

**European Union**European Structural
and Investment Funds**European Structural and Investment
Funds
2014 - 2020****Growth Programme for England****ESI Funds Growth Programme Board****Summary Report from the National Sub-Committees****Purpose:**

This paper summarises business at National Sub-Committee meetings held in the last quarter. It lists their current membership and covers:

1. Communications Sub-Committee
2. Employment, Skills & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee
3. Equalities & Diversity Sub-Committee
4. Evaluation Sub-Committee
5. Performance & Dispute Resolution Sub-Committee
6. Smart Specialisation Sub-Committee
7. SME Competitiveness Sub-Committee
8. Sustainable Growth and Development Sub-Committee
9. Sustainable Urban Development Sub-Committee

Recommendations:

That the Growth Programme Board notes the report.

Abe Allen
GPB Secretariat
31 August 2017

Communications Sub-Committee

Membership

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| • Rob Martell (Chair)
DCLG | • Margot Tomkinson-Smith
Thames Valley Berkshire LEP | • Matt Smart
Oxford University |
| • James Ritchie (Deputy
Chair) DWP | • Alex Ledbrooke
Cornwall Council | • Liz Sheppard
Defra |
| • Thomas Corker
BEIS | • Jen Robson
North East LEP | • Laura Spencer
Big Lottery |
| • John Hacking
Third Sector National
Learning Alliance | • Laura Welham-Halstead
Greater Cambridge & Greater
Peterborough LEP | • Laure Farret
GLA |
| • Aniekan Ekwere
BEIS | | |

1. The most recent meeting of this sub-committee took place on 5 April 2017. Feedback regarding the delivery of the 2016 Activity Plan, the initial delivery of the 2017 Communications Activity Plan and plans for the annual major information activity later in the year were the main focus of the meeting. Members agreed to consult their respective sectors regarding any communications activities planned in the short-term and to share this with the sub-committee.
2. A partner evaluation / survey regarding 2016 communications activities (conducted in January / February 2017) was presented and discussed. A separate paper for information was circulated to GPB members ahead of the previous GPB meeting containing survey results and actions completed / planned as a result of the survey.
3. The managing authorities (MAs) reported on key communications activities to have taken place in 2017. These included publicity around the launch of the Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund, ESI Fund Programme partner and ERDF practitioner network bulletins, re-organisation of some pages on the ESI Fund pages on GOV.UK, publishing and promotion of calls for projects and increased joint working with partners (in particular LEPs).
4. It was re-emphasised that advising on and supporting the ongoing delivery of the 2017 Annual Activity Plan, particularly in supporting the engagement of local / national partners in communications activities, remained a key role for the sub-committee.
5. It was agreed that the need for continuing compliance with the 2014 to 2020 ESI Fund Branding and Publicity Requirements should be reinforced by MAs and delivery partners.
6. Since this meeting, periods of sensitivity (purdah) ahead of local elections and the General Election have limited opportunities for external publicity / communications activities. The next meeting of this sub-committee will take place on 4 October 2017. The focus will be the delivery of activities within the 2017 Communications Activity Plan completed to date and progress / final planning for activities still to be delivered (including the Major Annual Information Activity); and agreeing the 2018 Communications Activity Plan.

Employment, Skills and Social Inclusion Sub-Committee

Membership

- **Anne Donkin** (Chair)
DWP
- **Mark Bacon**
Keele University
- **Chris Ball**
Research Fellow,
Newcastle University
- **Becky Brookes**
Employers' Network for
Equality and Inclusion
- **Ellen Broome**
Family and Childcare Trust
- **Rita Chircop**
Greater London Authority
- **Eleanor Dearle**
Local Government
Association
- **Ted Ryan**
RnR Organisation
- **Gabrielle Melvin**
Office of Civil Society
- **Hylda Mounsey**
Cornwall Council
- **Ian Oakes**
University of
Wolverhampton
- **Sue Ormiston**
The Big Lottery Fund
- **Nicola Radford**
Coastal Communities
Alliance
- **Laura-Jane Rawlings**
Youth Employment UK
- **John Hacking**
Third Sector National
Learning Alliance
- **Nick Small**
LEP Network
- **Steve Spendlove**
DWP
- **Anna Taylor**
DWP
- **Michelle Thompson**
Department for Education
- **Marc Vermyle**
European Commission
- **Judith Walker**
DWP
- **Iain Wishart/Sarah Morris**
Education and Skills
Funding Agency

1. As at 31 May 2017: ESF committed spend of £1.465bn (an increase of £69m since January figures reported in April 2017), has Direct Bid Funding Agreements with a total value of £304.175m in place and Memoranda of Understanding for the four National Co-Financing Organisations valued at £1.161bn. ESF full applications for Technical Assistance valued at £22.1m. Progress on commitment for individual regions is:
 - Less Developed £52m (35% allocation)
 - Transitional £362m (59% allocation)
 - More Developed £1,053m (53% allocation)
2. Outputs are currently at 45% of final target. On a national basis, weaker areas of performance are spread throughout the “over 50’s”; “Unemployed (aged 25 – 29)” and “participants without basic skills” sub-groups.
3. Ian Westwood from the managing authority gave an update on the current position of work around the Operational Programme (OP) review. He also provided an update on the managing authority’s current approach to Value for Money (VfM) and future work.
4. Iain Wishart from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) spoke about the situation regarding match funding (including the Apprenticeship Levy) during the later stages of the programme.
5. The next sub-committee meeting will be on 25 October 2017.

Equality & Diversity Sub-Committee

Membership

- **Anne Donkin** (Chair)
DWP
- **Alan Beazley**
Employers' Network for
Equality and Inclusion
- **Duncan Carnie**
DWP
- **Tamara Flanagan**
New Europeans
Association
- **Rita Chircop**
Greater London Authority
- **Marc Vermyle**
European Commission
- **Alice Hood**
TUC
- **Peter Riley**
Manchester Metropolitan
University
- **Sandra Popoola**
DCLG
- **Rachel Quinn**
D2N2 Social Inclusion &
Equalities Advisory Group
- **Anna Taylor**
DWP
- **Sue Ormiston**
Big Lottery Fund
- **Jonathan Slater**
London Voluntary Service
Council
- **Steve Spendlove**
DWP
- **Shafqat Rahim**
Education and Skills
Funding Agency
- **Mark Wright**
EHRC

1. The sub-committee was due to meet on 13 July but this meeting was cancelled following a proposal that meetings of the National Sub-Committee for Equality and Diversity are held three times a year rather than quarterly was agreed.
2. The next sub-committee meeting will be held 11 October 2017.

Evaluation Sub-Committee

Membership

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|---|
| • David Morrall (Chair)
DCLG | • Michele Mazza
BEIS | • Sue Parkinson
LEP Network |
| • Aloke Siddique
BEIS | • John Hacking
VCO | • Francis Lee
LEP Network |
| • Sarah Boyall
DCLG | • Simon Jones
DCLG | • Phil Smith
Private Sector and Small
Businesses |
| • Nisha Patel
DCLG Analyst | • Emily Kent
Cornwall | • Anthony Mtitimila
Universities |
| • Anna Taylor
ESF | • Amy Coleman
Culture | • Marc Vermyle
DG Regio |
| • Justin Martin
Defra | • Marianne Law
BEIS | • Max Nathan
Academic |

1. The Evaluation Sub-Committee met on 19 April and 25 May sitting as the ERDF 2014-2020 Programme Evaluation Steering Group. The sole focus of the discussion was the draft framework and guidance for project-level evaluations, i.e. the project Summative Assessment (SA).
2. The contractors for the evaluation scoping exercise, Regeneris et al., talked through a slide presentation setting out the background to the scoping exercise and the broader detail of the SA framework and guidance. In the discussion the following points were made:
 - Selling the idea of the SAs to beneficiaries would be a key aspect of its success. Several suggestions were put forward how this could be done in addition to those benefits already set out in the guidance.
 - Regular dissemination of completed SAs to local partners and beneficiaries would help promote best practice.
 - Local ESIF sub-committees could have a role in promoting the effective implementation of SAs as well as using the material to build a narrative around the impact of the funds in their areas.
 - Local technical assistance leads could have a role in promoting and supporting the implementation of SAs in their local areas. It was noted that this would require them to receive specific training which had yet to be planned for.
 - It was proposed that all projects should consider whether counterfactual impact evaluation was an appropriate methodology for them to use. It was accepted that it would not be appropriate in all instances but where this is the case the SA template could include a field where a short explanation why could be set out.
 - It was recognised that the guidance as it stood although comprehensive could be made more accessible to project managers.
3. The next meeting will be held on 7 September 2017.

Performance & Dispute Resolution Sub-Committee

Membership

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| • Nick Dexter (Chair)
DCLG | • Anne Donkin
DWP | • Heather Waddington
Leeds City Region LEP |
| • David Malpass
DCLG | • Alex Conway
GLA | • Noel Farrell
EC: DG Regio |
| • Mary-Louise Harrison
LEP Network (more developed) | • Keith Harrison
Action for Communities in Rural Kent | • Russell Reefer
Local Government Association |
| • Simon Jones
DCLG | • Clare Osborne
Defra | • Aniekan Ekwere
BEIS |
| • David Pratt
Higher Education | • Emily Kent
Cornwall & Isles of Scilly | • James Newman
LEP Network (transition) |
| • Richard Powell
Local Nature Partnerships | | |

1. The sub-committee met on the 17 August 2017. The ESF MA presented a progress update, noting that end of May data was used due to partial completion of the project change request exercise. The paper for the GPB would reflect a more up to date picture. N+3 and performance framework were broadly on target. Less developed had ground to make up but a transfer of allocation and planned calls would bring it back on track.
2. On outputs, the ethnic minorities sub-group showed low commitments in investment priorities 1.3 and 2.1. The fact that YEI was not operational in London played a significant part on 1.3 but the MA is looking into possible causes of low commitment on 2.1.
3. The ESF MA continued to work on the review of the operational programme and aim to have an initial draft for the GPB in September. DWP is planning for formal submission to the Commission in late October/early November. Discussions on opt-ins were ongoing and an update at the September GPB was anticipated.
4. Members sought clarity around ESF and ERDF exchange rates. Discussions on updating LEP area allocations in line with the current FOREX rates continue with HMT. The use of different exchange rates between the two managing authorities for reporting purposes will be reviewed and the rationale for any difference in approach will be set out to the GPB in September.
5. The ERDF MA continues to anticipate the 2018 N+3 targets will be met and is continuing to take action to address areas of the programme where current data suggest meeting the 2018 performance framework targets may be challenging.
6. An exercise is underway to update LEP area outputs in line with the OP modification. The approach will need to be consistent with the approach already agreed by the GPB that all LEP areas make a fair and proportionate contribution to the programme performance targets. The new approach will, however, seek to introduce flexibility against investment priority level targets.

7. The policy team is also working with GDTs to understand excess/ shortfall in demand against LEP area priority axes allocations. When this review is complete the team will look whether there is any scope to “trade” priority axis allocations between LEP areas.
8. The ERDF MA gave a presentation on claims. Key points included:
 - Over 500 claims had been processed for £120m with 370 in the pipeline for £37m.
 - Some claims over 40 days were being prioritised. Over 150 claims had not been received from applicants; GDTs were chasing.
 - The MA was putting pressure on projects to ensure they were spending funds or reforecasting.
 - The MA was doing more work up front on the claims process.
 - An improving picture was emerging.
 - E-CLAIMS pilots were taking place; the move towards electronic claims would result in significant improvement.
9. The next meeting is due to be held on 9 November 2017.

Smart Specialisation Sub-Committee

Membership

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| • Paul Drabwell (Chair)
BEIS | • Prof Stephen Roper
Warwick Business School | • Prof Joe Sweeney
Huddersfield University |
| • Tricia Allen
DCLG | • Prof Roy Sandbach
Newcastle University | • Jane Elliott
ESRC |
| • Nicholas French
BEIS | • Gillian Docherty
The Data Lab | • Prof John Goddard
Newcastle University |
| • Jen Rae
NESTA | • Andrew Carter
Centre for Cities | |

1. The sub-committee last met on 1 March. A report was provided at the June Board. The sub-committee is considering the date of its next meeting.
2. The Smart Specialisation Hub continues to draw on data across LEPs to provide greater understanding of the unique strengths of regional research and innovation infrastructure. An analytical framework has been developed using a series of indicators to measure innovation performance in each LEP area. The data generated by this exercise is housed in the Hub's Observatory – a public platform. Coverage of the LEP areas continues to progress and the Hub is now planning to increase their analysis to provide greater insight against the data on innovation capabilities.
3. BEIS are providing analytical input to inform the high level discussions on the objectives of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund model – highlighting the role of innovation funding in economic productivity, and the Smart Specialisation approach as a framework for informing ERDF innovation interventions.
4. The group were invited to attend a recent workshop to explore the evidence and options for science, research and innovation interventions in support of the place agenda. Collaboration between a diverse range of innovation players, and funding nascent innovation capability were viewed as important considerations where Government could make an impact.

SME Competitiveness Sub-Committee

Membership

- **Jacqui Ward (Chair)**
Cities & Local Growth
- **Tim Courtney**
BEIS
- **David Morrall**
DCLG
- **John Bennett**
DCLG
- **John Horseman**
DCLG
- **Joe Manning**
Cities & Local Growth
- **Karen Leigh**
Cities & Local Growth
- **Sean McKee**
London Chamber of Commerce
- **Glenn Collins**
Inst. Chartered Accountants
- **Allie Rennison**
Institute of Directors
- **Dominic Williams**
Fed'n of Small Businesses
- **Thomas Parry**
Forum of Private Business
- **Lee Hopley**
Engineering Employers' Fed
- **Richard Kendall**
Humber LEP
- **Clive Lewis**
Inst. Chartered Accountants in England & Wales
- **John Goodman**
Co-operatives UK
- **Becky Hood**
Cornwall Council
- **Dawn Whiteley**
National Enterprise Network
- **Ruth Lowbridge**
Sector Skills for Enterprise
- **Louise Bennett**
Chambers of Commerce
- **Mike Spicer**
Chambers of Commerce

1. The sub-committee held its fourth meeting on 16 March 2017 and is yet to schedule another meeting within the coming months.

Sustainable Growth and Development Sub-Committee

Membership

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| • Patrick Allcorn (Chair)
BEIS | • David Read
DCLG | • John Osborne
DCLG |
| • Mark Joslyn
DCLG | • Ben Plummer
DCLG | • Meg Patel
Defra |
| • Duncan Carnie
DWP | • Graeme Kerr
Natural England | • Bill Edrich
Bristol City Council |
| • Paul Nolan
Mersey Forest | • Alice Larkin
Tyndall Centre | • Aled Jones
Anglia Ruskin University |
| • Glenn Caplin
Cornwall Council | • Chris Saville
Environment Agency | • Phil Larkin
National Trust |
| • Mark Atherton
New Economy,
Manchester | • Roger Mortlock
Gloucestershire Wildlife
Trust | • Paul Bourgeois
Greater Cambridgeshire
& Greater Peterborough
LEP |
| • Richard Powell OBE
Chair, Wild Anglia CIC | • Iva Figueredo
Greater London Authority | |

1. The sub-committee met on 25 April 2017. It will next meet on 26 September. The Board will be updated on Priorities 4, 5 & 6 as part of a presentation at the 14 September meeting.
2. Priority 4 - Low Carbon. The Committee was informed that for transitional and more developed regions Priority 4 faced a challenge to meet the 2018 Performance Framework. Within Priority 4, £50 million has been moved out into Priority 3 in response to the market demand within LEP areas; however the required category region expenditure of targets of 15% for Transition areas and 20% for More Developed remains in place.
3. Priority 5 – Flooding. In partnership with the Environment Agency, it has been agreed to extend the scope of the output definition P6 (Businesses and properties with reduced flood risk) to include businesses and properties impacted by flooding as well as those actually flooded. DCLG and the Environment Agency met in June to discuss the issues around delivering Priority 5. There is a follow up workshop on the 13 September.
4. Priority 6 - Protecting the Environment. As part of the Programme Modifications a number of LEPs have opted to move funding out of Priority 6. We are however starting to get a range of good quality projects coming forward and the Liverpool and Leeds Sustainable Urban Design Calls have been launched which incorporate Priority 6.
5. Priority 7 Transport. PA7 only applies to Cornwall and Isles of Scilly. To date three projects have been contracted to improve trans-European network: 'Assess duelling of the A30'; 'Improve train signalling'; and a 'Main Mobile Hub' to bring transport together
6. Cross Cutting Themes (CCT) – Sustainability. A review is being undertaken as part of the CCT to understand how sustainability has been implemented to date in Priority 3 and how best to maximise sustainability in future business support calls and within growth hubs.

Sustainable Urban Development and Urban Agenda Sub-Committee

Membership

- **David Morrall (Chair)**
DCLG
- **Iain Derrick**
DCLG
- **Alex Conway**
Greater London Assembly
- **Heather Waddington**
Leeds City Region
- **Jem Woolley**
Nottingham City Council
- **Paul Evans**
Manchester City Council
- **Debbie Brown**
DCLG
- **Ben Morley**
Sheffield City Region
- **Sharon Millar**
Scottish Government
- **Lloyd Broad**
Greater Birmingham and Solihull
- **Lisa Smith**
Liverpool City Region
- **Rodin McDowell**
Bristol City Council
- **Annie Ekwere**
BEIS
- **David Anderson**
Scottish Government
- **Lee Cranston**
North East Combined Authority

1. The sub-committee will schedule a meeting following IBs and calls. A report will be provided to GPB.