

Yorkshire Dales LEADER Briefing Note 1

Electing the Local Action Group Decision Making Body members for LEADER

The Executive Group

The Executive is a small group of appointed and elected members of the LAG, who make decisions relating to applications for funding, help discuss and develop specific projects to be procured by the Executive Group, get involved with national or international co-operation projects, and influence the direction of the Programme. Being involved with the Yorkshire Dales LEADER Programme as a member of the Executive Group is a fantastic opportunity if you are looking to gain extra experience, are interested in getting involved, would like some extra to add to your CV, or if you have a specific skill set or knowledge base you would like to share!

All members are local representatives, some appointed to represent public sector partners and the majority elected non-public sector to represent the interests of the LAG. The structure is designed to ensure that there is strong representation by rural interest sector (e.g. agriculture, environment, community organisations) and by geographical area.

The Executive Group is governed by an agreed Terms of Reference and by a Code of Conduct. Elected Executive members can sit on the Executive for three years before standing down (they can stand for re-election).

The Executive Group nominate their Chair and Vice Chair by ballot issued at the first induction meeting. The new Chair and Vice Chair are appointed at the second meeting and subsequently elected annually.

The Executive will meet at least every quarter and will be required to make decisions outside of this if necessary. There will be substantial reading and preparation prior to each panel and members must be prepared to be accountable for the decision of the panel.

Executive Group members must have knowledge and expertise on the issues in their chosen local area:

- Enterprise
- Farming
- Forestry
- Tourism
- Culture and heritage
- Basic Services

The Executive Group duties

The Group's main duty is to evaluate, prioritize and approve project applications for LEADER funding and commission projects in line with priorities identified in the LAG's Local Development Strategy.

All members have an induction and regular training during their time on the Group. To maintain their knowledge and understanding of the LEADER approach, Executive Group members are encouraged to attend national or regional events organised by the Managing Authority (Defra) and/or the National Rural Network.

The Executive Group also has other roles:

- To consider and decide on the project selection criteria and priorities for any grant programmes operated through the Programme. – what activity can be funded and how much is given.
- Members can be project applicants themselves, (they must not to participate in any decision-making regarding their own projects; the overall share of the Group member owned projects must remain low).
- To assist LAG staff with technical knowledge and expertise.
- Monitoring and reviewing the progress of projects to meet agreed budgets, outputs/expenditure

The acronym 'LEADER' derives from the French words "Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économique Rurale" which means, 'Links between the rural economy and development actions'.

The idea is to enlist the energy and resources of people that can contribute to rural development by forming partnerships between the public, private and civil sectors.

The LEADER approach "empowers" local communities through developing a local strategy for investing in the rural economy and allocating resources – money and people – to help the development happen.

The main way of developing the local area actions (projects) and

- To report back to the LAG on progress of the programme and/or individual projects on an annual basis.
- To be responsible for all grant endorsements in line with previously approved project selection and grievance procedures.
- If representing an organisation or network, member's role is to communicate information to that organisation/network and seek input in preparation for discussions as and when required. This should not include the sharing of project applications and related paperwork.

The Executive – Structure of the group and Vacancies

The Executive Group for the 2014-2020 Programme recognises that partner organisations membership will change over the lifetime of the programme, as is appropriate to complement an annual updated LEADER Action plan.

There is provision for the public/private/voluntary sector to have “seconds” to attend meetings, however any person seconded to the role must be fully inducted and we discourage the use of “seconds” in the interests of robust decision making.

The full Executive Group consists of the following Voting members: 6 Public Sector members, 10 non-public sector	
Sector:	Organisation/sub-sector
Public Sector	Representatives (revolving) from: 4 Local Authorities (3 votes), YDNPA, 2 AONB's (shared vote), NYCC. YNYER LEP/Leeds City Region LEP (<i>advisory and non-voting</i>).
Private Sector	Elected (upon vacancy and/or after 3 years) from the LAG : Agriculture, SME Business Support, Forestry, Tourism, Manufacturing, Construction and Service Industry.
Voluntary/Community Sector	Elected (upon vacancy and/or after 3 years) from the LAG : Tourism, Forestry, Agriculture, SME Business Support, Community services sectors.

This structure allows the Programme to meet Defra's requirements for a balance between public, private and civil society representation, reflects the local area priorities and ensures that no single interest group has more than 49% of the voting rights.

1 new Executive Group member position is required to be filled by the election process.

Sub-Sector / Organisation	Number of Members	Public / Private / Voluntary
Agriculture/Food Sector	1	Private

How do I become a Candidate to sit on the Executive Group?

Nominations for sitting on the Executive Group come from the Yorkshire Dales LAG membership. All nominees must be a member of the LAG. Candidates can “self-nominate”.

We ask you to provide a short statement for the election ballot paper outlining any skills, knowledge, and experience that would make you a good Executive Group member for the 2014-2020 Yorkshire Dales LEADER Programme, (maximum 100 words).

Nomination Forms can be submitted either by post or email and must be received by the LEADER Programme team no later than 4th September 2017.

Eligibility

Agriculture/Food Sector

- Can be an individual or representative of a private sector organisation or network within the sector.

What happens after Nominations are sent in?

The Executive Group election: 14th September to 28th September 2017

The formal election of the new Executive Group members will take place week commencing **14th September, until 28th September**, with paper ballot forms going to those who require postal voting. Ballot forms will include candidate name, the sector they wish to represent, the name of organisation or network (if applicable) and the 100 word statement. All LAG members will be eligible to vote for the one candidate in each sector. Candidates will be eligible to vote for themselves.

The one Agriculture/Food sector representative with the highest number of votes will be elected to the existing Executive Group. All successful and unsuccessful candidates will be informed of the outcome by 30th September and in advance of any public announcement.

If there is no more than 1 nomination, no election will take place and the successful representative will be informed

Any questions

If you wish to discuss anything relating to the Executive Group, find out more about LEADER, the LAG or the election process please call Rima Berry, Programme Co-ordinator, 015242 51002, or email

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