

BNED LEADER Update

Bolsover North East Derbyshire (BNED) LEADER is a European Funded Programme which aims to develop a vibrant, dynamic and diverse rural economy and increase economic productivity and growth. The current Programme commenced in 2015 and the deadline for approving and contracting projects is expected to be March 2019 (subject to review by the Rural Payments Agency). To allow time for any final applications to be developed, considered and contracted by this deadline, Expressions of interest must be received by 30th November 2018.

The primary objectives of the Programme are job creation and economic growth within the rural economy, with projects meeting one of the six priorities:

- Support for increased farming productivity
- Support for micro/small enterprises and farm diversification
- Support for tourism activities
- Provision of rural services
- Support for culture and heritage activities
- Support for increased forestry productivity

Applications Received

Council area	Total Queries	EOI Endorsed	Awaiting FA	In Appraisal	Approved
Total	270	83	16	2	23
Bolsover DC	70	19	3	0	9
NEDDC	160	64	13	2	14
Out of BNED Area Queries	40	-	-	-	-
Grant Involved	-	-	£840,075.00	£88,431.28	£770,782.18

To date, 83 Expressions of Interest have been invited to Full Application. Currently 23 of these applications have been contracted, 3 have been rejected at the LAG Approval Meetings, 16 are in the process of completing Full Applications and 2 are in Appraisal. 42 have withdrawn from the process blaming problems with match-funding, arranging quotes and Programme complexity. Two withdrawals have been from approved applications and the amount they were awarded has been removed from the "Grant Involved" total noted in the table above.

The LEADER Team is in regular contact with all applicants to offer support and guidance, offered as face to face in meetings or support sessions as well as checking draft applications. The working relationship developed with applicants means that estimated spend profiles can be based upon the quality of applications and enthusiasm of the applicant, therefore showing a more accurate picture of likely approvals. Applicants are currently taking advantage of the available 121 guidance rather than requiring to attend the monthly support sessions and have commented on how much this has helped them, particularly as they move towards the end of their 3 month deadline and finalise their submissions. Discussions with the Rural Payments

Agency are continuing to help identify if further monies can be made available, should successful applications seek funding which exceeds the Programme budget.

BNED LEADER is grateful for the support from the D2N2 Growth Hub, who have produced an e-mail which can be shared with applicants which offers dedicated assistance towards the development of projects and completion of application forms. The Economic Development Units and Partnerships Teams of BDC and NEDDC have also played a key role in promoting the scheme, supporting applicants and undertaking project appraisals.

Promotion

Promotion will shift to case studies of completed projects in the near future. Several case studies have been added to the website (www.bned-leader.co.uk/index.php/projects-2014-2020) and more will be completed after the busy application processing period. Tours of completed projects will also be organised for BNED Local Action Group members and key partners up to the end of the Programme.

BNED LEADER Staffing

Sharon Stevenson succeeded Nicola Parsons as LEADER Programme Officer in October September 2018 and recruitment for a new Monitoring and Support Officer is currently in discussion with senior managers. In the interim, the NEDDC Partnerships Team will provide support for the day to day operations of the BNED Local Action Group and the Programme, to minimise any major disruption and ensure separation of duties requirements.

Sharon Stevenson, BNED LEADER
6th November 2018