

**2011**

**Ayrshire LEADER Local Action Group**



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## Table of Contents

<b>WELCOME TO THE AYRSHIRE LOCAL ACTION GROUP .....</b>	<b>3</b>
About LEADER.....	3
About the Local Action Group (LAG) .....	3
Who is on the LAG? .....	4
<b>ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES .....</b>	<b>5</b>
What does the LAG as a corporate body do?.....	5
What is my responsibility as a member? .....	6
LAG Staff.....	7
<b>PROTOCOLS .....</b>	<b>14</b>
Confidentiality .....	16
Knowledge of projects.....	17
Local Action Group Meeting protocols.....	18
<b>RULES, RULES.....</b>	<b>19</b>
European Level .....	19
Scotland Level.....	19
Local Level .....	19
Rules and processes we require from projects .....	19
<b>APPLICANT EXPERIENCE .....</b>	<b>20</b>
How do applicants get in touch with LEADER? .....	20
Action Two Projects.....	20
Common Problems Affecting Applicants.....	21
<b>ASSESSING APPLICATIONS.....</b>	<b>22</b>
What to do if you think something untoward has occurred .....	24
<b>HOW CAN LAG MEMBERS GET MORE INVOLVED IN LOCAL ACTION GROUP BUSINESS AND SUPPORTING THE ONGOING DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESS OF THE PROGRAMME? .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>FREEDOM OF INFORMATION.....</b>	<b>26</b>
What is Freedom of Information? .....	26
Is this an issue for the LAG?.....	26
<b>STATE AID.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>DOUBLE FUNDING.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>ANNEX 1: JARGON BUSTER.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>ANNEX 2: AYRSHIRE LAG CONSTITUTION .....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>ANNEX 3: AYRSHIRE LAG FUNDING ASSESSMENT SHEET.....</b>	<b>39</b>

## Welcome to the Ayrshire Local Action Group

### **About LEADER**

LEADER: Liaison Entre Action de Development de l'Economic Rurale or Links between Actions for the Development of the Rural Economy.

LEADER is essentially a European funding programme for rural development. In Scotland, it is now part of the Scottish Rural Development Programme and is therefore also part funded from Scottish Government funds and voluntary modulation. LEADER is not administered in the same way in each European country, nor necessarily the same way within the same member state (the UK is a classic example of this, with the four 'regions' administering their programmes separately). The managing authority in each country decides how they will manage LEADER and other funding programmes. The managing authority in Scotland is the Scottish Government. Our main contact with the Scottish Government is through the Rural Directorate (although financial aspects are dealt with through the Rural Payments Inspectorate). The Rural Directorate is responsible to Europe for all funds, and the LAG is responsible to both the Rural Directorate and the European Commission.

### **About the Local Action Group (LAG)**

The LAG has responsibility for setting the strategic direction of the Ayrshire LEADER Programme; implementing, delivering, monitoring and reviewing the Programme; selecting which projects will be supported; ensuring that a fair and transparent appraisal system for projects is in place, ensuring project monitoring is undertaken on an ongoing basis and ensuring that there is broad awareness of the existence and objectives of LEADER funding in the areas covered. It is intended to be a strong autonomous partnership, responsible for making its own decisions and reporting directly to the Scottish Government.

#### Business plan extract:

All LAG members are committed to direct involvement in the delivery of the Programme and will actively support the work of the LAG and LEADER staff in the field thereby adding considerably to the overall resource and development effort.



## Who is on the LAG?

Membership of the LAG is open to local Councils, business groups, other public agencies, constituted voluntary action groups and constituted community groups.

The Ayrshire LEADER Programme area is geographically large and communities are dispersed. However, there is a stated aim of securing LAG members who can take an overview rather than seeking to recruit members on a geographic or sectorised basis. A full list of current LAG members can be found on the website [www.ayrshire-leader.com](http://www.ayrshire-leader.com).

### Public Sector Membership

The Local Action Group will comprise not more than 50% public sector members.

### Private Sector Members




The majority of members of the Local Action Group will not be from the public sector, but will represent the programme area's civil society and may include local land managers, rural businesses, communities and community groups.











## Roles and Responsibilities




### ***What does the LAG as a corporate body do?***

The objectives of the LAG are, in accordance with Scottish Government guidelines, to:

-  Deliver a LEADER programme as part of the Scottish Rural Development Programme, aimed at promoting economic and community development within rural mainland Ayrshire;
-  Deliver support for rural development through implementing a local rural development strategy;
-  Increase the capacity of local rural community and business networks, to build knowledge and skills, and encourage innovation and co- operation in order to tackle local development objectives.

The LAG has a number of powers as defined in the Constitution (see Appendix A):

-  Identify, promote, develop and implement rural development in rural mainland Ayrshire in accordance with the Guidelines laid down by the Scottish Government;
-  Carry on any other activities which further any of the above objectives;
-  Establish and monitor an overall Ayrshire LEADER strategy;
-  Drive community engagement and participation processes;
-  Establish and operate financial and operational structures;
-  Monitor strategic outcomes;
-  Liaise with appropriate agencies and organisations to optimise complementarities between LEADER and other EU Programmes, Scottish Government policies and other local plans and strategies;
-  Liaise with the Regional Priority Assessment Committee (RPAC) appointed by the Scottish Government to assess and recommend to the Scottish Ministers applications for funding through all other funding programmes within the Scottish Rural Development Programme;

-  Consider and determine individual project applications from eligible organisations with power to delegate authority, as appropriate, to the Decision Making.
-  Implement and deliver the aims and objectives of the Ayrshire LEADER Local Action Group Local Development Strategy and Business Plan, a copy of which is accessible from [www.ayrshire-leader.com](http://www.ayrshire-leader.com)
-  Do anything which may be incidental or conducive to the furtherance of any of the objectives of the LAG.

### What is my responsibility as a member?

#### *Collective responsibility*

The Local Action Group brings together diverse organisations and opinions but publicly should speak with one voice. The LAG will work to seek consensus wherever possible but members agree to be bound by the majority position where consensus is not possible. There is a responsibility on all members of the LAG to adhere to principle of “collective responsibility” –

#### **Collective Responsibility**

Once a decision has been made all LAG members are responsible for it. The minutes of the meeting will record the **collectively agreed** reasons for the decision – either the feedback given on an application which caused the LAG to reject it or the reasons for an approval.

#### **But what if I disagree with a decision?**

It is likely that, with the increased volume of applications being seen, there will be occasions when individual LAG members do not agree with a decision which has been made. However:

#### **If someone in my community or organisation questions the LAG decision, what can I do?**

Please channel any query of this type through the Programme Coordinator. You can only state that the decision of the group was based on the reasons given in the minutes. Remember that the decision was based on all the information available – people questioning this may not have access to the full story.





#### **I want to disassociate myself from a decision made by the LAG**

You cannot remove yourself from a decision made by the LAG, even if that decision was made when you were absent. Collective responsibility requires that the LAG as a body will take responsibility for a decision once made.

## LAG Staff

The LAG staff are employed via South Ayrshire Council. They are responsible for delivering the aims of the LAG, as expressed through the business plan, the development strategy, and the decisions made at quorate meetings.

The **Programme Coordinator** is responsible to the LAG for:




-  The day to day operation of the programme and projects
-  Short to medium-term implementation of plans
-  Detailed planning and supervision
-  Delivery of all activity and targets

### **If I have a concern about the information provided by an applicant with a particular project, a recommendation or suggestion made by a member of LAG staff, what should I do?**

If you have a concern about the information provided this should be raised with the Programme Coordinator in the first instance. If your concern does not receive a satisfactory response, then the concern should be raised with the Chair.

### **If I have a concern about a member of staff, what should I do?**

If you have a concern about a member of staff this should be notified in writing to the Programme Coordinator. If your concern relates to the Programme Coordinator, the concern should be notified to the Chair in writing. They will:













-  Investigate your concern
-  Possibly consult with the Lead Partner within South Ayrshire Council on any personnel issues
-  Reach a conclusion and report back to you.

Any concerns regarding staff should be seen as strictly confidential.

## LAG officials

The LAG has one officially elected position – that of Chair

### Responsibilities of the Chair of the LEADER LAG

-  Manage and control all LAG meetings
-  Arrange with the Programme Coordinator the minutes and business of the LAG meetings
-  Liaise with the Programme Coordinator about the order of business and the order of the LAG applications
-  Familiarity with the following: Business Plan, Development Strategy, Constitution, Operating Procedures and Principles and Service Level Agreement with Scottish Government and South Ayrshire Council
-  Attend meetings out with LEADER meetings as and when required
-  Attend Network Meetings of Scottish and UK Leader and encourage requisite numbers of members of the LAG to attend
-  Ensure that views and concerns of the LAG members are heard understood and taken into account
-  Responsible for ensuring that arrangement is made with the Lead Partner over employment of LAG Staff and to ensure their efficient working, welfare and good working conditions
-  Deal with any concerns of staff promptly and appropriately
-  Ensure that relations with other Scottish LAGs are maintained and encouraged
-  Encourage the operation of inter-regional and international joint projects
-  Liaise with LAG partners when appropriate

### South Ayrshire Council as Lead Partner

South Ayrshire Council is the Lead Partner with regard to the LAG and holds the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Lead Partner (SAC) and Managing Authority (Scottish Government) and takes responsibility for employing the LEADER staff on behalf of the LAG, and as Lead Partner will remain a member of the LAG and the DMB at all times.

## Application for membership

Any organisation which wishes to become a member must sign, and lodge with the LAG, a written application for membership.

The LAG may, at its discretion, refuse to admit any organisation to membership.

The LAG shall consider each application for membership at the first meeting which is held after receipt of the application; the LAG shall, within a reasonable time after the meeting, notify the applicant of its decision on the application.

The Chair of the LAG will hold office for four years and will then be required to stand down and a new Chairperson will be elected. A Chairperson standing down may stand again for re- election as Chairperson.

A person holding any office shall cease to hold that office if he/she ceases to be employed by, or be a member of, the member organisation, if the member organisation ceases to be a member of the DMB, or if he/ she resign from that office by written notice to that effect.

## Withdrawal from Membership

Any organisation which wishes to withdraw from membership shall sign, and lodge with the LAG, written notice to that effect; on receipt of the notice by the LAG, the organisation shall cease to be a member.

The standard term of office for LAG members is the programme term, ending in 2015. The constitution allows for members to exit the LAG in the case of death or a letter of retiral.

## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LAG MEMBERS

### STANDARDS

#### Guiding Principles

The Group supports the guiding principles in the Code of Conduct for Devolved Public Bodies produced by the Scottish Government and will strive to ensure that their conduct matches the principles.

#### THE AYRSHIRE LOCAL ACTION GROUP HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO:

##### **Commitment**

Act in the interests of your community and the Ayrshire Local Action Group and in accordance with the purpose of the Group and its key tasks.

##### **Community Service**

LAG members have a duty to act in the interests of the communities within the whole of Ayrshire.

This mean they have a duty to ascertain and reflect the range of views of the communities as a whole and ensure that information presented to the LAG on any issue is the community view irrespective of personal opinion.

##### **Service**

Act in the interest of the Group in taking decisions. You must not act in order to gain financial or other material benefit for yourself, your family, friends or other inappropriate interests.

##### **Honesty**

Act honestly and must declare any private interests relating to your duties as a member. Steps must be taken by individuals to ensure that the Programme Coordinator are aware of any conflicts of interest, withdraw from the appraisal process, and leave any LAG meeting at which such applications are considered until the discussion is over.



## Integrity

Be under no obligation to any individual or organisation that might reasonably be considered to effect your judgement as a member.



## Openness

Be as open as possible about your decisions and actions, be able to give reasons for your decisions and restrict information only when required by the wider interest of the group.



## Community Leadership

LAG members not only have a duty to support the principles of this Code of Conduct but to promote the LEADER objectives, wider principles of social inclusion and challenge discrimination in any form.



## Objectivity

LAG members must make funding award decisions based solely on the information provided by applicants, additional information sought by the LEADER staff, or information which is publicly available, and should avoid influence by personal prejudice or hearsay.



## Respect

Members should behave openly and honestly, treating one another in a positive, respectful and non-discriminatory manner. This applies to verbal as well as written communication. Similarly, they should treat LEADER staff and other supporting agencies as well as members of the community with dignity and respect.

Recognition should be given to the contribution of everyone participating in the work of the LAG. Equality of opportunity should be given to every participant to have their knowledge, opinions, skills and experience, taken into account with all barriers to participation removed.

Individually, LAG members should be supportive of the office bearers and refrain from trying to undermine their confidence or authority. It is unacceptable for members to make personal remarks, make personal attacks or otherwise humiliate the LEADER staff and other members.

LAG members should ensure that confidential material, including details about individuals, is handled with dignity and discretion and is not used for personal or

nefarious purposes. Confidential material should be destroyed once the purpose for which they were originally provided has been fulfilled.

### **Accountability**

LAG members can ensure efficiency by focussing on their agreed purpose, clarifying roles and responsibilities and delegating tasks to those best equipped to complete them.

Minutes of LAG Meetings recording all agreed actions and decisions made should be produced and circulated to members within two weeks after each LAG meeting. By doing this members will know the tasks to be completed and who is to undertake them, and will ensure, when necessary, that members have time to consult those they represent.

LAG members will individually and collectively ensure that the business of the LAG is conducted according to the approved Development Strategy and Business Plan, the Constitution and this Code of Conduct.

They will also ensure that Annual Accounts are produced in accordance with the requirements of the Managing Authority (Scottish Government) showing the financial undertakings of the LAG, that these are audited by internal audit from South Ayrshire Council and that all resources are used efficiently, effectively and fairly.

### **Sanctions**

Sanctions which can be applied to LAG members who breach the terms of this Code of Conduct are as follows:

1. Written notification of the nature of the conduct giving cause for concern and advice as to the additional sanctions which could be imposed if continued or further misconduct occurs;
2. Suspension for a period of between 1 and 3 meetings of the Local Action Group;
3. Disqualification for a period not exceeding three years from being or being nominated for selection as, or from being selected as, a LAG member.

**If required, sanctions will be suggested by a group made up of the Chair, Programme Coordinator and Lead Partner, and can only be applied by a minuted decision of the LAG.**



## Trust

Support and promote these principles and maintain and strengthen trust and confidence in the integrity of the group, its operation and activities.

### Gifts and Hospitality

A member of the Ayrshire Local Action Group must never seek gifts or hospitality or accept any offer of a gift or hospitality, which could give rise to reasonable suspicion that the member's judgement might be influenced

In general, all offers of gifts or hospitality should be refused except isolated 'trivial' items or normal hospitality associated with the members duties and where it would show a lack of courtesy to refuse.

### Confidentiality

Members may at times be required to treat discussions, documents or other information relating to the Ayrshire Local Action Group work in a confidential manner and members should not disclose such information to which they have access by virtue of their position.

Members should never use any information to which they have access by virtue of their position for personal or financial gain.

Any discussion, documents or other information that requires to be treated in a confidential manner should be explicitly identified as such to members and any others acting for the Group.

In keeping with the Ayrshire Local Action Group values of openness and transparency, all documentation and information which are not identified as Confidential will be available by arrangement.

Members should exercise their judgements as to what should and should not be made available to others. Project information is confidential until the project has been fully approved and in the public domain.

### Conduct of staff

The Chair will inform any staff or contractors of their liability to conform to the Code of Conduct.

## Enforcement of the Code

The Ayrshire Local Action Group will take action in all cases where a member or someone acting on behalf of the Ayrshire Local Action Group has failed to comply with the Code.

## PROTOCOLS

### Register of Interests

It is important that all members maintain integrity in their conduct and to this end the Ayrshire Local Action Group maintains a Register of Interests.

The purpose of the Register is to provide information for each member about financial and non financial interests which could reasonably be considered by others to influence the activities of the person as a member.

All Ayrshire Local Action Group members will register and update their relevant interests as and when necessary and at least annually.

LAG Members must list all organisations, business connections, personal relationships or other circumstances that may influence directly or indirectly their contribution and involvement in and decisions made at LAG meetings, or at any stage in project development discussions.

### Declaration of Interests

Where an Ayrshire Local Action Group member has a registered interest which relates significantly to or might appear to relate significantly to a matter forming part of the proceedings of an Ayrshire Local Action Group meeting, the member must make an oral declaration of that interest prior to the discussion of that matter by the meeting.

Where a member has an interest that is not a registered interest, for example, one that arises out of association with another organisation, then that interest should be declared if it relates to any part of Ayrshire Local Action Group proceedings.

In making the oral declaration the member must consider whether they will be influenced or indeed whether anybody else might reasonably consider them to be influenced by their interest or where their presence in the meeting would influence unduly the decision of the LAG.








When a members makes an oral declaration of interests it will be up to the Chair to decide if the member should withdraw from the meeting while the matter is being discussed.

Should the Chair declare an interest it will be up to the Group to decide whether withdrawal is necessary.

### When should I declare interest?

You should declare interest in an application where you, or an organisation you represent, have an interest in the success or otherwise of an application, beyond a general interest by being a resident in the area.

For example, you have an interest to declare if...

-  Your employer is the applicant
-  An organisation you are a member of is the applicant (eg if the National Trust for Scotland applied then ALL members of the LAG who also hold NTS membership would have an interest)
-  The organisation you represent has a financial interest in the project (e.g. is a match funder of the project)
-  You would materially benefit from the outcome of the project (e.g., if you are the main beneficiary of a project)
-  You have an interest in the project being appraised not going ahead (e.g., if you are developing a similar sounding project which you think may not receive LEADER funds if this one goes ahead)

### What does a declaration of interest mean?

If you are the applicant or have a financial interest in a project before the LAG for consideration, then you have an interest in that application. If you have an interest in a project, then you will not receive the documents pertaining to that application. You will not be able to score the project and must leave the room during discussion. You will not find out the result of the LAGs decision until after the applicant has been informed. Of course there is no reason why you cannot obtain the application form from the applicant directly (and would be encouraged to do so). You are also encouraged to detail your support for a project in writing which can be circulated with the application as part of the evidence of demand for the project.

## Why do we have a Declaration of Interest procedure?

There are four reasons we have rigorous processes for declaration of interest:

1. As a body dispersing public monies we have a responsibility to ensure that processes are open, straightforward, fair, and accountable.
2. As a body which is audited by the European Court of Auditors we are required to have open, transparent and fair processes which ensure that bodies with an interest in a particular project are recorded as having taken no part in, nor observed, any discussion.
3. To protect members with an interest in projects from accusations of favouritism or special treatment.
4. To enable full and frank discussion to take place without anyone fearing their comments will be personalised or fed back to applicants.

### Confidentiality

The discussions which take place in a LAG meeting are confidential, other than the minutes of the meeting. Please do not tell others of the items discussed – this could have far – reaching repercussions. This includes fellow LAG members who have an interest in projects under discussion.

### Other confidentiality issues

When you receive a set of application documents these should be seen as a confidential file. There are a number of items within it which should not be discussed out with the LAG. For example:-

#### *Technical assessment*

The technical assessment file is a document which summarises the application form and highlights any areas where the LEADER staff have particular concerns or issues. As the LEADER staff may have worked with an applicant for some time to develop the application, and will continue to work with projects if funded through LEADER, it can be very damaging if items from the technical assessment are taken out of context and publicised.

#### *Applications*

Project applications include information on individual's salaries, on organisations future plans, on the state of an organisations bank account, or on other confidential issues. Please be aware of the private nature of some information included in the application forms.

#### *Paperwork*

Once the LAG has considered a project application, all members should delete related electronic files (including copies of the applications). Any paper or print files should also be securely disposed of. The LEADER staff can arrange for the shredding of any paperwork brought to LAG meetings and handed in for disposal.

## Knowledge of projects

### **What should I do if I know people interested in applying?**

The first step in any application is for organisations to fill out an Initial Enquiry Form. This allows the Programme Coordinator to carry out an initial check of the eligibility and fit of the project. Applicants will receive support to apply and will be visited by the Coordinator in most if not all cases.

### **Can I offer advice to people who are writing an application?**

Your perspective as someone who reviews applications will be invaluable to people preparing any application, and you are free to help people. However, what you cannot do is offer advice along the lines of 'The LAG will like x or y' – partly because it is very difficult to anticipate the way the LAG will respond, and partly because that could be misconstrued as giving a guarantee of approval.

### **Can I support an application officially?**

Yes. The best way to ensure that your support for an application is noted officially is to write a letter of support. Often, match funders provide a basic letter of support which is noted in the technical assessment. However, there is an opportunity for you to write a more detailed letter which will then be included in the application files, or referred to in the technical assessment.

## Local Action Group Meeting protocols

There are a number of protocols relating to the organisation and conduct of LAG meetings.

Minutes of all general meetings should contain in each and every case a note of members present, those attending, the Chair and a record of all proceedings, resolutions and decisions. Minutes do not represent a record of all discussions at a meeting, but do record the collectively agreed points and decisions made.

## Role of the Chair

*It is the Role of the Chair at LAG meetings to ensure:*

- Be fair and impartial
- Not to be directive of the discussion or points being raised
- Facilitate full and fair discussion from members of the Group
- Prevent repeating of the same point by members
- Don't allow the meeting to wander off topic
- An informed discussion is held
- Ability to sum up the main points of the discussion
- The meeting moves towards consensus
- Knowledge of Constitution, procedures & Declarations of Interest
- Ensure meeting is quorate
- Minute scribe is clear on decisions
- Provide introductions
- Start the meeting on time
- Stick with the agenda
- Close the meeting on time
- That certain voices do not dominate

*The Chair should avoid:*

- Taking sides
- Becoming a participant in the discussion
- Leading the discussion
- Manipulating the group towards the Chairs own agenda
- Criticising the values and ideas of others
- Forcing their own ideas on the group (if the Chair wants to discuss issues then the Vice-Chair should become Chair at that point)
- Making decisions or directing decisions of the Group
- Saying too much

## RULES, RULES

The LEADER programme is operated in a maze of different protocols, rules, and regulations.

### ***European Level***

As a European funded programme we are subject to all requirements of the European Commission. Some of these include:

- Projects must acknowledge the support of European funds at all times
- Organisations must retain files for seven years following the end of the whole programme

### ***Scotland Level***

The Scottish Government are our managing authority and set the guidance for LEADER in Scotland. Some of this guidance filters European regulation to us, and some is specific to Scotland. Some of the regulations which are applied at Scotland level include:

- As LEADER is now part of the Scottish Rural Development Programme we must operate with some awareness of their funding priorities and programmes

### ***Local Level***

The LAG has itself set regulations in its Business Plan and Development Strategy. We have also adopted some protocols set by South Ayrshire Council as the Lead Partner. For example:

- Staff are employed by South Ayrshire Council on behalf of the LAG, and so are subject to the Councils employment processes – holiday provision, flexi time, and a robust disciplinary system
- Procurement for the LAG and for projects is guided by South Ayrshire Councils Best Practice procurement rules

### ***Rules and processes we require from projects***

There is a long list of requirements for projects who wish to receive funding from LEADER. Some of these are:

- ✓ All match funding to be in place before a LEADER funded project can start
- ✓ All posts to be openly recruited – we can help with this if required
- ✓ All works to be openly contracted – we can help with this if required
- ✓ Publicity – the list of publicity requirements is quite long, but essentially we require that our funding is acknowledged using our logo, the Scottish Government logo, the European Funding logo, and the sentence 'THIS PROJECT IS BEING / HAS BEEN PART-FINANCED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY Ayrshire LEADER 2008 - 2013 Programme
- ✓ All statutory consents and permissions must be in place before LEADER projects can start



## Applicant Experience

### How do applicants get in touch with LEADER?

If people ask you for more information about LEADER, the best place to point them in the first instance is the website – [www.ayrshire-leader.com](http://www.ayrshire-leader.com). Most of the questions people commonly ask are answered somewhere on our website. If they have a specific project idea, the first step in any enquiry is for applicants to complete the Initial Enquiry Form. This allows the team to carry out a quick eligibility check on the project, check the budget given, and get in touch with the applicant to either send out the full application form or set up a time to meet, or ask some questions to clarify any points.

### Action Two Projects

#### How do applicants to more than one area get in touch with LEADER?

The applicant should submit an enquiry form to both LEADER Co-ordinators, and the Co-ordinators will then contact each other to discuss the application before presentation to the respective LAGs.

#### What will the co-ordinators do?

The LEADER Co-ordinators will then make sure that one Co-ordinator acts as 'Lead' on behalf of both LEADER areas – that is, acts as the prime contact with the applicant, copying the second area in to all correspondence. The applicant will complete one application form for both areas, clearly delineating the outputs, outcomes, and costs, respectively. If meetings with the applicant are required, the co-ordinators will try to ensure that someone from both areas can attend in order to make sure information flows correctly.

#### What will the LAGs do?

The current protocol for LAG consideration of Action 2 projects is that each LAG considers the application independently. Co-ordinators will not inform LAG members of the decision of another LAG during the consideration process. This will allow each LAG to make a decision based entirely on the merits of the application and how it fits with its own strategy. Once the decision of both LAGs has been reached the lead co-ordinator will feed back to the applicant the response from both LAGs. This ensures that applicants understand that the decision of one LAG is not binding on another, as each LAG will have different priorities and themes.



## Common Problems Affecting Applicants

### **The project will deliver in both eligible and ineligible areas, can we accept the application?**

It depends on the location of the delivery and where the beneficiaries are from. In some cases, people from an eligible area carrying out activity in an ineligible area could be a fundable project if the greater benefit comes to the LEADER area.

### **The project can't start until we get all the funding.... But we can't get all the funding until we start.**

LEADER cannot release funds until the entire match funding has been secured, but what applicants can do is amend their project plan, perhaps into two or more stages. LEADER could then be approached to part fund one or more stages, which might allow the organisation to kick start the project.

### **A new organisation may not have experience of completing forms.**

The LEADER staff will work with organisations to help them complete the application, but might also refer people onwards to locally available support staff from partner organisations if they need other help in developing their organisation or wider aspects of their project. As the number and range of support organisations varies across our LEADER area, the LEADER staff will strive to 'fill the gap' where necessary.

### **A potential applicant doesn't have the capacity as an organisation to comply with LEADER requirements.**



One of the questions the LEADER staff asks of organisations is how they will manage the varied requirements which a LEADER grant carries. As LEADER funding is made up of European and Scottish funds, these requirements can be onerous. If the team does not consider that an organisation is able to manage the requirements, this will be noted in the technical assessment file to be included in the LAG's decision making.

## Assessing applications







Assessing applications received is a key element in the role of a LAG member. It is the LAGs responsibility to ensure that the money the programme has to disperse is spent well and in line with the LAG's Local Development Strategy.

### What should you receive?

It is the role of the LEADER staff to ensure that you receive all the information you need to make an informed decision. You should always receive a LAG Pack which contains at minimum:

-  The final application form signed and dated as submitted by closing date
-  A blank appraisal sheet

In some cases, depending on the complexity of the application, you may receive additional papers, which could include:

-  A copy of the business plan or project plan
-  Photographs
-  Additional summary papers (the LEADER staff may ask applicants to prepare an additional paper to clarify questions we expect the LAG to have)
-  Project newsletters or annual reports
-  Feasibility study
-  Evaluation of previous projects

The team try to strike a balance between sending the relevant information and not overwhelming members with too many files. The technical check file will include a list of all additional information the team have.

### The Technical Assessment

The technical assessment is undertaken by two individuals. The Programme Coordinator who has been working with the group will complete a technical assessment designed to summarise the checks which have been made on the application form to comply with the technical requirements of the Programme, The 'Technical Sign Off' will be completed by the Lead Partner (SAC) who has not been involved with the project's development. No recommendations are made to the LAG on whether a project should be approved or not.

## How do I complete the LAG Project Assessment Sheet?

Project Assessment sheets should be completed prior to attending the meeting and used as a crib/prompt sheet for discussion. It is essential that every sheet is handed to the Programme Officer prior to you departing from the meeting. There is a specific audit requirement to provide written evidence of the LAGs fair and transparent process of assessing applications. Please ensure that your name and the project name being assessed are clearly stated on each form.





The assessment crib sheet allows you to consider each application against all 12 set criteria as defined in the Local Development Strategy. You should consider whether the project meets with each of the criteria or not and satisfy yourself that the projects fits within the Ayrshire LEADER Strategy.

You should voice any technical or budget issues you would like the Programme Coordinator to seek clarification on.

To ensure that our LAG encourages cooperation and networking, should you have any suggestions for organisations or individuals that the project could make contact or connections with, then please raise this at the meeting.







Should you wish to highlight any specific conditions of grant that you deem appropriate or would like to see complied with, please raise this at project consideration stage.

Finally you should state whether you recommend the project for LEADER support and there are 3 options available:

-  **Approved subject to standard terms and conditions** (This is a full approval of an application subject to only to the standard LEADER conditions [these are many and varied, but include an acceptance of our publicity guidelines, provision of evidence of all match funding, and acceptance of our claims process]).
-  **Approved subject to additional specific terms and conditions** (this is used for applications where the LAG wants to approve but has specific additional questions or requirements it would like the LEADER staff to ensure are in place prior to the project commencing. These applications will be subject to all standard conditions as well as these additional requirements. [if you select this you should tell us in the comments field what your suggestions for additional terms would be])
-  **Deferred** (this is where the LAG, in principle, is supportive of the aims and objectives of the project but feels unable to make a collective approval because more information is required, clarification of information provided is sought or external factors need to be resolved before a decision can be made. *Please note that deferral should not be used where the LAG intends to reject the application once the clarification/information etc has been sought – this is unfair to applicants and sends a confused message.*)
-  **Rejected** (rejection of a project must be for stated reasons. An organisation is not able to reapply for exactly the same project to LEADER).

## Innovation

The innovation element to LEADER funding is quite crucial. Other LAGs came up with the following description of innovation:

-  Must be innovative for our area – not necessarily the first in Scotland
-  'Sparkly'
-  Fresh concept, fresh approach
-  New way of doing things
-  New way of looking at things
-  Adapting, bringing or developing existing or new ideas of ways of doing things to the area

## Monitoring

The application process ends with the formal communication outlining the LAG's decision to the applicant, but this is simply the start of the monitoring and claims process.

Projects are required to report to LEADER on their total project spending and their progress towards the outputs and outcomes. This process is led by the Programme Officer who will work with each organisation to ensure compliance with our requirements.

## What to do if you think something untoward has occurred

If you have reason to believe that something untoward has happened, you should contact the Programme Coordinator with your evidence in the first instance. Please note that, as often there are disagreements within communities about plans and activities, LEADER must strive to offer no preference to either side in a dispute. Complaints from individuals within a community about the actions of a project do not in themselves necessarily constitute reason for rejection or withdrawal of support. This is a delicate area which LAG members must navigate with help from the LEADER staff.

## How can LAG members get more involved in Local Action Group business and supporting the ongoing development and success of the Programme?

LAG members can get involved in a number of ways:

**As a representative of the LAG** you may be asked to attend events on behalf of the group – including Project launch events, open days, and festivals

**As a local person**, you are the eyes and ears of the LAG and reports on the impact of a project in your local area are welcomed by the LEADER staff, as they will complement their more formal monitoring procedures.

**In the publicity programme** the LEADER staff receives requests from media outlets for an individual to take part in radio interviews etc.

**You may be asked** to sit on the steering group of a project to represent the LAG's interest in the project

**You could attend** the LEADER network events on behalf of the LAG. At present we do not know how frequent or what format these network events will follow, but in the previous LEADER programme, LAG members found these events very useful.

**Spreading the word.** We know that the most effective publicity channel is through word of mouth. Letting colleagues, neighbours, and local groups know that LEADER exists and what its funding can be used for is an invaluable awareness raising tool.

## Freedom of Information

### What is Freedom of Information?

The Scottish Freedom of Information act was passed in 2002 and came into full effect in 2005.

Anyone - from anywhere in the world - has a right to see any kind of recorded information from a Scottish public authority, however old the information is. Applicants do not have to say why they want the information or what they want it for and the authority is obliged to respond to all information requests they receive within 20 working days of receipt.

People may ask for **any kind of recorded information held by a Scottish public authority**.

This includes information that is recorded on:



- paper
- computer files (including e-mail)
- video
- microfiche

Requests may only cover information which is recorded. For example, requests cannot be made for someone's opinion that has not been put on record.

### Is this an issue for the LAG?

The LAG is dispersing public funds and the programme is supported by South Ayrshire Council as Lead Partner. In this way we are subject to Freedom of Information requests.

What could people ask for?

-  Items which could be covered by the legislation include (but is not limited to):
-  The minutes of LAG meetings, correspondence between the LEADER staff and members, other LAG papers, and score sheets.

Exemptions set out in the guidance include where information could be viewed as commercially sensitive. This could cover information given in application forms, financial information, and claim information held on projects.

Therefore it is important to be aware that written comments and opinions (including e-mails) may be required to be passed on to third parties on request.

## State Aid

State aid is a European Commission term which refers to forms of assistance from a public body, or publicly-funded body, given to undertakings on a discretionary basis, with the potential to distort competition and affect trade between member states of the European Union.

The 'State aid rules' are set out by the European Commission and comprise various articles of the EC Treaty, regulations, frameworks and guidelines - which set out what aid can be given. The European Commission governs member states' compliance with these rules and must be notified of all schemes involving State aid. State aid granted without Commission approval is viewed as unlawful and may be subject to repayment - by the aid recipient.

State Aid relates to all 'economic undertakings', regardless of who the applicant is. This means that as well as applying to commercial businesses, State Aid rules may also apply to any charity or community organisation involved in an activity which competes with commercial business.

### Why is State Aid relevant for the LAG?

Essentially State Aid rules set out that public money cannot be used where it could distort competition. It is possible that applications received by the LAG could be subject to State Aid rulings.

If the support given to a project is deemed a state aid, then the support must be reported to the EU under the General Block Exemption (GBER), a notified scheme, or awarded under De Minimis. In all cases where there is a State Aid issue, the applicant will need to be advised as the nature of the support being offered as this will affect the funds they are able to raise from elsewhere.

In most cases where there is a State Aid issue, funding from the LAG will be awarded under De Minimis. This is a threshold figure under which money can be awarded to an organisation without it being deemed to have distorted the market. The current De Minimis threshold is 200,000 euros over a three year period. It is important to note that De Minimis is cumulative, and it will apply to all funding received from a public source (which for State Aid purposes includes the Big Lottery).

Whilst it is important that the LAG is aware that some awards may be deemed state aids, this does not preclude the LAG from supporting those projects. It is the responsibility of the Programme Coordinator and the Lead Partner that the State Aid rules are followed when applicable.

## Double Funding

LEADER cannot fund a project that has already received European funding for the same project activity.

This should not be confused with 'match funding', which is the scenario when projects raise money from another (non-European) source to 'match' their LEADER contribution towards a project.

So, a project that has received funds from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) or Rural Priorities (SRDP-RP) cannot receive LEADER funds for the same activity. However, it is possible for funds from different European funds to be used for different phases or element of a wider project. For example, LEADER funds could be used to fund a feasibility study for a project, and Rural Priorities/ERDF could be used to implement the findings of that study.

The LEADER Programme Coordinator will liaise with other European funders to ensure double funding does not take place. However, as a LAG member you believe a project has been double-funded, then you should advise the Programme Coordinator for this to be checked at the earliest opportunity. You are not expected to undertake this checking yourself.



## Annex 1: Jargon Buster

**Co-finance** is used to mean all other finance attracted to a project.

**CVS** stands for Council for Voluntary Service - a locally based membership body for third sector organisations.

**ERDF** stands for European Regional Development Fund, the European Union's major structural fund supporting capital and infrastructure costs.

**ESF** stands for European Social Fund, the European Union's major structural fund supporting development costs, particularly improving skills and tackling unemployment.

**In-kind contribution:** An in-kind contribution is a non-cash contribution to a project that can be assigned a monetary value, typically donated goods or services necessary for the project to proceed and which otherwise would need to have been purchased.

**Intervention rate:** the minimum proportion of European money required to enable the project to proceed. For example, an intervention rate of 45% on a project costing £10,000 in total would require £4,500 from European sources (LEADER) and £5,500 from other sources.

**LEADER** stands for Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Economie Rurale which means "links between activities developing rural communities". It is the European Union's major funding programme for local rural development.

**Match funding:** All European projects require to have "match funding" - that is, some of the total costs of the project need to come from other (non European Union) sources. Match funding can either be "cash" or "in-kind". Cash match-funding might be attracted from a range of sources including from national or local government or their agencies, from Lottery sources, from charitable trusts or foundations, or from third sector organisation's own resources. "In-kind" match funding will be donated goods or services, including use of office accommodation, gifted supplies, or, in certain circumstances, from donated volunteer time.



**SCVO** stands for Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, Scotland's membership body for third sector organisations.

**Third sector** is the collective term used to describe organisations that are neither government bodies ("the public sector") or profit-distributing companies ("the private sector"). Third sector organisations include local voluntary organisations, charities, development trusts and social enterprises.

**Top down and Bottom up.** LEADER is often referred to as a 'Bottom up' funding programme, as it is intended for "Projects which are led by the Community, and/or of benefit to the Community". Bottom-up projects are those which have arisen from a community need, which is



led by the local community and where local people are intrinsically involved in managing and delivering the project. Pitfalls here for LEADER include:

-  Merely having local people involved in a project doesn't automatically mean that they have consulted the wider community. The LEADER staff will always check on the representation brought by any group
-  Agency doesn't always mean top- down! Sometimes the best organisation to deliver a project isn't always the community organisation that have developed it. Occasionally, larger organisations or agencies will apply for a project on behalf of a community. In these cases LEADER should look for the involvement of the community rather than making an assumption that agency involvement automatically means the project is top – down.

## Annex 2: Ayrshire LAG Constitution

### 1. Name

- 1.1 The name of the organisation shall be the Ayrshire LEADER Local Action Group (hereinafter referred to as "the LAG").

### 2. Objectives

The objectives of the LAG are, in accordance with Scottish Government guidelines, to:

- 2.1 deliver a LEADER programme as part of the Scottish Rural Development Programme, aimed at promoting economic and community development within rural mainland Ayrshire;
- 2.2 deliver support for rural development through implementing a local rural development strategy;
- 2.3 increase the capacity of local rural community and business networks, to build knowledge and skills, and encourage innovation and co- operation in order to tackle local development objectives.

### 3. Powers

In pursuance of the objectives set out in clause 2, the LAG shall have the following powers to:-

- 3.1 identify, promote, develop and implement rural development in rural mainland Ayrshire in accordance with the Guidelines laid down by the Scottish Government;
- 3.2 carry on any other activities which further any of the above objectives;
- 3.3 Establish and monitor an overall Ayrshire LEADER strategy;
- 3.4 Drive community engagement and participation processes;
- 3.5 Establish and operate financial and operational structures;
- 3.6 Monitor strategic outcomes;
- 3.7 Liaise with appropriate agencies and organisations to optimise complementarities between LEADER and other EU Programmes, Scottish Government policies and other local plans and strategies;
- 3.8 Liaise with the Regional Priority Assessment Committee (RPAC) appointed by the Scottish Government to assess and recommend to the Scottish Ministers applications



- for funding through all other funding programmes within the Scottish Rural Development Programme;
- 3.9 Consider and determine individual project applications from eligible organisations with power to delegate authority, as appropriate, to the Decision Making Body as defined in clause 5 of this Constitution;
- 3.10 Implement and deliver the aims and objectives of the Ayrshire LEADER Local Action Group Local Development Strategy and Business Plan, a hard copy of which is available at the LEADER office, Training and Development Centre, 15 Links Road, Prestwick KA9 1QG for consultation and a copy of which is accessible from [www.ayrshire-leader.com](http://www.ayrshire-leader.com);
- 3.11 do anything which may be incidental or conducive to the furtherance of any of the objectives of the LAG.

#### 4. Membership

- 4.1 Membership of the LAG shall be made up of representatives from the following organisations

<u>Public</u>	<u>Private</u>
South Ayrshire Council	East Ayrshire Woodlands
North Ayrshire Council	RSPB
East Ayrshire Council	Scottish Rural Property and Business Association (SRPBA)
Ayrshire Joint Planning Unit	West Kilbride Community Initiative Ltd
South Ayrshire Association of Community Councils	Scottish Power Renewables
Forestry Commission Scotland	<del>CVO Kyle and Carrick</del> replaced by VASA
Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)	Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry
VisitScotland	Coalfield Communities Federation
	East Ayrshire North Communities Federation
	North Ayrshire CVS
	National Farmers Union
	Dalmellington Partnership
	Womans Royal Voluntary Service (WRVS)

#### 4.2 Membership Obligations:-

Organisations which are members of the LAG shall be required:-

- To take a full and active part in the activities of the LAG;



- To nominate a representative to attend meetings of the LAG and Decision Making Body as defined at clause 5 of this Constitution and ensure its nominated representative attends meetings on a regular basis and takes a full and active part in proceedings.

## 5. General Structure

- 5.1 The general structure of the LAG shall consist of the members of the LAG, who will have the right to attend the meetings of the LAG, elect representatives to the Decision Making Body, delegate authority as appropriate to the Decision Making Body and take decisions in relation to changes to the constitution;
- 5.2 The LAG will appoint The Decision Making Body (hereinafter referred to as “the DMB”)in accordance with clauses 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 16 of this Constitution who will be responsible for the day- to day- overview of the delivery of the LAG objectives, its operational management and consideration and determination of applications for funding delegated to it by the LAG. The DMB will hold regular meetings between LAG meetings and be supported by the LEADER Programme Coordinator, as defined in clause 15 of this Constitution.

## 6. Qualifications for Membership

- 6.1 Membership of the LAG shall be open to local Councils, business groups, other public agencies, constituted voluntary action groups and constituted community groups.

## 7. Application for membership

- 7.1 Any organisation which wishes to become a member must sign, and lodge with the LAG, a written application for membership.
- 7.2 The LAG may, at its discretion, refuse to admit any organisation to membership.
- 7.3 The LAG shall consider each application for membership at the first meeting which is held after receipt of the application; the LAG shall, within a reasonable time after the meeting, notify the applicant of its decision on the application.

## 8. Withdrawal from Membership

- 8.1 Any organisation which wishes to withdraw from membership shall sign, and lodge with the LAG, written notice to that effect; on receipt of the notice by the LAG, the organisation shall cease to be a member.

## 9. Procedure at Meetings of the Ayrshire LEADER Local Action Group

- 9.1 The LAG will meet at least four times per year and more frequently if required to do so due to high volumes of funding applications.

- 9.2 No business shall be dealt with at any meeting unless a quorum is present. The quorum shall be half of the number of member organisations, present in person. In the event that the number of member organisations is uneven, the figure should be rounded down.
- 9.3 The chairperson of the LAG shall (if present and willing to act as chairperson) preside as chairperson of each meeting. If the chairperson is not present and willing to act as chairperson within 15 minutes after the time at which the meeting was due to commence, the members of the LAG present at the meeting shall elect from among themselves, the person who will act as chairperson of that meeting.
- 9.4 The chairperson of a meeting may, with the consent of the meeting, adjourn the meeting to such time and place as the chairperson may determine.
- 9.5 Representation and voting: Each member organisation may be represented at a meeting by up to two members. Notwithstanding this, each member organisation shall have one vote, which must be given personally, on any motions, amendments or proposals. Any motion, amendment or proposal shall be deemed to be carried if a simple majority of those member organisations attending so agree. A resolution put to the vote at a meeting shall be decided on by a show of hands.
- 9.6 The LAG may, at its discretion, allow any person, whom they consider appropriate, to attend and speak at any meeting of the LAG; any such person invited to attend a LAG shall not be entitled to vote.
- 9.7 A member of the LAG shall not vote at a meeting of the LAG on any resolution concerning a matter in which he/ she or the organisation that he /she represents has an interest, which conflicts (or may conflict) with the interests of the LAG; he/she must withdraw from the meeting, while the matter is being discussed and determined.
- 9.8 In the event of any tied vote, the Chairperson of the meeting shall have a casting vote.

## **10. Maximum Number of Decision Making Body Members**

- 10.1 The maximum number of members of the Decision Making Body shall be twelve members.

## **11. Eligibility**

- 11.1 An organisation shall not be eligible for election to the Decision Making Body unless it is a member of the LAG.

## **12. Election, Retiral, Re- election**

- 12.1 The Chairperson of the LAG will hold office for four years and will then be required to stand down and a new Chairperson will be elected. A Chairperson standing down may stand again for re- election as Chairperson.
- 12.2 At any meeting of the LAG, the members may elect any member to be a member of the DMB.
- 12.3 Membership of the DMB will last for two years and after that period, two members from the public sector and two members from the private sector will be required to stand down and they will be replaced by members from their respective sectors.
- 12.4 A person holding any office shall cease to hold that office if he/she ceases to be employed by, or be a member of, the member organisation, if the member organisation ceases to be a member of the DMB, or if he/ she resigns from that office by written notice to that effect.

## **13. South Ayrshire Council as Lead Authority**

- 13.1 South Ayrshire Council is the lead authority with regard to the LAG, with responsibility for employing the LEADER Programme Co-ordinator, as defined at clause 15 this Constitution and as lead authority will remain a member of the LAG and the DMB at all times.

## **14. Membership of the Decision Making Body**

- 14.1 Membership of the DMB will consist of 50% public sector members and 50% private sector members at all times and in the event of an imbalance occurring, the LAG, facilitated by the LEADER Programme Co-ordinator, shall co- opt members of the LAG to the DMB as vacancies occur in order to maintain a balanced membership of the DMB, and shall report details of all co-opted members to the next available meeting of the LAG.

## **15. Role of the LEADER Programme Coordinator**

- 15.1 The LEADER Programme Co-ordinator shall act as Secretary to the LAG and the DMB and will be responsible for the technical appraisal of projects prior to assessment by members.

## **16. Procedure at Meetings of the Decision Making Body**

- 16.1 The DMB will meet regularly as required to consider and determine applications under delegated authority from the LAG and to consider issues of operational management.
- 16.2 No business shall be dealt with at any meeting unless a quorum is present: the quorum shall be five members present in person.

- 16.3 The chairperson of the LAG shall preside as chairperson of each DMB meeting at which he/she is present; if the chairperson is not present and willing to act as chairperson within 15 minutes after the time at which the meeting was due to commence, the members of the DMB present at the meeting shall elect from among themselves the person who will act as chairperson of that meeting.
- 16.4 The chairperson of a meeting may, with the consent of the meeting, adjourn the meeting to such time and place as the chairperson may determine.
- 16.5 Each member organisation shall have one vote and questions arising at a meeting of the DMB shall be decided by a majority of votes; if an equality of votes arises, the chairperson of the meeting shall have the casting vote.
- 16.6 The DMB may, at its discretion, allow any person who they consider appropriate to attend and speak at any meeting of the DMB; any such person invited to attend a DMB shall not be entitled to vote.
- 16.7 A member of the DMB shall not vote at a meeting of the DMB (or at a meeting of the LAG) on any resolution concerning a matter in which he/ she or the organisation that he/she represents has an interest which conflicts (or may conflict) with the interests of the LAG; he/she must withdraw from the meeting while the matter is being discussed and determined.

## **17. Management and Control of Finance**

- 17.1 South Ayrshire Council will act as the Administrative Lead and Accountable Body as defined in the Ayrshire Leader Local Action Group Local Development Strategy and Business Plan (see clause 3.10 of this Constitution) for the Ayrshire LEADER Initiative, and as part of this role, will be the fund- holder for the LAG. South Ayrshire Council will use its financial systems to receive funds from the Scottish Government, and match funding from individual partners for the administration of the project, and then pay out grants and management costs as agreed by the LAG. South Ayrshire Council will employ LEADER- funded staff and all reasonable costs for such employment will be reimbursed to the Council by the LAG.
- 17.2 The financial year of the LAG shall be from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31 December. An audited statement of the fund for the financial year shall be submitted to the LAG. South Ayrshire Council has responsibility for preparation, compliance and the submission of claims to the Scottish Government.
- 17.3 The LAG shall be required to submit an annual progress report to the Scottish Government in September or October, such report to include
- a. Chairperson's Annual Report;
  - b. Leader Programme Coordinator's report and the up to date claims position.

## **18. Special General Meeting**

- 18.1 A Special General Meeting shall be convened following the receipt by the LAG of a request for such a meeting signed by representatives of a majority of the number of member organisations. Such a request shall indicate the reason for the request for a Special General Meeting.
- 18.2 Upon receipt of such a request, the LAG shall convene a meeting, to which all member organisations shall be invited. Such a meeting shall take place within 28 days of receipt of request, and member organisations shall receive at least 14 days notice of the meeting. Notice of the meeting shall include a copy of the agenda for the meeting, which shall clearly indicate the reason for the meeting.
- 18.3 The quorum and voting arrangements for any Special General Meeting is as described in clause 9 above.

## **19. Alterations to the Constitution**

- 19.1 Any proposal to alter this Constitution must be delivered by letter to the Leader Programme Coordinator not less than 28 days prior to the date of the meeting at which it is first to be considered. The terms of the proposed resolution to alter the Constitution shall be stated on the notice calling the meeting which shall be issued not less than fourteen days prior to the meeting. If the resolution is supported by a simple majority of the member organisations who attend and vote at such meeting, the alteration shall be deemed to have been duly authorised. Any meeting shall be chaired by the Chairperson of the LAG or, in her/his absence, another nominated member of the LAG. In the event of any tied vote, the Chairperson of the meeting shall have a casting vote.

## **20. Dissolution**

- 20.1 If the LAG decides at any time that, on the grounds of expense or otherwise, it is necessary or advisable to dissolve, it shall agree a date for a meeting of member organisations to be held to discuss the proposed resolution to dissolve. Not less than fourteen days prior to the date of such meeting member organisations shall receive information indicating the terms of the proposed resolution to dissolve the organisation. If the resolution is supported by a simple majority of the member organisations who attend and vote at such a meeting, the alteration shall be deemed to have been duly authorised. Any meeting shall be chaired by the Chairperson of the LAG or, in her/his absence, another nominated member of the LAG. In the event of any tied vote, the Chairperson of the meeting shall have a casting vote.
- 20.2 All grant funding remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts or liabilities, shall transfer to the Scottish Government.

**21. Data Protection and Freedom of Information**

- 21.1 All parties warrant that they will duly observe all their obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 which arise in connection with this constitution and their dealings with, membership of, and participation in, LAG, and that they will comply with the terms of any data sharing protocols with the Scottish Government.
  
- 21.2 To the extent that the public authorities within LAG are public authorities within the meaning of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA) or the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (EIRs), they will comply with their statutory obligations under FOISA and EIRs.



### Annex 3: Ayrshire LAG FUNDING ASSESSMENT SHEET

Project Title:

Ref:

Key Considerations		Y/N	Notes
1.	Does the project clearly demonstrate community involvement in the development and delivery?		
2.	Does the application clearly demonstrate a community, market or business need and or demand for the project e.g. economic, social, environmental etc?		
3.	Does the project demonstrate clear linkages to other related local and national activities or strategies?		
4.	Does the project adequately target the priority groups?		
5.	Are the balance of outputs and outcomes appropriate to the overall project costs?		
6.	Does the project applicant demonstrate adequate knowledge, experience and enthusiasm to deliver?		
7.	Does the project adequately recognise and address participation barriers or risks?		
8.	Does the project require LEADER grant assistance and what benefit will it provide?		
9.	Does the project embody originality, embrace experimentation or demonstrate innovation?		
10.	Does the project recognise the need to contribute to a sustainable future?		
11.	Does the project demonstrate a realistic exit strategy?		
12.	Does the project provide value for money?		
<b>Are you happy that this project fits comfortably within the LEADER strategy? (If not are you confident that there is another more suitable fund?)</b>			
<b>Any key technical / budget issues to be clarified</b>			
<b>Any suggestions for connections / contacts</b>			
<b>Any suggestions for "Specific Conditions of Grant"</b>			
<b>Recommendation for support</b>			



Notes:

