



Kildare Rural Development Programme

Terms of Reference LEADER Evaluation Committee

September 2017

1. Role of the Evaluation Committee

Kildare LCDC/LAG is required to establish an independent evaluation committee as part of its role in overseeing the delivery of Kildare Local Development Strategy.¹ This is a committee of the LAG and is solely responsible for evaluating LEADER project applications and making recommendations for LEADER funding to Kildare Local Action Group (LAG). The committee is established in line with the National Operating Rules for the Rural Development Programme Ireland 2014-2020, Kildare Local Development Strategy.

2. Membership

Evaluation committee members will be independent and cannot be members of Kildare LCDC/LAG or CKLP as Implementing Partner. Members can be rotated, between the evaluation committee and the LAG, as required. This will help retain expertise within the LAG and the evaluation committee.

It is essential that members have substantial skills and experience relevant to Kildare Local Development Strategy.

Evaluation committee members must declare any conflicts of interest and absent themselves from any deliberations where such a declaration is made. This will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Members of the evaluation committee will be invited by Kildare LCDC/LAG through the Chief Officer and LAG Rural Development sub group Chairperson. This follows consideration and agreement of membership by the LAG.

Membership will be reviewed periodically by the LAG who retains the right to change membership at any time during the lifetime of the programme. However changes made must be agreed by the LAG and should only occur if a) evaluation committee member/s cannot continue in their role, b) member/s are continually absent, c) regular conflict of interest issues emerge or d) performance or behavioral issues that impact on the ability of the evaluation committee to carry out its' role.

There is no remuneration for committee members, however all volunteer representatives are entitled to travel and out of pocket expenses in line with the LCDC volunteer policy.

¹ Referred throughout the document as the LAG

3. Evaluation committee structure

Kildare LEADER evaluation committee will initially be composed of no more than members. It is proposed that members will possess the following skills. It is recognized that members are likely to have expertise in more than one area.

- Accountancy/financial skills
- Business acumen (strategic and operational planning, experience of establishing/running business)
- Procurement
- Social Inclusion/Community development
- Tourism
- Environment
- Heritage
- Youth
- Architecture/planning
- Natural Resources (farming, forestry)

As the committee becomes established the LAG may recommend additional skillsets to expand the committee. However, it is not anticipated that the committee will expand beyond a membership of thirteen.

Evaluation committee members will include people with previous experience of evaluating LEADER proposals alongside members with no prior experience. The committee will strive to achieve gender balance.

All evaluation committee members must be fully committed to the role, contribute positively to decision making and prepare professionally for all meetings. Members must not in any circumstances disclose or share any information presented to them or discussed at evaluation sub group meetings with other parties.

The chairperson of evaluation committee will be approved by the LAG. The quorum for all evaluation committee meetings is 50% plus one. The committee will strive to make all decisions by consensus, where this is not possible by a majority of the votes of the members present and eligible to vote. The Chairperson will make the final decision where there is a tied vote.

4. Evaluation of Projects

CKLP will provide all projects for consideration two weeks in advance of evaluation committee meetings. This will be presented in an easily accessible format. All applications must be read by evaluation committee members in advance of the committee meetings. Evaluation committee meeting dates will be agreed by the LAG to correspond with their meeting schedule. CKLP will provide all necessary support and administration to the evaluation committee to organise, record meetings and to support the chairperson to make their recommendations to the LAG.

Meetings will be run in a professional, participatory manner. The groundrules to underpin meetings will be finalised by the committee but should fit with the LAG principles.

The evaluation committee must complete a formal evaluation scoring record, based on objective criteria. A project must score a minimum of 65% of the total marks to be recommended for approval to the LAG. Where there is a targeted call for applications, projects should be ranked in order of highest to lowest as per the scoring record. Only the highest rated projects should be considered for funding.

The final evaluation score and recommendations agreed by the evaluation committee in respect of a project application must be signed and dated before submission to the LAG and must not be amended or rejected by any other person, group or body prior to their submission to the LAG.

A detailed record of the evaluation committee's assessment and recommendations must be maintained on the project file. This record must include a clear rationale for each recommendation, as well as the recommended rate of aid, grant ceiling and any conditions the evaluation committee.

The LAG may ask the evaluation committee to reconsider its recommendation or seek further information on the project before reaching a decision. The LAG is not obliged to accept a recommendation of the evaluation committee. Where the LAG rejects a recommendation, it must clearly record the rationale for its decision. Where the LAG rejects a recommendation not to award funding to a project, it must complete a single scoring record and ensure that the minimum aggregated threshold of 65% is reached.

All funding decisions must fit with LEADER operating rules and the Kildare Local Development Strategy.

Signed:

Peter Carey, Chairperson Kildare LAG, Chief Executive Kildare County Council

Date:

Kildare LEADER Evaluation Committee - September 2017

Name	Organisation
John Burke	John P. Burke & Co. Accountants
Jimmy Cox (Chairperson)	Kildare Local Enterprise Office Evaluation Committee
John Lahart	Retired Director of Services (Kildare County Council.)
Karen Gorey	Robertstown Holiday Village
Bridget Loughlin	Heritage Officer, Kildare County Council
Emma Berney	Children & Young People's Services Committee Co-ordinator (Tusla)
Vivian Cummins	Vivian Cummins & Associates, Kildare Chamber of Commerce
Paddy Gleeson	Retired Agricultural/Horticultural Consultant (Teagasc)
Damian Clarke	District Conservation Officer with the National Parks and Wildlife Service. (Participation to be confirmed)