

MINUTE OF FLAG MEETING

**TUESDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2012 AT 2.00PM
COMMITTEE ROOM 4, WOODHILL HOUSE**

Present

Belinda Miller	FLAG Chairperson
Shona Anderson	Visit Scotland
Moira Beverley	Aberdeenshire Council – Finance
James Buchan	Scottish Fishermen’s Organisation
Will Clark	Peterhead & Fraserburgh Fish Processors Association
Roger Goodyear	Banff Coast Tourism Partnership
Reid Hutchison	Aberdeenshire Council – Community Economic Development
Alexander Macleod	Aberdeenshire Council – Community Planning
Chris White	Aberdeenshire Council Area Manager

Officers in Attendance

Ann Marie Macaskill	AEFF Co-ordinator
Vicky Thomson	EU Rural & Fisheries Programmes Team Leader
David John McRobbie	Fisheries Project Officer
Anne MacLennan	EU Rural & Fisheries Assistant

Apologies

Jamie Bell	Scottish Enterprise
Gavin Clark	Scottish Natural Heritage
David Cook	Banff & Buchan College
Ian Gatt	Scottish Pelagic Fishermen’s Association Ltd
Ian Hay	East Grampian Coastal Partnership
William Murdoch	Aberdeenshire Council – Harbours Project Manager
Michael Park	Scottish Whitefish Producers Association
Maureen Stephen	Aberdeenshire Councils for Voluntary Services
Andy Willox	Federation of Small Businesses

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

- 1.1 Belinda welcomed those present and apologies were noted as above. David-John McRobbie, the newly appointed Fisheries Project Officer, was welcomed and introductions were made round the table.

2. MINUTE OF LAST MEETING

- 2.1 The draft minute of the FLAG meeting of 18 September 2012 approved.
- 2.2 The draft minute of the PAC meeting of 20 November was noted. An error in item 8.3 was highlighted – the Skipper Expo should be Aberdeen not Glasgow. This will be corrected and the minute will be considered for approval at the next PAC meeting.

3. CHAIRPERSON’S UPDATE

- 3.1 As yet, there has been no communication from Marine Scotland following Aberdeenshire’s response to the draft Service Level Agreement (SLA)

which was returned recently. PAC expressed concerns about working with no formal agreement.

- 3.2 David John and Ann Marie are working hard to stimulate projects. FLAG members are asked to help to build capacity to encourage applications coming forward to AEFF.

4. PAC AND FLAG REPRESENTATION

- 4.1 Discussion took place regarding the importance of meetings being quorate. It would be helpful if PAC and FLAG members could inform Ann Marie in advance if they are unable to attend meetings.

The possibility of substitutes was again discussed. It was acknowledged that members have exceedingly busy working schedules and it may be necessary for members to consider relinquishing their PAC/FLAG duties to allow another member of their organisation to participate.

It was agreed that Ann Marie issue a letter to PAC and FLAG members regarding this issue and ask those who are finding it difficult to attend meetings if they would consider delegating to an appropriately experienced substitute within their organisation.

5. AEFF POSITION STATEMENT

- 5.1 In response to the debate regarding project eligibility, an e-mail was received from Marine Scotland confirming that although they will be happy to give an opinion and advice on the eligibility of projects applying to AEFF, the final decision will be delegated to the FLAG.

However, FLAG must be able to defend any decision made if it is challenged by audit.

FLAG welcomed this positive message.

It is important to consider objectives as set out in the Local Fisheries Development Strategy document at all times. Marine Scotland focus was considered to have been more on the eight eligible measures but, as the FLAG is keen to ensure all projects meet legislation, it was agreed that FLAG must not lose sight of the strategy document.

6. CO-ORDINATOR'S UPDATE

- 6.1 The Co-ordinators update is summarised below:
- Approximately £0.623 million budget remaining after commitment made in Round 2.
 - Around 5 project meetings arranged with potential applicants to Round 4.
 - Axis 5 claim was submitted to Marine Scotland in July. Partial payment has been received with a balance outstanding.
 - Service Level Agreement (SLA) due to be signed off once

- clarification is received regarding one outstanding query.
- AEFF Newsletter 3 was issued. If FLAG members would like to have an article included in Newsletter 4, please submit details to Ann Marie.
- Ann Marie has attended several community planning events.
- FLAG members are encouraged to get the message out there to help publicise AEFF.
- Ann Marie to remind FLAG members about passwords and procedures for accessing the members only area of the website.
- Dates for the 2013 meeting timetable will be circulated by the end of December.
- Anne Marie reported on the three Round 2 projects which were put forward by Area Managers to be matched from the Aberdeenshire Council Towns & Villages Priority Fund – Cairnbulg Boathaven, Whitehills Seafood Restaurant and PORT Restoration. Both Cairnbulg and PORT were successful. Finance for the Seafood Restaurant has been secured from Aberdeenshire Council's regeneration monies.

6.2 Due to time constraints, it was agreed that David John's presentation become the final item on the agenda.

David John will be based in Peterhead once office premises can be secured. His remit will include working closely with Ann Marie to follow up on leads for possible AEFF applications. David John will aim to inspire communities and he will try to animate potential applicants to come forward. Other FARNET projects which are working in Europe will be considered and David John will put these ideas forward to local communities if he thinks they might work in the North East. David John will also re-visit ideas which were talked about in the early days of the AEFF programme but which did not develop into a formal application.

One of David John's first tasks will be to organise the Provost's visit to Peterhead and Fraserburgh. Items on the agenda include a visit to Peterhead fish market and harbour, a tour of a pelagic vessel, tour of Fraserburgh harbour, a fish processing plant and tour of the lifeboat shed.

David John lives in Fraserburgh and has valuable local knowledge. FLAG welcomed his input and will support him in his efforts.

7. COMMUNICATION

- 7.1 The Axis 4 project claim form template has been received. It is hoped to issue the claim form to project managers soon.
- 7.2 Marine Scotland have requested information on spend forecasting. Data showing anticipated spend will be captured in spreadsheet form.
- 7.3 The most recent FARNET Magazine was circulated.

8. FARNET CONFERENCE UPDATE

- 8.1 Ann Marie attended the FARNET (Fisheries Areas Network) Seminar on Fisheries Communities at the Heart of Local Development on 13, 14 & 15 November 2012 in Quiberon, France.

Ann Marie gave an interesting presentation about the focus of the seminar which was to take stock of FLAG partnerships and assess, evaluate and develop achievements.

The seminar had over 150 delegates and represented FLAGs Europe wide. FARNET was strong on the message that every member of the FLAG has an important role and to view it as such. A strong message about the importance of FLAGs and their active and ongoing participation both inside and outside PAC and FLAG meetings was given. It was stressed that attendance at meetings whilst crucial, is not the sole purpose of FLAG members. FLAGs are the builders and enablers to reaching communities and organisations, and must be empowered to do so.

Ann Marie attended workshops regarding FLAG partnerships: why we have a FLAG and what kind of FLAG should we have and took home valuable information which she intends to present to the FLAG on 4 December.

The groups visited three projects in the FLAG area of Pays D'Auray and gained an appreciation of the issues unique to the FLAG area. The focus of the Pays D'Auray Strategy is to improve the environment and particular nurture the environment for oyster farming - a key industry in the locality, and one that has suffered a sharp decline since 2008 due to deterioration in water quality and bacterial infections. Over 60% of the Pays D'Auray monies has been invested into improving water quality. FARNET highlighted that every FLAG has to consider their own unique area and deliver projects that protect these interests whilst also sustainably developing their fisheries areas.

The seminar ended on focusing on the "FLAG of the Future". The next funding programme, the EMFF is programmed for 2014-2020 and will have a strong focus on "Community Led Local Development". Future funding allocation will have a strong focus on FLAG participation and this will need to be demonstrated in FLAG strategies. This will include FLAGs promoting the AEFf message and not relying solely on the Co-ordinator ensuring those in their field of expertise are aware of Axis 4 and ensuring no opportunities are missed in the AEFf areas.

FLAG members have an understanding of the economic function of the areas, provide knowledge and should be marketing the FLAG, acting as builders and enabling integration amongst groups and areas. FARNET highlighted that for future funding programmes FLAGs will have to evidence how their members add worth to the partnership and how they can reach people and groups where other organisations have failed to do so - or simply cannot. The FLAG members have the paramount role of sustaining the Fisheries areas and in future funding programmes including the

European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), will act as the knowledge and enablers for the "Community Led Local Development".

FARNET emphasised that whilst EC Reg 1198/2006 Article 44 "Sustainable Development of Fisheries Areas" is important in identifying project eligibility, FLAGs must also consider their Local Fisheries Development Strategy at all times; all members should be aware of the content therein and be mindful of this in the decision making process.

The take home message from FARNET on Axis 4 is: this is our last opportunity to deliver projects that leave a lasting impact in fisheries areas and FLAGs play a big role in this - both individually as members and collectively as a group working towards the objectives in our Strategy.

9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 9.1 Belinda Miller declared an interest in project 011, Energetica Coastal Path. As she is not directly involved in the application, Belinda will take part in the discussion and vote.
- 9.2 Will Clark declared an interest in project 013, Events and Exhibitions. Will can take part in the discussion but not the vote.

10. PROJECTS 011 and 013

10.1 011 Energetica Coastal Path – Phase 1

Matthew Watt, Environment Planner for the Energetica Project and AEFf applicant, was welcomed to the meeting. Matthew provided an informative presentation to address a number of points which were raised by the PAC.

The project, which relates to eco-tourism, is to develop two stretches of a coastal path which at the moment form only a partial route. Section 1 will form the missing link from Collieston to Whinnyfold and Cruden Bay. Section 2 will improve access from Cruden Bay to Slains Castle. This section will be an all-abilities path, suitable for buggies and wheelchair users and will include passing places and resting areas, making the path fully accessible.

This missing link will complete the coastal network along the Energetica corridor from Aberdeen to Peterhead.

The project will link settlements with strong maritime/fishing heritage and this will be promoted on information boards which will be located at key visitor points along the route, adding value to the visitor experience. The possibility of multi-media interpretation boards is being investigated. Namely the option for smartphone barcode technology to be embedded into the boards. With this technology, information can be easily changed ensuring it is up-to-date and relevant.

Matthew confirmed that the Collieston to Cruden Bay section of the path will be 7.5 km long and Cruden Bay to Slains Castle 1 km long. Each section of path is aimed at a different user group. With regard to the materials to be

used for each path, Section 1 will be a mown grass path and section 2 will be an aggregate path. This section will be suitable for all abilities and will allow access to the castle and open onto the clifftop route.

With regard to questions raised about health and safety and level of ability, Matthew confirmed that the Collieston to Cruden Bay section of the path will be fairly challenging. It is a clifftop route which will limit certain abilities. Signage and leaflets will illustrate this, allowing users to make their own judgement. Interpretation boards will make users aware of possible difficulties descending the path at the end of the route. Users have a duty of care to themselves but landowners will be ultimately responsible. Local landowners have had no issues with coastal erosion.

Clarification was also sought regarding whether the path will cross the existing Ladies Bridge structure. Matthew confirmed that Ladies Bridge is outwith the remit of this application. There will be another Aberdeenshire Council project to upgrade the bridge.

Public co-finance is confirmed from Scottish Enterprise and Aberdeenshire Council. Planning permission and SSSI consent have been granted.

Ongoing maintenance of paths will be undertaken by Aberdeenshire Council.

FLAG thanked Matthew for his detailed presentation which addressed all the issues raised by the PAC.

FLAG agreed that the project links well to the Local Fisheries Development Strategy. Proposals will enhance and improve the local environment and access to it. FLAG welcomed the proposed cycle network and the various events planned, which include guided walks, walking festival and family events. The paths will link the coastal communities, improve the profile of the area and increase opportunities for wildlife and cultural heritage tourism.

As this is a lead partner application, this project will have to be presented to Marine Scotland for approval.

PROJECT FUNDING OF £20,000 APPROVED.

10.2 **Report on Outcomes of Project 002 – East of Scotland Seafood Festival and Trail – Scoping Study**

At this point, due to time constraints, it was agreed that the next project presentation be heard as the next agenda item.

Ela Nowakowska, graduate student, and Alan Garvie from East Grampian Coastal Partnership, were welcomed to the meeting.

Ela gave an informative presentation about her activities and findings while working on the East of Scotland Seafood Festival and Trail Scoping Study.

The aim of the project, which was managed by East Grampian Coastal Partnership, was to undertake a feasibility study to look at the possibilities of

a year-long Seafood Festival in the North East and the creation of a Seafood Trail.

The study was carried out over a 10 week period. During this time Ela researched the availability of locally caught seafood, carried out an audit of fresh fish outlets and held meetings with various stakeholders. From her findings, a database of establishments who are interested in becoming seafood 'champions' has been created. Links have also been created with organisations such as Grampian Food Group and Banff Coast Tourism Partnership. The seafood festival will be a one-off event which will form the second phase of the project.

Question and answer session followed.

Next steps will be to establish the best way to take a number of these elements forward and it is hoped that this can be a FLAG led concept.

The final report and DVD of the findings is being produced.

10.3 **012 – Skills Diversification in Kincardineshire**

Project number 012, Skills Diversification in Kincardineshire, was withdrawn at this stage but will be re-submitted in Round 4, allowing the applicant to work up a stronger application.

10.4 **013 – Events and Exhibitions**

The project is to promote and display North East seafood produce at events and exhibitions in the local area such as the Turriff show, as well as throughout Scotland at events such as the Skipper Expo in Aberdeen.

The proposal will showcase the quality of locally landed seafood products, host cooking demonstrations and encourage buyers by providing free taster samples. It is hoped that the project will help to encourage customers to buy locally caught fish and encourage Scottish chefs to use the local product more widely.

Project costs include the purchase of a mobile refrigeration and display vehicle, marketing and promotional materials, display graphics and exhibition space.

PAC had a number of questions regarding the application and Ann Marie met recently with the applicant to try to seek clarification on several of the points raised.

The project proposals will look at local seafood and will be industry led which is something that Seafood Scotland can't do.

Proposals will be 3 fold – local/promotional/educational. It is hoped to take the mobile unit to local primary and secondary schools as well as Banff & Buchan College to promote the local product and enthuse young people.

Confirmation of private match funding and public co-finance is still outstanding.

An appendix to the business plan has now been provided.

PAC expressed concerns about potential overlap with the Taste of Grampian project which was approved in Round 2. However, this will be a mobile unit which will cover a range of events locally and nationally.

FLAG welcomed member Will Clark's input which clarified a number of points raised but, although the concept is good, FLAG still considered there to be insufficient information provided to allow for a final decision to be made regarding the application. It was agreed that the project be deferred pending more detailed input from the applicant.

PROJECT FUNDING OF THE INDICATIVE AMOUNT OF £27,825
(SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION) DEFERRED FOR FURTHER
INFORMATION

11. AOCB

- 11.1 Unfortunately time did not allow for David John to deliver his presentation on the AEFF Facebook page. It was agreed that the presentation be uploaded to the member's area of the AEFF website

12. PAC AND FLAG TIMETABLE 2013

- 12.1 The 2013 Timetable is still to be confirmed. This will be circulated to FLAG members as soon as it is available.