



Minutes of the Waterford LAG Meeting
Thursday 13th January 2022, teleconference via Zoom at 11.00 a.m.

Present:

Non Public Sector:

Public Sector

1. Gabriel Foley	PPN / Environment	1. Mayor Joe Kelly (Chair)	Elected representative
2. Senan Cooke	PPN / Community & Voluntary	2. Michael O'Brien	WWETB
3. Gerald Hurley	CEO Waterford City Chamber	3. Michael Walsh	CE, WC&CC
4. Liam Quinn	CEO – Waterford Area Partnership	4. Brendan Lawton	Reg. Mgr. Dept. Social Protection
5. Jimmy Taaffe	CEO – WLP CLG	5. Cllr Eamon Quinlan	Elected representative
6. Breda Fell	PPN / Community & Voluntary	6. Julie Somers	CYPSC Coordinator
7. Heather Kiely	PPN/ Community & Voluntary	7. Cllr. Pat Nugent	Elected representative
8. Jenny Beresford	CEO Dungarvan & West Waterford Chamber		
9. Maggie Flanagan	PPN / Community & Voluntary	Apologies:	
Apologies:		8. Richie Walsh	Head of LEO
10. Catherine Quinlan	I.C.M.S.A.	9. Derval Howley	Head of Wellbeing HSE

Staff Present: I. Grimes Chief Officer, K. Moynihan S.O., J. Codd S.O., S. Whelan S.O., C O'Brien S.O., E. Smyth, ASO

1.Total current Membership	19
2.Total attendees	16
3. Quorum % required (50% of 1 above)	Achieved – 84%
4. non-public/public ratio attendees % ratio non-public/public attendees	9 non-public : 7 public 56% non-public: 44% public

1. **Confirmation of Quorum:** Having reviewed the attendance record Acting Chief Officer Ivan Grimes informed the attendees that a quorum was achieved. Non-public 9: Public 7.

Chair Joe Kelly opened the meeting.

2. **Apologies.**

As per table above apologies were noted.

3. **Introductions**

- Liam Quinn, the new C.E.O of Waterford Area Partnership, was introduced and welcomed to the committee
- The committee was informed that Ivan Grimes has been appointed as Acting Chief Officer following the retirement of former Chief Officer Don Tuohy.

4. **Conflict of Interest:**

- (i) Committee members were reminded to complete and return their Conflict of Interest forms.
- (ii) No declarations submitted for this meeting
- (iii) Review of Quorum: Quorum achieved 9:7 in favour of non-public sector.

5. **Confirmation of Minutes of LAG Meeting held on 16th December 2021.**

Proposed: M. Flannagan	Seconded by G. Foley
Abstentions: None	
Quorum achieved: Yes	APPROVED

6. **Matters arising:**

None.

7. Rural Development Programme.

(a) Project for rejection.

i) 31LDRWAT116848 Tracked Skid Steer with Grader

Project ID	31LDRWAT116848
Project Type:	SA 2.1) Capital Investment in existing and start up technology, graduate orientated rural businesses
Project Name:	EURI - Tracked Skid Steer with Grader and GPS
Promoters Name:	McDonald Plant and Civil
Address:	Reandampaun, Ballymacarbry, Via Clonmel, Co. Waterford
Description:	The equipment comprises of a GPS guided skid steer with grader attachment. This equipment will accurately grade passages to minimise soiled water runoff into local water courses. It can also be used for a similar purpose on construction sites and industrial locations. If the project goes ahead, it will assist in the creation of 1.5 jobs.
Theme:	LO 2 Enterprise Development
Sub-theme:	SA 2.1) Capital Investment in existing and start up technology, graduate orientated rural businesses
Link to LDS	LO 2 Enterprise Development

Total Project Costs	€118,711		
Eligible Project Costs	€118,711		
Funding sought by promoter:	The cost of this project is €118,711 and the promoter has requested funding of €89,033.25 or 75% of eligible costs whichever is the lesser.		
State one of the following: - First Review / Previously Deferred or Not Recommend	Previously Deferred		
Funding recommended by Evaluation Committee:	€0		
Details of private funding:	€29,677.75 Loan		
Voluntary Labour: YES / NO (If yes provide detail)	No		
Synopsis of project:	The purchase of specialised equipment comprising of GPS guided tracked skid steer with grader attachment.		
Detail exactly what WLP will be funding (List items from Project Assessment Report)	Detail	Total Cost (Expenditure)	Grant Aid recommend by the Evaluation Committee @ %

	Tracked Skid Steer with GPS	€118,711	€0
Total Funding		€118,711	€0
Was an assessment completed?: Date: _____	The Evaluation Committee agreed that the project assessment was completed on the 23th November 2021		
Are detailed costings provided for the project? Were the costs for the project considered reasonable and how was this measured?	The Evaluation Committee agreed that the promoters followed Category 1 National Procurement Guidelines		
Where the procurement process resulted in less than 3 quotes, the EC must show the additional steps taken to ensure the reasonableness of costs:	OGP and the Dept. were contacted and they confirmed that procurement was in order		
Innovative Element of the project:	This project is highly innovative as it is offering a new service to reduce soiled water run-off from farm roadways.		
Consideration of Deadweight:	The Evaluation Committee agreed that this project would not proceed without funding		
Consideration of Displacement:	The Evaluation Committee considered displacement an issue and therefore are not recommending for approval.		
Economic justification for project:	The project fits the Local Development Strategy plan for enterprise support		
Average Score for Project:	62/100		
% level of aid & ceiling:	A maximum of €0 or 0% of eligible expenditure, whichever is the lesser		
E. C. Executive Summary/Rationale for Funding	The Evaluation Committee agreed to not recommend funding this project for the following reasons:- 1. Funding will cause displacement 2. The project scored 62% and not the required 65% minimum required to pass.		

Jobs Created	Jobs Sustained	Match Funding	Previous Grant Aid Received
1.5		Yes	None

Confirmation on the applicant's position re De-Minimus and double from the relevant agencies.	Date of Confirmation	Signed By
Waterford Local Enterprise Office	24/11/2021	B. Kirby

Meeting on the 20 12 21:- The following were the main points raised in the discussion of the project: -

- Mr. Jimmy Taaffe advised that this is a new start up business, and the promoter is working with Mr. Brendan O'Dwyer an Accountant in Dungarvan to formalise the business. DPE are clients of Dwyer's and probably put both in touch.
- The query in relation to displacement is a valid concern and Mr. Taaffe confirmed that he had only considered the environmental aspect of the project. Without doubt if funded other applications will follow and this could be an issue.
- A Committee Member queried if WLP has a policy on funding this type of project? Mr. Taaffe said that WLP did not fund mainstream agriculture or plant contracting equipment but took this application as an environmental project as the promoter identified a niche market.
- Mr. Jimmy Taaffe confirmed that the gradient works could be carried out by mainstream contractors but that this machine will do it more efficiently and cheaper as the levels can be ascertained while in the cab and do not require physical measuring and manpower.
- The Evaluation Committee agreed that this machine is the way forward but noted it will compete against JBC and Hymac diggers.
- They referred to it as disrupted technology comparing it to the internet versus post.
- It was noted that someone is bound to go ahead given the new legislation requirements. A lengthy discussion ensued with consideration being given to funding at a reduced level as the project was considered progressive and fits the environmental criteria of the programme. Jimmy advised that the Project Assessment requested 75% but anything below 50% would not be feasible for the promoter to make repayments.
- A Committee Member noted that the application was weak in terms of confirmed contracts with reference being made to SISK and Comeragh Construction and none from farmers or Teagasc. Mr. Jimmy Taaffe replied that the promoter was probably staying away for referencing farmers due to the displacement issue.
- Mr. Jimmy Taaffe said that he could not say how many applications may be received if this one is funded. No doubt funding this machine will give the promoter a massive leap ahead of competition as he will be able to do the job more efficiently and cheaper than other contractors.

The Evaluation Committee did not consider the project eligible due to displacement and agreed to recommend not funding.

Meeting on the 8 12 21 :- The following were the main points raised in the discussion of the project: -

- Ms Claire Connors advised that Mr. Jimmy Taaffe sent his apologies but due to a bereavement in the family he was unavailable to attend the meeting today.
- Ms Connors briefly updated the Evaluation Committee on the background of the promoter advising that he has set up a contracting business in Ballymacarbry in 2018 after returning from Australia. He sees a gap in the market and wishes to purchase specialised equipment that will complement and work with his existing business.
- New legislation by the Dept of Agriculture effective from Jan 2021 means that farmers now must prevent the direct run-off soiled water from farm roadways. This equipment will be a one stop piece of equipment to create the slope on the roadway without having to bring in huge amount

of stone /fill and the gps will enable the correct slope/gradient be created accurately.

- The original Project Assessment report was sent out at 50% but the promoter can apply for 75% and will do so subject to the Evaluation Committee agreeing to this. This will reduce his match funding which you will see is being provided by Dungarvan Precision Engineering.
- A Committee Member noted that it is quite a weak proposition and while he shows a client base there are no confirmed contracts and doesn't show a repayment capacity for the loan. Turnover is only 56k in 2021.
- Ms Connors said that in its favour the promoter came to us through the accountant Brendan O'Dwyer who seems to have taken the promoter under his wing.
- The Committee queried if they would have a deluge of applications from other contractors following funding. Typically, the programme did not fund plant and equipment for contractors, and it was queried if this was a project for other funding sources.
- It was pointed out that the project fits the environmental criteria of the new programme as it is addressing a problem of runoff water for farmers. It is cheaper and more efficient and will use less resources.
- A discussion took place on displacement and if by funding this project other local contractors will be displaced.

The Evaluation Committee agreed to defer this project subject to clarification on the following:-

- Issue of displacement
- What is the connection between DPE and the promoter?
- Potential contracts

Deferred

Amount Recommended:€0

0% of Eligible Project Funding:

WLP S.E.O. Mr. Jimmy Taaffe informed the committee that the evaluation committee has recommended that this project be rejected by the LAG. Mr. Taaffe outlined that whilst there was precedent for funding this type of environmental technology there remains sizeable displacement issue. Competition is a necessary norm on the open market however displacement is a key issue when allocating state grant aid and there are a number of existing same service providers, funding this project would not create any new economic activity but rather displace and damage existing services. There are a number of these machines coming to the market and favouring one provider in lieu of another is not consistent with LEADER protocols. A number of committee members expressed dissatisfaction with the proposal to reject the project and wished to explore further options to allow the project to proceed including eligibility via other funding vehicles. Mr. Taaffe was not aware of any other suitable funding programmes but advised that the applicant has recourse via an appeals process.

Proposed: P Nugent	Seconded by: G Foley
Abstentions: None	
Quorum achieved: Yes	APPROVED

(b) 31LDRWAT116827 West Waterford Festival of Food

For Noting: WLP S.E.O. Mr. Jimmy Taaffe informed the committee that this project is now being funded under the transitional budget.

Proposed: J Beresford	Seconded by: S Cooke
Abstentions: None	
Quorum achieved: Yes	APPROVED

(c) 31LDRWAT115766 Comeragh Pods

For Approval:

WLP C.E.O. Mr. J Taaffe advised the committee that approval is required for the purchase of two items which are being substituted for two end of line models which were previously approved.

The items match tender specifications already approved but the make and model have changed.

Proposed: M Walsh	Seconded by Maggie Flannagan
Abstentions: None	
Quorum achieved: Yes	APPROVED

8. Circulars

Three Circulars were noted by the committee and have been circulated to the members.

- Circular 12 2021 Domestic Subsistence Allowance
- DPER Circular 23_2021 - Domestic Subsistence Allowances
- Circular 13 2021 Closing of the €15m LEADER Food Initiative

9. Correspondence.

A recording of an LECP Introductory Event has been circulated to members.

10. A.O.B.

A/Chief Officer Ivan Grimes informed the committee that nominees for an advisory group would be required and a proposal will be brought to the February meeting. The advisory group is required to work on the formulation of the new LECP.

11. Date and venue of next LAG meeting: The next meeting will take place at 10.00am Thursday 17th February 2022, via videoconference.

Meeting Closed

Signed _____
CHAIRPERSON DATE