

**MINUTE OF MEETING OF
AEFF PROJECT ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE**

**THURSDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2013 AT 1.30 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM F, WOODHILL HOUSE**

Present

Belinda Miller	FLAG Chairperson
Gina Ford	Scottish Enterprise
Gavin Clark	Scottish Natural Heritage
Ian Hay	East Grampian Coastal Partnership

Officers in Attendance

Martin Brebner	Aberdeenshire Council
David-John McRobbie	Aberdeenshire Council
Maureen Cooper	Aberdeenshire Council (notetaker)

Apologies

James Buchan	Scottish Fishermans Organisation
David Cook	Banff and Buchan College

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

1.1 Belinda welcomed those present and, for the benefit of Maureen Cooper, introductions were made round the table.

2. DRAFT MINUTE OF PAC MEETING ON 20 AUGUST 2013

2.1 This was approved as a correct Minute.

3. DRAFT MINUTE OF FLAG MEETING ON 4 SEPTEMBER 2013

3.1 The minute was noted and will be tabled for approval at the FLAG meeting on 10 December 2013.

4. CHAIRPERSON'S UPDATE

4.1 Belinda gave an update on staffing. When Ann Marie Macaskill left the Council, David John was acting into the role. Following the European Projects and Policies team service review Belinda updated the PAC regarding the new structure:

- Martin Brebner has been appointed as Team Manager European Policies and Programmes.
- Alasdair Cunningham has been appointed as European Programmes Co-ordinator.
- David John McRobbie has been appointed to the second European Programmes Co-ordinator post.
- Anne MacLennan has been matched to the European Programmes

Claims Officer post.

- June Jaffrey, an internal candidate, has been appointed to the second European Programmes Claims Officer post.

Martin is to produce a new structure for the next meeting.

Belinda has emailed FLAG regarding the offer from Marine Scotland to extend funding and programme timescale into further rounds. AEFF has accepted £200,000 additional funding.

David John attended the UK FLAG networking event, where he obtained confirmation that spend deadlines had been extended by six months, with monies to be committed by June 2014 and spent by October 2015. . AEFF is working towards March 2015, so this gives more time to allow spending for approved projects. Belinda confirmed that projects previously awarded AEFF funding would still aim for March 2015 spend.

David John is working on a schedule of FLAG application rounds until June 2014. This has been discussed and it is possible to fit in two further rounds. Round 8 with a deadline in February 2014 with the FLAG meeting at the end of March and Round 9 with a deadline of May and the FLAG in June.

In terms of co-financing, a report was approved by Aberdeenshire Council's Policy and Resources Committee, whereby the Council agreed in principle to provide co-financing to AEFF monies. This can only be done in principle at the moment as funding will be out of next year's budget 14/15. Martin met with Finance colleagues and he is to send a decision sheet to Finance and make sure money is available in next year's budget.

There may be something that can be done looking into the next financial year (15-16), but this would mean a further report to Policy & Resources.

An Email has been received from Marine Scotland stating that it is the view that FLAGs don't have the authority to spend money, following a recent audit. In England the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) signs off projects. Because of this, Audit wished to make an amendment to the SLA. This is to authorise that Marine Scotland has authority to sign off projects. This takes away some power. There do not appear to be any material changes in the amended version.

It was agreed that there was no choice or material difference to the AEFF programme and that Belinda would sign the agreement, which was done at the end of the meeting. It was also suggested that the Chair write back and make Marine Scotland aware that the short timetable for responses was less than ideal.

5. CO-ORDINATOR'S UPDATE

- 5.1 DJ gave a financial update. The total commitment to date is £682,691 leaving approx £274,999. In this round an indicative budget of £207,000 could be committed leaving a potential unallocated budget of £67,000 (plus the additional £200,000 award, totalling £267,000).

52 expressions of interest had been received to date, and 58 applicant meetings had taken place.

A number of claims have now been processed and the AEFF office is working well with Marine Scotland. Four claims are ready to be submitted for the month of November. AEFF provide cash flow summaries for reporting to MMO and a quarterly performance spreadsheet was sent to Marine Scotland in October.

Two project inspections have taken place to date. So far £67,000 has been paid out, representing about 10% of the budget. Over the next few months, hoping to get more of a handle on the situation and claims processed. DJ attended the UK FLAG event Monday/Tuesday this week, which was a good opportunity to raise issues and network.

Newsletter 6 was issued and provided information to date on successful Round 5 projects. The Fisheries Officer issued a press release in October 2013.

Pipeline projects – up to 5 potential projects have been identified, which are expected to meet Round 8 and Round 9 application deadlines.

Martin added that upon reviewing guidance and the SLA it was realised that an audit should be signed covering June 2012 – June 2013. Marine Scotland was written to and permission granted to extend the deadline for receipt of this until the end of 2013. An audit is currently ongoing of the AEFF programme and this should be signed off and returned to Marine Scotland by the end of the year.

Martin made the group aware of the need under Marine Scotland guidance for FLAG members to score applications. An additional section had been added to the assessment reports (the assessors opinion) to assist FLAG members. It is intended that an email link to a scoring sheet be sent to all FLAG members for each project in advance of FLAG meetings.

6. FUNDING AND CO-FINANCING UPDATE

6.1 Covered above.

7. EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)/LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (LDS) UPDATE

7.1 An Expression of Interest was submitted to form a new Local Action Group for the 2014-20 funding period. The population coverage originally being looked at is too large and it was suggested it be split into two – North and South Aberdeenshire action groups, both of which would cover fisheries and rural funds.

Guidance on the timescale and how to move on to a Local Development Strategy has not yet been produced and is due out in the next few weeks. It

is intended to appoint a consultant and carry out community engagement events in the first quarter of next year.

DJ said that at the event on Tuesday, other areas stated they had already started community engagement for the next programme of funding.

The first draft of the strategy would be expected to be ready by the end of March 2014.

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

8.1 There were no declarations of interest.

9. AEFF PROJECT ASSESSMENT REPORTS AND APPLICATIONS

9.1 027 – Fraserburgh Harbour Commissioners – Provision of Pontoons in South Harbour

The project involves installing pontoons which will allow approximately 30-40 smaller vessels to use the port on a regular basis. This will enable Fraserburgh Harbour to develop part of the South Harbour into a community asset as the public will be able to use the facility.

This project will allow the harbour to develop and diversify through the increased trade and income from extra berthing capabilities. It is anticipated that the Fraserburgh economy will also benefit from the increased usage and additional berths as local shops and businesses which currently service the facility will be able to take advantage of increased custom.

The project has backing from a number of businesses, organisation and residents of Fraserburgh. Consultation has taken place with the current stakeholders of this basin. During these discussions a need and desire for such a project was unanimously agreed.

Eligible costs are noted as £294,090, but costs were amended and the actual cost is now £269,036. Fraserburgh Harbour Commissioners have agreed to provide 50% of the costs and 25% has been confirmed by Fraserburgh Regeneration Money which leaves an AEFF 25% contribution of just over £67,000, once the new figures are supplied.

DJ believes this project fits the criteria and fits (b) and (d) of AEFF Eligible Measures. The match funding has been confirmed and a letter received.

The project aligns well with the Aberdeenshire Council: Economic Development Strategy 2011-2016 Strategic Objectives. It also satisfies one of the key points in enhancing Fraserburgh as a seafood hub of excellence.

Risks are the ability to manage the high costs associated with the project. This is one of the larger projects received to date. Fraserburgh Harbour has followed all AEFF project requirements to date.

AEFF have only received two quotations as a third withdrew, and this is explained in detail in the assessment.

The timescale of the project is deliverable within allocated timescale. It is intended to start in Spring and finish by the end of Summer. DJ had plans available for perusal.

After discussion, it was agreed that DJ obtain figures of usage at the harbour.

Discussion took place on whether neighbouring harbours (Cairnbulg and Sandhaven) would be in competition. The size of the vehicles to be taken into Fraserburgh harbour would be larger than in other neighbouring harbours. This project would be part of the regeneration and changing perception of the town. It was noted that Fraserburgh is a town where crafts could restock supplies.

Any grant offer would be subject for five years and Fraserburgh Harbour Commissioners should be made aware of this.

The project meets six of the AEFF Eligibility Measures and has a Ratio AEFF/Match Funding = £1 : £3.

In terms of state aid, it is believed that the award would be covered through the EFF regulations. The Group were supportive of the proposal. Eleven letters of support have been received.

PROJECT FUNDING OF £67,259 RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL WITH ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUESTED FOR THE FLAG.

9.2 **028 – Gardenstown Harbour Trustees - Gardenstown Harbour Eco-Tourism Vessel Access Project**

The project consists of the implementation of enabling works to allow Gardenstown Harbour to better meet the needs and aspirations of visitors to the village, particularly those participating in eco-tourism related to marine activities such as dolphin watching.

Gardenstown Harbour Trustees proposes to carry out enabling works to part of the end of the West Pier. This will consist of foundation works, as well as re-facing part of the inner end of the pier, providing four mooring poles, and upgrading an existing staircase ladder linking the top of the pier to an existing landing platform below. A recessed vertical ladder will also be provided, as part of the project, to replace the existing one which is in poor condition and unusable. The implementation of the enabling works will provide enhanced embarkation/disembarkation facilities for larger leisure craft including eco-tourism vessels, based at Gardenstown, as well as any visiting vessels from other ports along the north Aberdeenshire coast e.g. Banff.

The provision of a secure leisure vessel mooring point at the end of the

West Pier, combined with safer access to a landing platform/vessel, will provide significantly enhanced passenger safety. In turn, this will encourage more visitors to take the opportunity of going out on the eco-tourism vessels, with visiting vessels allowing passengers to disembark at Gardenstown Harbour, thereby increasing visitor numbers and potential visitor spend in the village and surrounding area.

The new landing facility will also be used by fishermen based at the port providing improved and safer facilities for landing fish, shellfish and creels.

Discussion took place on replacement issues and whether this work was eligible.

Eligible Costs are £40,392 and Gardenstown Harbour Trustees have agreed to provide 20% of the costs and the balance, 40% from Aberdeenshire Council and 40% coming from AEFF. This project fits well with the AEFF strategy.

The project meets six of the AEFF Eligibility Measures and has a Ratio AEFF/Match Funding including co-finance = £1 : £1.50.

Axis 4 funding was awarded to this group previously for kitchen facilities, CCTV and garden tables.

Discussion took place on whether this project was just about repairing the harbour. BM stated that this was allowing a harbour to continue and is not maintenance, but aims to improve its competitiveness.

DJ said the Harbour Trustees are not under any legal obligation to do this work and are purely doing this for the ease of people using the harbour.

It was recommended that DJ obtain some photographs to show the existing staircase. It would be nice to see more facilities for visitors around Gardenstown and extend the appeal. A number of support letters have been received from eco-businesses. It was agreed to ask them to promote the use of accredited eco-vessels.

Belinda asked DJ to check the amount of vessels into the area.

BM queried the mention of 5 posts being created and the confirmation sought indicated that it is hoped that the final figure is 1.5 full time posts.

PROJECT FUNDING OF £16,157 RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL WITH ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUESTED FOR THE FLAG.

9.3 029 – Peterhead Lifeboat Museum – Peterhead Lifeboat Museum

This project is a resubmission and the differences from the last submission were discussed. Originally the project was focussed on the lifeboat and there is now a greater emphasis on Peterhead harbour and its whaling history. The costs from the original application has changed and decreased from £330, 000 to £270,000 but they still have not been out to tender and

these are estimated costs from a Quantity Surveyor. Peterhead Port Authority has agreed to provide £33,000 and this leaves a private shortfall of £37,000.

The Port Authority is hoping to hear on December 16th regarding a lottery application and they have applied to Aberdeenshire Council as a backup.

The site location has now changed – there were 200 complaints in terms of the original application. The new site is behind the existing Fish Market. Planning was approved last week by Aberdeenshire Council. There were no complaints, nor planning issues with this application.

Everything asked for from the previous round has been adhered to. A SWOT analysis and updated business plan have been submitted. The figures in the business plan and in the market research was done in-house. There are to be no fees for entry, only donations are to be asked for.

DJ to send out the business plan and projections to FLAG members.

It was agreed that the group were interested, but more detail is required.

BUSINESS PLAN TO BE CIRCULATED TO THE FLAG.

9.4 030 – Scottish Traditional Boat Festival – Community Coble Build Film

The project proposes to create a feature documentary on the building of a traditional salmon coble. At present there is no historic record showing how a salmon coble was traditionally built. It is hoped that a reference point of national and international interest can be created which reflects Aberdeenshire's place in the heritage of wooden boat building.

As the Portsoy Salmon Bothy was a former important fishing centre, the Scottish Traditional Boat Festival has decided to contact New Moon Films about the possibility of creating a high quality film which details the heritage of the once vital Scottish Fishing industry to the village. The film aims to raise awareness of traditional boatbuilding techniques, once essential to the commercial salmon fishing industry which have not been employed since the 1970s.

The local community will be fully involved in this documentary as volunteers will be recruited to build the salmon coble. The main aim of the project is to create opportunities for the local community to become involved in traditional boatbuilding. Experience and advice will be sought from village elders with previous shipbuilding experience to help build the coble. The documentary will film the whole process from the selection of timber, to the launch of the coble and beyond. The film will also document the personal testimonies of those involved in the build.

STBF hope to premier the film around Aberdeenshire on its release and include the documentary as an educational tool at the Salmon Bothy. The completed coble will become a workhouse for the Scottish Traditional Boat Festival and a focus for heritage tourism. The completed film will be the

highpoint of a prestigious exhibition in Portsoy. The free standing interactive DVD will be on regular show to visitors at Portsoy's Salmon Bothy.

Total project costs are £35,000. Portsoy Thrift Shop has provided £1,000 and New Moon Films have provided £4,000. The applicant has been asked to obtain confirmation from Heritage Lottery that they are happy for the money to be used for this project.

£15,000 has been requested through AEFF.

Match Funding Ratio is AEFF £1 : £1.33 of all match. This project fits well in promoting Aberdeen City and Shire as a key tourism destination in Scotland and helps improve the visitor experience by strengthening and supporting the tourism industry.

The biggest risk to a successful outcome is the inability to achieve the public and private funding profiles. There is also the risk of a lack of interest and engagement from the film industry.

The film producer and the Director have agreed to work for free, but intend claiming for rent and utilities whilst the film is being made and this is included in the cost for production. Local volunteers will be recruited. An equal opportunities proposal has been submitted to AEFF.

The duration of the film is expected to be an hour. There will be a story to the film and a village elder that helped build the last salmon coble will be involved.

If the Boat Festival is the applicant, they will need to go through the tendering process. Quotations have been received for the sound, editing etc, the non-production side will be contracted out. The "free" element is purely for filming. New Moon films have been confirmed as the £4,000 funding donation.

The HLF project started in November/December and is hoped to complete by October 2014. The timber has been sourced and the materials are ready.

The partnership element is not clear and demonstrated. Confirmation to be obtained from HLF funding about the £10,000.

FURTHER INFORMATION TO BE REQUESTED FROM THE APPLICANT FOR THE FLAG.

9.5 **031 – Apex Church- International Fisherman Social & Welfare Project**

The project proposes installing Wifi at the Apex Centre which will allow International Fishermen the opportunity to contact their families back home. This will enable the fishermen to communicate through electronic means such as emails, internet and social media. The centre aim to purchase four iPads to enable the fishermen to access online newspapers and read the

latest news from their home country.

A welfare pack will also be provided to each international fisherman on their arrival to the centre which will contain relevant information about the region. Many of the Fishermen arrive in the UK with a lack of basic winter clothing and toiletries. To overcome this, the project proposed handing out a welfare pack for 100 international fishermen in the North East region. The packs will contain information, warm clothing, a rice cooker and toiletries.

DJ indicated doubts regarding the welfare aspect of the project. Belinda said her initial thoughts were that from a LEADER point of view, not allowed to fund a religious organisation. In terms of Church Halls previously, it has been made clear that the facilities must be made available for the wider community, not restricted to members of a specific religious group.

DJ stated that the communication side was eligible in terms of installing Wifi and the installing of iPads – this is similar to the mission, but goes beyond what is currently offered.

At the UK FLAG networking event, it was revealed that other areas have provided equipment to fishermen, jackets, etc and when you take this into account, it could be eligible.

From the Annex of the Guidance it states that social welfare facilities are ineligible.

It was agreed that DJ would contact Marine Scotland for further guidance. The possibility of desktops being installed rather than portable devices that could easily disappear was discussed.

Ian stated that iPads are a lot more expensive and would recommend going for a generic tablet at approximately £100.

ELIGIBILITY TO BE CHECKED WITH MARINE SCOTLAND.

10. AOCB

- 10.1 DJ received a call from Paul Higson, NESPT asking for further funding of £200,000. He has been promised a further £200,000 from Historic Scotland. BM stated that her understanding was that this can't be done. DJ to check the guidance and respond.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

FLAG Meeting: 10th December, 2013 – Committee Room 1, WHH