

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET MEETING**

**10 February 2015**

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**EUROPEAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME PEAK LEADER  
2015-21 (STRATEGIC POLICY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND  
BUDGET)**

(1) **Purpose of Report** To note arrangements for the delivery of European Rural Development Programme following the successful submission for funding to support the Peak LEADER Local Action Group (LAG) and to confirm the Council, as the accountable body, for receipt of between £1.660m and £1.833m LEADER funding (subject to final confirmation) for the period 1 January 2015 to March 2021.

(2) **Information and Analysis**

**Background**

The Council has been the accountable body for the Peak LEADER funding during the previous programme which completed 31 March 2014 and for subsequent transitional funding from 1 April 2014 to 31 December 2014.

The previous programme delivered over £2.3m European Union (EU) LEADER funding and attracted a further £2.7m match funding, largely secured from the private sector. Headline outputs for the programme were: 247.5 new jobs; support to 14 new rural businesses; over 22,000 additional overnight stays; and 16,877 additional day visitors brought to new attractions.

The Peak LEADER LAG developed and submitted a new Local Development Strategy (LDS) to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in September 2014. Confirmation has now been received that the LDS has been approved for funding support from the next European Rural Development Programme 2015-21. At this stage, the Council is awaiting final contractual details, including confirmation of the final financial allocation which will be between £1.660m and £1.833m.

**Summary of Local Development Strategy 2015-21**

The Peak LEADER programme aims to deliver a difference by building on the successful track record of partnership working to create jobs and new business opportunities. The new LEADER programme for 2015-21 is focussed

on helping: improve farm productivity and growth in the wider rural economy; create permanent jobs; provide opportunities for higher skilled/higher wage employment and increased prosperity. It will champion and support entrepreneurial communities and develop innovative ideas to improve community sustainability. Working alongside the D2N2 (Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire) Local Enterprise Partnership's growth strategies, the outcome will be a thriving, resilient and sustainable area attractive to residents and visitors.

The programme is managed by the Peak LEADER Co-ordinator (employed by the Council as accountable body) who reports to the Peak LEADER LAG, consisting of 11 members from the private and voluntary/community sector and 7 public sector members; this Group includes elected representation from the constituent district/borough councils, as well as the County Council. In addition, the programme also reports quarterly to the current Derbyshire Economic Partnership (DEP).

In line with EU guidance, detailed and comprehensive mapping and population analysis has been undertaken, to determine the area to be covered by the new programme. In summary, it is proposed the area will be the whole of the Derbyshire Dales, High Peak, (with the exclusion of Glossop/New Mills and Furness Vale (classified as urban)), and parts of Staffordshire Moorlands. This is an extension of the previous programme now including the service hub towns of Matlock, Buxton and Leek. A total population of 150,000 residents will benefit from the programme.

Nationally, six priority areas have been agreed for delivery within an overall strategy to support jobs and growth, primarily through direct grant support to businesses and addressing business support needs.

The six priority areas are as follows:

- Support for increasing farm productivity
- Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification
- Support for rural tourism
- Provision of rural services
- Support for cultural and heritage activity
- Support for increasing forestry productivity

One hundred and seventeen projects are forecast to be supported with a minimum of 111 direct jobs created. Targeted support will be provided to increase sustainability within businesses, protect long term jobs, increase overnight stays within the area and to support rural service delivery.

**(3) Financial Considerations** The LDS proposes Derbyshire County Council acts as accountable body for the LEADER programme 2015-21. The Council acted as accountable body during the previous programme following

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transfer in management arrangements from the Derbyshire Economic Partnership in 2011.

(4) **Human Resources Considerations** The European Rural Development Funding will include an allocation to cover the effective management and administration of the programme. It is proposed that, subject to confirmation of the final allocation, the contract of the current LEADER Co-ordinator is extended to 31 March 2021 with salary costs being covered by the allocated programme funding. As with the previous programme, it is also envisaged that additional Officer support will be required to undertake monitoring of the LEADER programme. The level of this activity has not yet been fully determined and will be subject to usual Human Resource processes in relation to job description, job evaluation and recruitment. However, it is anticipated the salary costs of this post will also be covered by LEADER programme funding.

### **Other Considerations**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

(5) **Key Decision** No.

(6) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(7) **Background Papers** Held by the Economy and Regeneration Service within the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officer contact details – Frank Horsley, extension 38348.

(8) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That Cabinet:

8.1 Approves that the Council should act as Accountable Body for the Peak LEADER 2015-21.

8.2 Approves, subject to confirmation of the final allocation, the contract of the current LEADER Co-ordinator is extended to 31 March 2021.

8.3 Notes that a report will be submitted to the Cabinet Member – Strategic Policy, Economic Development and Budget to seek approval to the appointment of additional programme monitoring support at a level considered appropriate within the scope of the budget available.

**Mike Ashworth**  
**Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment**