

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL  
REPORT**

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| <b>To:</b> POLICY & RESOURCES (REGENERATION & INFRASTRUCTURE) SUB COMMITTEE |                     | <b>Subject:</b> Kelvin Valley And Falkirk (KVF) and Lanarkshire LEADER Programmes 2014-20 |
| <b>From:</b> HEAD OF PLANNING & REGENERATION                                |                     |   |
| <b>Date:</b> 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2016                                      | <b>Ref:</b> 1852/EA |   |

## 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update committee on the background and progress of the new LEADER Programmes for rural areas within North Lanarkshire as part of the 'Kelvin Valley & Falkirk (KV&F)' and 'Lanarkshire' LEADER Programmes.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 LEADER is a European funding programme used primarily to support 'community led' rural economic development projects. Through the 2007-13 LEADER Programme, North Lanarkshire Council (in partnership with East Dunbartonshire) was awarded £750,000 LEADER funding which was used to support the successful implementation of the 2007-13 Kelvin Valley LEADER Programme (covering rural areas around Kilsyth, Croy and Kirkintilloch).
- 2.2 Subsequently 2 new LEADER Areas were formed for 2014-20 with respective population levels of 99,500 and over: the KV&F Programme has Falkirk Council as the Accountable Body; and the 'Lanarkshire' LEADER Programme which includes the settlements of Shotts, Harthill, Eastfield, Allanton, Caldercruix, Longriggend and Salsburgh has South Lanarkshire Council (SLC) as the Accountable Body.
- 2.3 LEADER implementation in Scotland is primarily shaped by Local Action Groups (LAGs) who take decisions on funding projects which are community driven and have a wide community benefit. These LAGs are a partnership made up of representatives from:
- the local council
  - local enterprise company
  - business people
  - other public agencies
  - voluntary action groups
  - community groups
- 2.4 In the last programme, problems had been reported about which body had the responsibility for decision making. In response Scottish Government confirmed that:
- the Local Action Group (LAG) is the decision making body, rather than the Accountable Body;
  - the Accountable Body administers the funding and employs the staff on behalf of the LAG;
  - the LAG makes decisions on staffing, accommodation, salaries, roles and responsibilities; and
  - a procedure for dealing with "shared" issues should be established.

2.5 Following discussions with the LEADER Strategic Board and Scottish Government KV&F LEADER LAG adopted a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the LAG and the Accountable body. It is anticipated that a similar agreement will be reached between the Lanarkshire LEADER LAG and SLC.

### 3. Local Development Strategy Submissions

3.1 Since 2014 the KV&F and Lanarkshire LAG partnerships have undertaken a range of engagement and consultation works to support the development of their LEADER Local Development Strategy (LDS) which focus on delivering activity across a range of strategic themes as follows:

#### (i) Kelvin Valley & Falkirk LDS

| Strategic Theme                 | Objective  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Heritage, Tourism & Leisure     | To promote the sustainable development of this area's natural and cultural assets (including the Antonine Wall and Forth & Clyde Canal) in order to help achieve its economic potential as a visitor destination   |
| Community Services & Facilities | To ensure that communities living within the KV&F LEADER Area are well connected and have access to opportunities created  |
| Local Business & Employment     | To ensure economic benefit gained supports local business development and that employability support (particularly for long term unemployed and young people as key target groups) is incorporated as a key cross-cutting theme underpinning LEADER activity |

#### (ii) Lanarkshire LEADER LDS

| Strategic Theme                 | Objective  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Developing Communities          | To increase capacity of local groups to develop and support sustainable and accessible community based activity  |
| Growing Business                | To support the sustainable growth of rural business (particularly across rural town centres and within Lanarkshire's agricultural sector) and address barriers to employment opportunity (particularly for young people)             |
| Heritage, Culture & Environment | To support the development of rural Lanarkshire as a key visitor destination for Central Scotland making use of its cultural and natural assets (such as New Lanark and the Clyde and Avon Valley) to promote local economic benefit |

3.2 The KV&F and Lanarkshire LEADER revised LDSs (and associated Business Plans used to support the governance and financial management arrangements for LAGs and LEADER Programmes) were submitted to the Scottish Government in 2014. Following an appraisal of these submissions by the Scottish Government, the LAG lead bodies have been informed that:

- the KV&F LDS submission was approved and the grant offer of £2.8 million has been formally accepted by Falkirk Council as the Accountable body for the KV&F LAG in July 2015; and

- the Lanarkshire LDS submission was approved and the grant offer of £4.1 million has been formally accepted by SLC as the Accountable body for the Lanarkshire LAG in October 2015.

### 3.3 The current positions of both programmes are as follows:

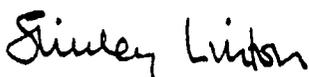
- the KV&F LAG is currently open for applications for project funding, having been formally launched at a community event on the evening of 29<sup>th</sup> October 2015 in Colzium House, Kilsyth with further local events having been held in Falkirk on 21<sup>st</sup> April, East Dunbartonshire on 27<sup>th</sup> April and North Lanarkshire on 4<sup>th</sup> May to encourage community led applications; The projects need to accord with the Local Development Strategy and are considered by the Local Action Group. A number of projects have been submitted already, eg NLC has submitted a project for funding towards the fit out of Colzium Visitor Centre and Cafe; and
- the Lanarkshire LAG is due to be formally launched in early summer 2016 and is anticipated to open for applications in the Autumn of 2016.

## 4. Staffing Structure

- 4.1 The KV&F and Lanarkshire LAG's have agreed a staffing structure that consists of a Programme Manager, 2 Development Officers and an Administrator.
- 4.2 KV&F have recruited a Programme Manager who is based in Falkirk Community Stadium. The posts of development officers and administrator are in the process of being recruited.
- 4.3 In SLC the previous 2 LEADER programmes, for 2000-06 and 2007-13, were managed and administered on behalf of the LAG by South Lanarkshire's Rural Development Trust (RDT). Therefore the Lanarkshire LEADER staffing structure is in the process of commencing a Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) for the RDT employees to SLC.

## 5. Recommendations

- 5.1 It is recommended that committee notes the contents of this report.



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Local Government Access to Information Act: for further information about this report, please contact Ellen Archibald, Planning and Regeneration, (01236 632855)