

MINUTE OF FLAG MEETING

TUESDAY, 20th JANUARY 2015 AT 10.00 AM
COUNCIL CHAMBER, ARBUTHNOT HOUSE, PETERHEAD

Present

Belinda Miller	FLAG Chairperson
Moira Beverley	Aberdeenshire Council – Finance
Philip Smith	Visit Scotland
Chris White	Aberdeenshire Council Area Manager
Gina Ford	Scottish Enterprise
George Cameron	Principal Engineer Harbours
James Buchan	Scottish Fishermen's Organisation
Brian Stewart-Coxon	Federation of Small Businesses

Officers in Attendance

Martin Brebner	Team Manager European Policies & Programmes
David John McRobbie	European Programmes Co-ordinator
June Jaffrey	European Programmes Claims Officer

Apologies

Will Clark	Peterhead & Fraserburgh Fish Processors Association
Ian Gatt	Scottish Pelagic Fishermen's Association Ltd
Reid Hutchison	Aberdeenshire Council – Community Economic Development
Alexander Macleod	Aberdeenshire Council – Community Planning
Michael Park	Scottish Whitefish Producers Association
Maureen Stephen	Aberdeenshire Councils for Voluntary Services
Andy Willox	Federation of Small Businesses
Roger Goodyear	Banff Coast Tourism Partnership
Ian Hay	East Grampian Coastal Partnership
Gavin Clark	Scottish Natural Heritage

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

- 1.1 Belinda welcomed those present.
- 1.2 It was noted that quorate was met.

2. DRAFT MINUTE OF AEFF FLAG MEETING

- 2.1 The draft minute of the AEFF FLAG meeting held on 9th October 2014 was noted and approved pending the addition of George Cameron's name and correction of a minor typo.

3. CHAIRPERSON'S UPDATE

- 3.1 The Chair advised there is no update to report since the previous FLAG meeting.

4. CO-ORDINATOR'S UPDATE

4.1 The Co-ordinator's Update is summarised below:

- Financial update; DJ advised that the funding figures from the start of the programme of March 2012 as £843,425 having been committed to 27 projects. There are £114,265 of funds uncommitted.
- Remaining Spend; £422,657 is yet to be spent. There are a number of claims which have yet to be submitted which will bring this figure down. Approx. 38.5% of Axis 4 funding has been spent for the period to December 2014. David John confirmed that match funding from public sources had been one issue for the underspend. Aberdeenshire Council have been approached by the Co-ordinator on behalf of applicants, on a project by project basis, for funding. It was recognised by the FLAG that this issue was created by Scottish Govt. and that all Scottish FLAGs have encountered this same issue.
- Scottish Government claims; seven admin claims have been submitted to Marine Scotland to date. Over £52k has been reimbursed, with some outstanding queries on a number of the claims causing difficulties and backlogs in the reimbursement process.
- The queries raised from the Internal Audit of August have been reviewed and changes implemented. Martin felt the Auditors were creeping over their remit with some of the queries they raised and had highlighted issues which are caused by internal council services; he will discuss this at a Scrutiny and Audit committee later in the week. Martin advised that he and Belinda are to meet with the Directors to go over these issues.
- David John advised of the appointment of the new Aberdeenshire Council Fisheries Project Officer, Panos Pliatsikas. DJ took Panos on a tour of the Fraserburgh – Whitehills coastal area. Panos will be involved with the promotion of the new EMFF programme along with DJ.
- David John attended the “Business of Processing” film screening; this film showcased fish processing businesses across the UK including Fraserburgh and Aberdeen. DJ thought the film was very informative and encouraged FLAG members to view the film at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gcbuyn6K5b8&feature=youtu.be>
- David John has been contacted by DEFRA for the FLAG to become involved in a survey of all Scottish FLAGs. This survey will be an evaluation of the Axis 4 programme in a UK context; the FLAG are in agreement to being involved and providing information to DEFRA.

4.2 Discussion around grant funding issues, projects meeting AEFF timescales etc. took place. There was general agreement that the current system has failed some applicants/projects and that initial guidance from Scottish Govt. at the beginning of the programme has led to some of the issues encountered – the FLAG would not wish this to be replicated in the new programme. David John advised that the initial point of contact within Marine Scotland is Adam Groat with Mark Nicol heading the programme. It was agreed by the FLAG members to write to Richard Lochhead outlining the concerns/differences with FLAGs across Europe and outlining ideas for

improvement in the new programme. It was also suggested that the Ministers were invited to meet with FLAG members and project applicants. Martin and David John will action this.

Concern was also raised about the commitment of non Council FLAG members, regarding drop in attendance and interaction – the FLAG would wish to retain a high input level by FLAG members and will actively seek to do this.

5. AEFF PROJECT UPDATE

- 5.1 **AEFF/R1/Mar12/003** East of Grampian Seafood Trail and Scoping Study – David John advised that following the decision at the last FLAG meeting where the FLAG members sought to de-commit the project; a letter was issued to the applicant advising of the de-commitment. No response has been received from the applicant to date therefore the project has been formally de-committed.
- 5.2 **AEFF/R2/Sep12/005** Our Village: A People’s Story of Johnshaven – the project is underway with regular financial claims being submitted. David John undertook a monitoring visit in December 2014. The project is expected to be completed by August 2015. The Lifeboat Shed refurbishment is complete with the Project Co-ordinator post still ongoing.
- 5.3 **AEFF/R2/Sep12/007** Taste of Grampian Seafood Pavilion – this two-year funded project ended in June 2014 and was very successful with the marquee tent being made bigger to satisfy demand. David John is unsure if the project can come forward in the next programme in the same format.
- 5.4 **AEFF/R2/Sep12/008** Banffshire Coast Tourism Development 2012–15 - This project was expected to be completed by March 2015; an extension to May has been requested and will be sent to the FLAG Chair for consideration. The applicant is currently submitting monthly claims.
- 5.5 **AEFF/R2/Sep12/009** Portsoy Organisation for Restoration and Training Boatshed – David John had concerns over the progress of this project. A recent site visit confirmed that the roof is not yet in place but the builder fully expects the building to be watertight by March 2015. David John met with the applicants to go over the claims process and the applicants advised that they are in a position to submit a claim shortly.
- 5.6 **AEFF/R3/Dec12/011** Energetica Coastal Path Phase I – The project is part complete with the paths being installed and signage and a bridge section as yet (uncompleted due to issues with the landowner). Despite David John contacting the applicant (Aberdeenshire Council) on various occasions there has been no response. Therefore a meeting with the applicant and his line manager is scheduled for 2 February to discuss submission of a claim etc.
- 5.7 **AEFF/R4/Mar13/016** Whistle My Lad – David John advised that the film was screened to the International Film Festival in Cannes; where it was well received. AEFF publicity material was also displayed at the screenings. The applicant also held screenings of the film across the Banffshire coast

and in Aberdeen.

- 5.8 **AEFF/R5/Jun13/022** Peterhead and Fraserburgh Fish Producers Association (PFFPA) Development Officer – The Development Officer post has been filled and Michael Bates is in post. Regular claims are being made. The applicant requested an extension of the project end date to summer; which was subsequently approved.
- 5.9 **AEFF/R6/Sep/023** Increased Efficiency for Macduff Shipyards – the project delays caused a knock on effect with some quotes doubling from their original quotes. Additional monies from Policy & Resources committee of £47k has been agreed. David John met with the applicant recently who indicated that the project will start in February 2015 and finish in April 2015. David John confirmed that the monies will have to be drawn down by the end of the financial year; the applicants are fully aware of this requirement.
- 5.10 **AEFF/R6/Sep/024** Banff Ice Machine - George Cameron advised the FLAG that the signage is currently being made and will be erected shortly and that trials of the ice machine are currently being undertaken.
- 5.11 **AEFF/R6/Sep/025** Back Green Bunk House – David John expressed to the FLAG previously his concerns with this project, this led to a meeting with the applicant to go over the timescale for completion and claim deadlines. The applicant decided to rescind the grant offer from AEFF as their funding request to the Coastal Communities Fund was successful and allowed them to proceed with the project without AEFF funding.
- 5.12 **AEFF/R6/Sep13/026** Ythan Estuary Forvie New Visitor Facility – As the project is now complete a site visit was undertaken by David John and photographs of the new visitor structure were taken. There are still outstanding pieces of supporting information required to back up their final claim – which is being progressed.
- 5.13 **AEFF/R7/Dec13/027** Installation of pontoons at Fraserburgh Harbour – the pontoons have been installed after initial delays with the project; with the fencing contractor now appointed and the security fences being erected shortly. Regular claims have been made to date.
- 5.14 **AEFF/R7/Dec13/028** Gardenstown Harbour Eco Tourism Vessel Access Project – Regular contact has been made by the applicant with a claim to be submitted shortly as the majority of costs have been made.
- 5.15 **AEFF/R8/Feb14/032** Feasibility Study on Phase Three of the Harbour Regeneration plan – the study is complete and David John has received a copy – he will check with the applicant before circulating to FLAG members.
- 5.16 **AEFF/R8/Feb14/033** Seafood Sea Here! – A claim has been received but due to the involvement of other FLAG areas there have been delays in completing the claim due to lack of bank statements.
- 5.17 **AEFF/R9/Apr14/036** Peterhead Town Heritage Trail – the visual blades will be erected in March with the website currently under construction.

- 5.18 **AEFF/R9/Apr14/037** Inshore Mackerel Quality Enhancement – due to a poor Mackerel summer season in 2014 the applicant did not purchase the bins. The applicant decided to rescind the FLAG funding offer and will resubmit the project application in the next AEFF programme.
- 5.19 **AEFF/R9/Apr14/039** The Seafront Seafood Restaurant – David John advised that the project is causing concern as the planning permissions are not yet in place. David John will meet shortly with Christine Webster to inform her of the issues. The advice from the Council’s service accountant was for DJ to prepare a match funding report detailing the projects which required to draw down “Six Key Area” funds by the end of the financial year. A report to Policy & Resources committee would be required in order to give approval to the funding retention.
- 5.20 **AEFF/R9/Apr14/040** Rosehearty Boat Compound – The project is near completion with location agreement required on the siting of the new recycling bins. The signage is being made and will be erected shortly. A claim is expected to be submitted soon.
- 5.21 **AEFF/R9/Apr14/041** Marina Feasibility Study – The tender process has been a cause for concern as the preferred tender has given rise to VAT queries.

6. UPDATE ON NEW PROGRAMME

- 6.1 Martin advised the FLAG of the differences in the new programme;
- i. Claim process
 - ii. Aid intensity rates
 - iii. Match funding/co-finance; an agreement in principle has come from Scottish Govt. that they will match.
 - iv. Application submission (AEFF staff unable to assist applicants with this)
- 6.2 Martin confirmed that the launch date will be Sept 2015 and that Scottish Govt. recommended we target specific towns along the coastline i.e. communities with links to the fishing sector.
- 6.3 A new FLAG working group has been set up with David John in conversation with a potential chair.
- 6.3 Indications are that a proposed “super FLAG” with Moray and Angus is unlikely to come forward.

7. AOCB – Evaluation Report

- 7.1 David John asked the FLAG members their views on creating an Evaluation Report at the end of this current programme. There was general agreement that an evaluation would be valuable in identifying areas for improvement of the programme and for lessons to be learnt. New applicants may also find it a useful resource for reference and guidance. The Chair suggested that the survey aspect could be done externally with the report written by ourselves.

It was confirmed that 50% of the costs could be claimed back from the Scottish Govt.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

- 8.1 The next scheduled meeting of the current FLAG will take place on 2 June and November 2015; with the venues being moved to Peterhead.
- 8.2 The Chair advised that a number of organisations had been written to regarding membership and input into the new FLAG and a good response was returned. It is anticipated that a Chair for the new FLAG programme will be appointed at the meeting of 12 February 2015.