

**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 (January - March 2017). 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 secretary
14 March 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 | • Louise Danks
Cornwall Council | • Liz Sheppard
Defra |
| • Aniekan Ekwere
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 |
| • TBC
British Chambers of
Commerce | | |

1. The most recent meeting of this sub-committee took place on 11 October 2016. Final delivery of the activities within the 2016 Activity Plan and contents of the 2017 Communications Activity Plan 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. An evaluation / survey regarding 2016 communications activities was conducted in January / February 2017.
3. The initial months of 2017 have seen some key communications activities take place – these include publicity around the launch of the Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund, partner and 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).

Future work

4. Supporting the delivery of the 2017 Annual Activity Plan.
5. The next meeting of this sub-committee will take place on 5 April 2017. The focus will be reviewing the results of / feedback from the annual communications survey and the ongoing delivery of the 2017 Communication Activity Plan.

Employment, Skills and Social Inclusion Sub-Committee

Membership

- **Anne Donkin** (Chair)
DWP
- **Marc Vermyle**
European Commission
- **Gabrielle Melvin**
Office of Civil Society
- **Mark Bacon**
Keele University
- **Chris Ball**
The Age and Employment Network
- **Vacancy**
TUC
- **Ellen Broome**
Family and Childcare Trust
- **Rita Chircop**
GLA
- **Anna Taylor**
DWP
- **Eleanor Dearle**
Local Government Association
- **Steve Spendlove**
DWP
- **Jane Lavender**
Dept. for Education
- **Becky Brookes**
Employers' Network for Equality and Inclusion
- **Hylda Mounsey**
Cornwall Council
- **Ian Oakes**
University of Wolverhampton
- **Sue Ormiston**
The Big Lottery Fund
- **Adrian Richards**
DWP
- **Nicola Radford**
Coastal Communities Alliance
- **Laura-Jane Rawlings**
Youth Employment UK
- **Ted Ryan**
RnR Organisation
- **John Hacking**
Third Sector National Learning Alliance
- **Nick Small**
LEP Network
- **Judith Wright/Sue Johnson**
DWP
- **Sarah Tulk**
Skills Funding Agency

1. The sub-committee was due to meet on the 7 February but this meeting was cancelled due to a threatened transport strike in London.
2. The next sub-committee meeting will be on 26 April 2017.

Equalities & Diversity Sub-Committee

Membership

- **Anne Donkin** (Chair)
DWP
- **Marc Vermyle**
European Commission
- **Alan Beazley**
Employers' Network for Equality and Inclusion
- **Rita Chircop**
Greater London Authority
- **Duncan Carnie**
DWP
- **Sue Ormiston**
Big Lottery Fund
- **Tamara Flanagan**
New Europeans Association
- **Alice Hood**
TUC
- **Jonathan Slater**
London Voluntary Service Council
- **Shafqat Rahim**
Skills Funding Agency
- **Peter Riley**
Manchester Metropolitan University
- **Steve Spendlove**
DWP
- **Anna Taylor**
DWP
- **VACANCY**
Business Disability Forum
- **Mark Wright**
EHRC
- **Richard Corfield**
DCLG

1. The sub-committee met on 31 January and discussed progress of the ESF 14-20 programme. Around 47% of the programme budget had been committed by the Managing Authority (MA) through funding agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoU). The total financial commitment is £1.35 billion; of this £1.15 billion is through MoUs and £210 million through Direct Bid funding agreements. A number of ESF calls valued at £53 million have recently closed. A new Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) call has been published for the Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire (D2N2) LEP valued at £0.77million.
2. Jonathan Slater from the London Voluntary Service Council talked about some recent work that this organisation had done on the possible impact of Britain's exit from the EU.
3. Duncan Carnie gave an overview on the work that is taking place to provide equality training to MA and (Intermediate Body) IB staff. The aims of the equality training are to:
 - ensure compliance with regulations/legislation;
 - support equality in terms of the programme's performance; and
 - fulfill commitments made in the Operational Programme.
4. Duncan Carnie gave an overview of the 2016 ESF Equality Leaders Awards and the award ceremony held on the 17 November 2016 at Birmingham NEC. The sub-committee welcomed Fiona Apio-Matanda from *Reed in Partnership – Opportunity Hackney*, the winners of the ESF Gender Equality Leader Award. Ms Apio-Matanda gave a presentation on the work of *Opportunity Hackney*.
5. The next sub-committee meeting will be on 12 April 2017.

Evaluation Sub-Committee

Membership

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| • David Morrall (Chair)
DCLG | • Simon Jones
DCLG | • Fay Treloar
York St John University |
| • Derek Egan
DCLG | • Nisha Patel
DCLG | • Christian Aagaard
EC: DG Emploi |
| • Anna Taylor
DWP | • Jo Banks
Cornwall & Isles of Scilly | • Max Nathan
What Works Centre |
| • Justin Martin
Defra | • Heather Heward
LEP Network (transition) | • Anna Taylor
DWP |
| • Aloke Siddique
BEIS | • Francis Lee
LEP Network (more developed) | • Nicolette Lares
DWP |
| • John Hacking
VCO | • Phil Smith
Private sector and small businesses | |

1. Since the last national sub-committee report the evaluation sub-committee has met twice.
2. At the 2nd December 2016 meeting the main focus of the meeting was on the presentation of the ECORYS YEI report. Members are especially keen to see that all future ESIF programme reports highlight potential learning aspects. Key areas for this report included:
 - Lack of detailed integration of cross cutting themes into projects;
 - Ways of increasing the opportunities for sharing good practice across all LEPs;
 - The need for the faster resolution of queries; and
 - Ways of looking to reduce the administrative burden on beneficiaries.
3. The 23rd January 2017 meeting focussed on the ERDF national evaluation scoping exercise. The contractors, Regeneris et al., provided an outline of their work plan for delivering the project. Sub-committee members suggested that the following points should be considered when taking forward the Scoping Study:
 - match funding, particularly, exploring whether there is limited match funding and if this is leading to applicants being risk adverse and putting forward less innovative projects;
 - the project selection process;
 - added value of investments;
 - the effectiveness of partnership working;
 - lessons to be learnt for future programmes;
 - project summative assessment budget maxima (£100K or 1%), It was noted that the managing authority has taken legal advice and concluded that projects could spend in excess of these maxima if they wished; and
 - the prioritisation of the various potential evaluation activities across the programme was also raised.
4. Updates on ESF and EAFRD evaluations were also given.

Performance & Dispute Resolution Sub-Committee

Membership

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| • Nick Dexter (Chair)
DCLG | • Anne Donkin
DWP | • Heather Waddington
Leeds City Region LEP |
| • David Malpass
DCLG | • Andy Cole
College North West London | • Christian Aagaard
EC: DG Emploi |
| • Simon Jones
DCLG | • Keith Harrison
Action for Communities in
Rural Kent | • Russell Reefer
Local Government
Association |
| • Mary-Louise Harrison
LEP Network (more
developed) | • 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 2nd February 2017
2. The ERDF managing authority had updated the way data was presented in relation to progress against performance framework targets at both programme and LEP area. There was an additional action required to discount elements of the data to ensure it provided a more realistic picture of progress; this will be done for the data presented to the next meeting.
3. Progress across the programme was on the whole seen to be positive. The sub-committee did identify that progress in some LEP areas appeared to be slower than expected but the managing authority explained in the main this would be addressed when the sustainable urban development calls were launched.
4. The sub-committee members suggested that similar data could be presented at local ESIF sub-committees. The managing authority agreed they would aim to do this following further refinement including the inclusion of discounting.
5. The ESF managing authority set out that there was a healthy level of commitment across the programme but some concern that gaps were appearing between the levels of spend and targets being achieved. Sub-committee members agreed this was a real issue and the managing authority agreed to closely monitor the situation.
6. Sub-committee members also sought clarification from the managing authority on the likelihood of ESF CFOs participating in the second half of the programme. The ESF MA replied that they did not yet have information on the CFOs' intentions but appreciate the need for LEP areas to know about this. Members wanted to know whether to hold money back or commit via direct bids. The ESF MA again appreciated the need for clarity and will report on progress at the next meeting.

Smart Specialisation Sub-Committee

Membership

- **Charlotte Heyes (Chair)**
BEIS
- **Tricia Allen**
DCLG
- **Tim Courtney**
BEIS
- **Stian Westlake**
NESTA
- **Prof Stephen Roper**
Warwick Business School
- **Prof Roy Sandbach**
Newcastle University
- **Gillian Docherty**
The Data Lab
- **Alexandra Jones**
Centre for Cities
- **Prof Joe Sweeney**
Huddersfield University
- **Jane Elliott**
ESRC
- **Prof John Goddard**
Newcastle University

1. The sub-committee held its third meeting on 1st March. The impact of the EU referendum outcome on Smart Specialisation funding and what this might mean for future local growth and innovation support was discussed. The discussion of issues remains broad ranging. Key points follow:
2. An update was provided on the work of Government officials who are continuing to consider models of domestic/local growth funds in place of ESIF funding. Future funding models will be informed by a robust evidence base, and therefore input from the advisory group in developing this was welcomed.
3. A committee member presented a paper exploring how innovation systems could be better supported across all regions. The case was made for Government to facilitate strong anchor institutions in all regions that provide the capacity to connect a range of local innovation players. It was also argued that civil society should be a key additional innovation partner. It was recognised that building innovation capabilities requires long term (mortgage term) investment decisions by Government.
4. The group welcomed the opportunity to submit a collective response to the Industrial Strategy consultation. One member of the group has already submitted his own personal response. The challenge for the group is to prioritise the key issues raised in the discussions exploring place-based policy development in the context of the Industrial Strategy.
5. The Committee also received an update from the Smart Specialisation Hub. The Hub is drawing 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. Coverage of the LEP area's continue to progress. It published its first Annual Report. The report presents a cross-section of innovative, place-based activity across England with a Smart Specialisation focus.

SME Competitiveness Sub-Committee

Membership

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

1. The sub-committee held its third meeting on 27th October 2016. The discussion covered (i) DCLG progress on contracting for existing projects and progress on MI data; (ii) Industrial Strategy and (iii) priorities for post ESIF/ERDF funds. The next meeting will take place on Thursday 16th March and will focus on Industrial Strategy Green Paper actions.
2. More than 300 ERDF applications are currently being worked through including large financial instruments (Northern Powerhouse and Midlands Engine). There was no update on the data but revised MI was due to be available following the December meeting of the GPB. Some of the data previously asked for on progress with ERDF PA3 SME Competitiveness will need to be commissioned on a bespoke basis.
3. The committee heard that Industrial Strategy will consider the importance of understanding uneven economic growth across the country through a place-based lens. The Industrial Strategy Green Paper has now been published and the next committee meeting falls within the consultation period and will be a focus.
4. The sub-committee took part in a discussion which considered immediate priorities, long-term thinking about how projects will be funded in future, and the transition from Structural Funds to a long-term solution. The aim was to gather sub-committee views, to reflect and consider the challenges and risks, but also opportunities and how these will play out at the local level. The committee indicated that a broad evaluation approach is required which should be looking to build on strengths and funding programmes that are working.

Sustainable Growth and Development Sub-Committee

Membership

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

1. The sub-committee is due to meet on 25th April 2017. A report will be provided at the June GPB.

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 in early summer following IBs and calls. A report will be provided to GPB.