

North East Derbyshire District Council

Cabinet

27 August 2014

BNED LEADER Programme 2014-2020

**Report No: GBXR/19/14/JW of Councillor G Baxter MBE, Portfolio Holder with
Responsibility for Building a Better Council**

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

1 Report Details

- 1.1 To update Members of the submission of an application for European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) funding through the Rural Development Programme for the Bolsover North East Derbyshire LEADER programme 2014-2020.
- 1.2 The BNED LEADER Approach operated 2008 to December 2013, targeting development of the rural economy in Bolsover and North East Derbyshire. As part of the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE), overseen by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), LEADER primarily focused grants to the private sector to assist with farm diversification, supporting and creating micro-enterprises, tourism activities, rural heritage and culture and the provision of training and information. Grants were also open to the public and third sector. An evaluation of the programme can be found on the BNED LEADER Approach website, at www.bned-leader.co.uk/evaluation/.
- 1.3 The accountable body for BNED LEADER is North Eastern Derbyshire Business Developments (NEDBD) Limited, a public-private partnership company limited by guarantee which operates in Bolsover, North East Derbyshire and Chesterfield, and whose members are the three district councils, the County Council, Chamber of Commerce and Trades Union Council. Operationally, the BNED LEADER Local Action Group (LAG), a public-private group which again includes the district councils as well as other partner agencies oversee the strategic direction of the programme. Councillor Ken Savidge is the Council's representative on and is also the current Chair of the LAG.
- 1.4 In summary, £1,904,092.34 was allocated to 33 projects across the two districts, which directly created 75 jobs, supported/created 30 businesses and supported 54 tourism events which attracted over 70,000 visitors to the area. Recognised as one of the top performing LEADER Programmes nationally by DEFRA's independent

evaluators, the programme achieved a social return on investment ratio of 16.91:1 (£16.91 of added value for each LEADER £1 spent) and generated in excess of £4.5m additional private sector investment into the area. Although still early since the end of the programme, the activity has helped to increase the National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) generated in Bolsover by a further £20,425 per annum. Future projects and reviews by Valuations Office could see this increase further.

- 1.5 In addition to the project monies, DEFRA provided £354,000 towards the administration of the grants, which was delivered by 2.5FTE LEADER Officers employed until December 2013. This funding was supplemented with £133,000 from BDC (£66,000), NEDDC (£66,000) and English Heritage (£1,000).
- 1.6 The 2008-2013 LEADER programme ended in December 2013, with the two (1.5FTE) Monitoring & Support Officers posts made redundant. The Programme Officer was retained during the 2014 Transition Period, funded by DEFRA, to focus on the development of the Local Development Strategy (LDS) for a potential 2014-2020 programme, which has to be applied for. Due to European Commission delays, the programme will not start until 1st January 2015; the new LDS has to be submitted by 5th September 2014, with the outcome notified in November 2014.
- 1.7 DEFRA has advised that there will be an increase in the number of LAGs across the country from 64 to up to 70. This means that the national LEADER allocation will be distributed more widely; BNED LEADER has been advised that the indicative funding it will be allocated will be within the range of £1,321,000 to £1,617,000, which will include the administration budget, with up to 18% allowed for this element. The issuing of an indicative funding range however does not guarantee that funding will be awarded to a LAG.
- 1.8 DEFRA indicated at a meeting on 4th August 2014 that Local Development Strategies, which will form the major part of an application for EAFRD funding, should be based on the median figure of the indicative allocation range which for the BNED area is £1,459,000 inclusive of the administration budget. This would be £1,196,380 project spend and £262,620 management and administration.
- 1.9 DEFRA further advised at that meeting that successful LAGs will be contracted for the duration of the programme i.e. 6 years although it will be for individual LAGs to determine the profile of funding spend which could be shorter than the 6 year period.
- 1.10 LAGs can determine the proportion of funding that is applied to each measure based on a split of projects that deliver direct jobs and those that deliver growth only but these must demonstrate that such projects will benefit the local economy. The minimum allocation of funding for direct job creation is 70%.
- 1.12 At the Stakeholder Event held on 9th April 2014, participants felt that the minimum funding that should be allocated to projects that directly create jobs should be 80%
- 1.11 In light of the reduced budget, it is believed that the programme can be delivered as in the previous programme, but without the 1.0FTE Monitoring & Support Officer. This would leave 1.0FTE Programme Officer, 0.5FTE Monitoring & Support Officer and 0.2FTE Strategic Partnership Co-ordinator. This is the minimum which can be delivered whilst adhering to DEFRA's "separation of duties" rules, which means that

project development, monitoring and payment must all be processed by separate individuals. To help provide office administration support and allow the delivery team to focus on their technical duties, the NEDDC Partnerships Support Officer will extend their working time by 8 hours per week. NEDDC would remain employing body for the BNED LEADER staff.

1.12 Following consultation with a wide range of stakeholders (Members, businesses, CVS) via Survey Monkey, Business Breakfasts and a Stakeholder Workshop, the local priorities for delivery in the next BNED LEADER programme have been placed in the following order of importance;

- Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification – 50%
- Support for rural tourism – 23%
- Provision of basic village services – 12%
- Support for increasing farm productivity – 10%
- Support for rural culture and heritage activities – 3%
- Support for forestry productivity – 2%

1.13 The apportionment of the indicative funding allocation is shown at Appendix A to this report.

1.14 The BNED LEADER programme will aim to deliver the following outputs against each measure. The unit costs shown are based upon the outcomes of the previous programme.

Support for increasing farm productivity	Unit Cost (£)	No of outputs
Projects	16,666	7
Holding benefitting	50,000	2
Businesses benefitting	50,000	2
Individuals benefitting	25,000	5
Jobs created	15,000	8
Jobs safeguarded	15,000	8
Micro and small enterprises and farm diversification	Unit Cost (£)	No of outputs
Projects	18,016	33
Holding benefitting	49,136	12
Businesses benefitting	49,136	12
Individuals benefitting	36,000	17
Jobs created	15,000	40
Jobs safeguarded	15,000	40
Support for rural tourism	Unit Cost (£)	No of outputs

Projects	22,000	13
Existing tourism activities supported	22,000	13
New tourism activities supported	22,000	13
Additional overnight stays	108	2,548
Jobs created	15,000	18
Jobs safeguarded	15,000	18
Provision of rural services	Unit Cost (£)	No of outputs
Businesses benefitting	50,000	3
Villages, communities benefitting	21,460	7
Population benefitting	10	14,357
Jobs created	15,000	10
Jobs safeguarded	15,000	10
Support for cultural and heritage activity	Unit Cost (£)	No of outputs
Projects	30,000	1
Facilities benefitting	32,000	1
Population benefitting	10	3,589
Jobs created	15,000	0
Jobs safeguarded	15,000	0
Support for increasing forestry productivity	Unit Cost (£)	No of outputs
Projects	6000	4
Forests, woodlands, holdings benefitting	6000	4
Jobs created	15,000	2
Jobs safeguarded	15,000	2

1.15 The areas within which LEADER funding can be delivered is proscribed by DEFRA and is based upon Census Output Areas classified as urban or rural rather than wards. The classification of these areas is not negotiable.

1.16 In the NEDDC district, LEADER funding can be used district-wide except those areas within which are COAs classified as urban which are Clay Cross North ward,

Clay Cross South ward, Coal Aston ward, Dronfield North ward, Dronfield South Ward, Dronfield Woodhouse ward, Gosforth Valley ward.

- 1.17 The next rural development programme will need the Council's ongoing engagement e.g. Economic Development officer support, an Elected Member on the LAG and in-kind appraisal support.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 The proposed BNED LEADER programme 2014-2020 will align with the joint Growth Strategy of North East Derbyshire District Council and Bolsover District Council and will complement the priorities of the Growth Plan of the two Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) that cover this area, Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire LEP (D2N2) and Sheffield City Region LEP (SCR).
- 2.2 The BNED LEADER LAG has a proven track record of delivery and has been recognised as one of the top performing LEADER Programmes nationally by DEFRA's independent evaluators.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

- 3.1 The consultation consisted of two main elements:
- A Survey Monkey electronic questionnaire which was provided in paper version when requested
 - Stakeholder consideration of the survey results.
- 3.2 The Survey Monkey exercise was undertaken between January and February 2014 to determine the local priorities as seen by stakeholders, based upon the measures identified for the new programme. The survey was publicised and circulated to as wide an audience as possible, such as by attending stakeholder's meetings, e-mailing the stakeholder contact list, publicising in the local press and on the BNED LEADER website and targeting through partner organisations such as the Derbyshire Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce mailing list.
- 3.3 A broad range of sectors were consulted including Elected Members, Officers, businesses, Community & Voluntary Sector, Agricultural Sector, Tourism Sector and individuals and all were invited to comment and feed in their respective views.
- 3.4 The results of the consultation were published and circulated in February 2014.
- 3.5 Equality will be given an ongoing overview by the LAG.
- 3.6 In addition to the multi-sector approach, targeted engagement was undertaken with key stakeholders who have interest in specific measures:
- 3.7 Engagement with Local Businesses / Business Representatives
- 3.8 Eckington Town Group, 14th January 2014. The Programme Officer attended the meeting, to consult on business views and to promote the survey which would be distributed. Over 20 businesses were in attendance. Due to the early timing of the

meeting, it was agreed that the businesses would provide their views as part of the survey.

- 3.9 Young Farmers, 9th January 2014 The Programme Officer gave a presentation and overview of the LEADER programme to raise awareness of the potential funding to the agricultural sector. The meeting was attended by approximately 25 young farmers and the NFU
- 3.10 Business Breakfasts, April 2014. Four business breakfast events were publicised to take place across the LAG area, to allow interested parties to engage with programme and comment upon the emerging priorities identified from the survey. Invitations were sent to businesses across the LAG area, with meetings held in locations accessible to the larger business clusters. Due to other priorities from invitees, two events were cancelled (South Normanton and Eckington), with interested representatives signposted to The Arc, Clowne on 3rd April 2014 and Coney Green Business Centre, Clay Cross on 4th April 2014. 5 business attended in total and were supportive of the priorities brought forward.
- 3.11 Meeting with Sheffield City Region (SCR), 13th June 2014 The Programme Officer together with counterparts from Peak LEADER and East Pennines Innovation Partnership met with the CEO of SCR to advise of the progress on the preparation and alignment of LEADER priorities with those of the LEP
- 3.12 Engagement with Tourism, Cultural and Heritage Stakeholders
- 3.13 Limestone Journeys Landscape Partnership Steering Group Meeting, 28th January 2014. The Programme Officer addressed the Group consisting of 18 delegates to promote the consultation exercise and to seek their input into the development of the Local Development Strategy.
- 3.14 Derbyshire Tourism Forum, 1st April 2014. The Programme Officer gave a presentation to the Forum outlining the achievements of the previous programme and the opportunities for tourism projects in the next programme. The meeting was attended by approximately 15 delegates.
- 3.15 Engagement with the Statutory, Community & Voluntary Sector
- 3.16 North East Derbyshire District Parish Liaison Group, 15th January 2014. The Programme Officer and Strategic Partnership Co-ordinator attended the meeting held between NEDDC and its constituent Parish Councils, raising the profile of BNED LEADER, with the Councils encouraged to take part in the survey. The presentation highlighted the achievements of the previous BNED LEADER programme and the priorities for the 2014-2020 programme. Reference was also made to the priorities identified by the two Local Enterprise Partnerships, Derby Derbyshire Nottingham Nottinghamshire (D2N2) and Sheffield City Region (SCR) within their respective Growth Strategy. There were 27 attendees; 18 Parish Councillors, 1 Parish Clerk and 8 NEDDC representatives including the Leader and

Deputy Leader. There are 24 Parish and Town Councils in the North East Derbyshire District Council area who receive all information from the meetings.

- 3.17 Bolsover District Parish Liaison Group, 27th January 2014. The information above was provided to the 18 attendees, 10 of whom were Parish Councillors (there are 15 Parish and Town Councils in the Bolsover District Council area who receive all information from the meetings). It was agreed that questions would be directed through the survey.
- 3.18 VCS Frontline Service Providers Network on 11th June 2014. The Programme Officer delivered a presentation to promote engagement with the BNED LEADER Approach 2014-2020. 29 people attended the meeting and over 70 organisations are on the mailing list.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 Option 1 is to not run a rural development programme within Bolsover North East Derbyshire. This would lose the opportunity for generating additional National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) through the creation of new businesses and the expansion of existing businesses.
- 4.2 Option 2 is to opt for a lower percentage of funding to projects that create jobs directly to 70% rather than 80%. This would reduce the potential increase in NNDR which is a major aim of the Growth Strategy.
- 4.3 Option 3 is to allocate the funding across the measures differently. This would not however reflect the desired economic focus of the LAG.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

Without a BNED LEADER programme 2014-2020, the opportunity for generating additional NNDR through the creation of new businesses and the expansion of existing businesses would be greatly reduced.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

There are no legal implications.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

North East Derbyshire District Council would bear employment liability.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 That the North East Derbyshire District Council Cabinet note this report and endorse the submission of the application for European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) funding through the Rural Development Programme for the Bolsover North East Derbyshire LEADER programme 2014-2020.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	No
District Wards Affected	All except Clay Cross North ward, Clay Cross South ward, Coal Aston ward, Dronfield North ward, Dronfield South Ward, Dronfield Woodhouse ward, Gosforth Valley ward.
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	Corporate Plan: Develop vibrant town centres and rural communities; Maximise employment Opportunities. Growth Strategy, Strategic Priority 1: Supporting Enterprise: maintaining and growing the business base

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1	Allocation of Indicative Funding Across Measures
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
None	
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Appendix 1

Allocation of Indicative Funding Across Measures

	Expenditure Forecast (£)							
	Financial Year							Total programme
Policy Priority	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	
Support for increasing farm productivity	0	10,827	36,270	36,270	36,270	0	0	119,638
Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification	0	72,183	175,335	175,335	175,335	0	0	598,190
Support for rural tourism	0	25,941	65,781	91,723	91,723	0	0	275,167
Provision of rural services	0	10,827	44,246	44,246	44,246	0	0	143,566
Support for cultural and heritage activity	0	2,707	11,061	11,061	11,061	0	0	35,891
Support for increasing forestry productivity	0	1,805	7,375	7,375	7,375	0	0	23,928
Total Project Spend	0	124,290	340,069	366,011	366,011	0	0	1,196,380
Running costs and animation	11,486	45,948	45,948	45,948	45,948	33,672	33,672	262,620
Grand Total	11,486	170,238	386,017	411,958	411,958	33,672	33,672	1,459,000