



LEADER+ in the East Riding of Yorkshire

East Riding of Yorkshire Local Action Group Partnership – Constitution

Background

1. The purpose of the Partnership is to direct the implementation of the East Riding of Yorkshire LEADER+ programme as agreed in the offer letter from Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber (GOYH) received 28 June 2002, over a period from 1st January 2002 – 31st December 2008. The Partnership, in European Terms, is known as the 'Local Action Group' (LAG).
2. The East Riding of Yorkshire LEADER+ Programme aims to help rural communities in the designated Area (see Development Plan) pilot new ideas for rural regeneration through the development of new projects centred around the themes
 - *Improving the Quality of Life in Rural areas*
 - *Making the Best Use of Natural and Cultural Resources*

The thrust of the programme under these themes is the use of heritage to improve the quality of life.

Projects funded under this programme should particularly target *the Unemployed and the Underemployed and Rural Businesses and Workers Affected by Rural Restructuring*
3. The overall philosophy and direction of the Programme is set out in the Development Plan, which was agreed by the LAG after a period of community consultation.
4. Annual Work targets and strategy are set out within an Action Plan, agreed annually in consultation with GOYH.
5. East Riding of Yorkshire Council acts as the 'Accountable Body' that is responsible for administering and auditing LEADER+ financial matters on behalf of the LAG.
6. The Decision Making Panel is made up of members from the LAG and is primarily responsible for approving applications for LEADER+ funding.
7. Appendix 1 shows the LAG Structure and Working Arrangements.

Terms and Abbreviations

The following terms are used in this document:

Partnership:	The Local Action Group
LAG:	Local Action Group Partnership
DMP:	Decision Making Panel
Programme:	The East Riding of Yorkshire LEADER+ Programme
GOYH:	Government Office for the Yorkshire and Humber
Accountable Body:	East Riding of Yorkshire Council
Development Plan:	'Revitalising the Riding' strategic plan governing the implementation of the Programme
Action Plan:	The plan drawn up annually to implement the delivery of the Development Plan.
Area:	The LEADER+ geographical area of coverage

Part 1: Governance:

1. The Partnership has two tiers – the LAG and the DMP

Part 2: The Local Action Group – Terms of Reference

1. To be responsible for rolling out the LEADER+ Programme in the East Riding of Yorkshire area in accordance with:
 - a) the approved Development Plan
 - b) any subsequent reasonable requirements of the funding body,
 - c) the agreed and approved Action Plan that is in place at the time and;
 - d) this Constitution.
2. To set the strategic vision and direction of the LEADER+ Programme. It will normally play no part in taking decisions on the funding of projects put forward for consideration, this power being delegated to the DMP.
3. To promote and raise awareness and understanding of issues relating to the Programme for the benefit of the Areas local communities and visitors.
4. To act as a forum for discussion of major issues affecting rural regeneration across the LEADER+ Area.
5. To encourage partnership working between the Area's statutory, community and voluntary organisations, to maximise benefits for all.
6. To promote innovation and best practice in rural regeneration.
7. To promote equality of opportunity within the Area, irrespective of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religious beliefs or age.
8. To share experience and develop co-operative projects with other relevant groups and networks in the UK and elsewhere, especially within the European Union.

Part 3: Membership of the Local Action Group

1. The LAG shall have community and sectoral representation from across the Area and all the main community based partnerships active in the LEADER+ bid area shall wherever possible be represented on the Group.
2. There will be a maximum of 35 representatives on the LAG. Not more than 49% of Representatives will be Members or officers of public sector bodies (including Parish and Town Councils).
3. In nominating representatives, organisations should wherever possible give priority to those who live or work within the Area.
4. LAG members who are unable to attend a particular meeting may arrange for a substitute from their organisation to attend in his/her place.
5. An individual acting as a representative of an organisation shall cease to be a member of the LAG should he/she resign from that organisation. The organisation will be invited to nominate a new representative.
6. If a member of the LAG is absent from 3 consecutive meetings, the LAG shall have the right – in default of an acceptable reason being given by such member – to declare a vacancy, whereupon the member shall cease to be a member of the LAG.
7. All representatives will be responsible for disseminating information to their respective communities/organisations.
8. Individuals and /or representatives from organisations with particular skills may be co-opted on to the LAG as non-voting members and for a specified period.
9. Changes to membership will not be permitted if they result in the total number of members representing statutory partners, accounting for more than 50% of the total numbers of the LAG.
10. Nominations of new members will require a Proposer and Seconder to submit details to a LAG meeting. The LAG will take a vote on all nominees and record the results in the minutes. The nominee voted on to the LAG will be invited to take their position from the next meeting.
11. The list of members will be kept up to date and made available to the LAG.

Part 4: Election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

1. Elections for the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson will be held at the Annual General Meeting. The Chair and Vice Chair will act in the best interests of the LAG as a whole. The Chairperson will conduct LAG meetings and have a second or casting vote in the case of an equality of vote.
2. In the case where a vacancy arises the LAG will nominate an Acting Chairperson or Vice Chairperson until the formal election is held.

Part 5: Operating Procedures

1. The LAG shall meet at least four times per year, the dates to be fixed a year in advance on a rolling basis. Minutes of all meetings shall be kept and agreed at the next regular meeting of the LAG.
2. The LAG will hold an Annual General meeting in January each year, which will elect the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Members of the Decision Making Panel.
3. The LAG will co-ordinate its work with other relevant initiatives.
4. The LAG will receive consolidated information on performance from the Programme staff.
5. The LAG will consider the Annual Action Plan, Annual report and progress against the Development Plan.
6. Administrative support for the LAG will be provided by the Accountable Body via the LEADER+ Programme staff and nominated Democratic Services staff.
7. All meetings of the Local Action Group will be formal meetings and open to the public.
8. The quorum for all meetings will be 10 Representatives. Not more than 49% of Representatives at any meeting will be Members or officers of public sector bodies (including Parish and Town Councils). There must be a Representative from the Accountable Body at each meeting.
9. All decisions will be put to the vote. A matter will be decided by a simple majority of those present and eligible to vote. In the event of a tied vote the Chair shall have a second or casting vote
10. Members have a joint interest in the implementation of all projects in the programme but, from time to time, will need to take part in discussions on issues and projects in which they have a **direct or indirect** interest. Members having a direct financial interest or organisational link to issues or projects under discussion shall declare their interest at the commencement of the item. All such interests shall be minuted. Declaring members shall take no part in the discussion, unless invited by the Chairperson. Members will not be entitled to vote if an interest is declared.
11. Where urgent decisions are needed in between regular meetings the Chairperson shall decide whether to call a special meeting of the LAG or a meeting of an urgency

group that shall consist of the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, one representative each of the Accountable Body and the community sector (no more than 49% to be statutory body representatives. If this is the case then steps to be taken to invite another community representative to address this issue).

12. The LAG may set up, manage and dissolve such Sub-Groups as it sees fit.

Part 6: The Decision Making Panel (DMP)

1. The East Riding of Yorkshire Local Action Group Decision Making Panel is responsible for:

- a) Approving LEADER+ Programme projects,
- b) Commissioning LEADER+ Programme projects,
- c) Monitoring and reviewing the progress of projects to meet agreed outputs/expenditure and:
- d) Preparing an Annual Plan and an Annual Report for consideration by the LAG

2. The role of the DMP is to take prompt decisions on project applications, monitor the operation of approved projects and to function as a discussion group to develop the Annual Action Plan for consideration by the LAG.

3. There will be a maximum of 12 Members of the DMP. Not more than 5 will be Members or officers of public sector bodies (including Parish and Town Councils). The system of a rotating Chairperson will operate.

4. Members of the DMP will be selected at the Annual General Meeting by the LAG. Members of the DMP must be representatives serving on the East Riding of Yorkshire LAG. Any vacancies will be filled by election at any meeting of the LAG.

5. The DMP will meet quarterly. The Panel will also meet as and when required.

6. All meetings of the DMP will be formal meetings and not open to the public.

7. The quorum for all meetings will be 5 Members. There must be a representative of the Accountable Body present at each meeting. No more than 49% of members present will be representatives of Statutory organisations.

8. All decisions will be put to the vote. Any matter will be decided by a simple majority vote of those present and eligible to vote. In the event of a tied vote the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

Part 7: Legal and Financial Matters

1. The East Riding of Yorkshire LAG has appointed East Riding of Yorkshire Council to be the Accountable Body.

2. The main role of the Accountable Body is to be the legally responsible body to accept and efficiently distribute the European and Defra grant, via GOYH, to projects and to satisfy GOYH on behalf of Europe that all necessary procedures have been properly undertaken.

3. The Accountable Body will be the employing organisation for the LEADER+ staff and has the final say in matters of detail relating to personnel issues and in matters relating to the financial probity of projects.

4. Programme staff will provide financial updates to the LAG at least twice per year.

5. LAG members will be encouraged to offer appropriate support to those developing projects. Members must ensure that any such advice is in line with their own personal and professional skills and experience and ensure that such support does not result in personal liability.

6. The appraisal of project applications may involve access to sensitive business information. In this event, members must respect requests for confidentiality.

7. Members who have no procedure for claiming back expenses from their organisation, will be entitled to reasonable refunds from the East Riding of Yorkshire LEADER+ Programme subject to any regulations in place at the time.

Part 8: Changes to the Constitution

1. This Constitution shall be open to review at any time but any proposed variation shall require the agreement of the LAG in accordance with its normal voting procedures.

This constitution was adopted at a meeting of the LEADER+ Local Action Group on 19th September, 2003 (Minute 16 refers).

Signed: _____

(Chairman of the LEADER+ Local Action Group)

Date: _____