

European Structural and Investment Funds (2014-2020)
Growth Programme for England

ESI Funds Growth Programme Board

GPB 2015/12/16 Item 4 (iii)

Progress on EAFRD Growth Programme

Purpose:

To provide the Board with an update on the current position on the EAFRD part of the Growth Programme.

Recommendations:

The Board is invited to note the information set out in this paper.

Summary:

Overall, calls totalling £24.5m have been issued in 27 of the 37 LEP areas with RDPE funding. Full applications arising from the March calls are now being assessed. Three rounds of calls, totalling around £21.2m, were issued this summer. Outline applications from the July and August calls are also now being assessed. Applications from the September calls will be received in early January.

Work is in had to assess and improve processes in light of the first rounds of calls.

EAFRD GROWTH PROGRAMME UPDATE

1. Overall, calls totalling £24.5m have been issued in 27 of the 37 LEP areas with RDPE funding.
2. The initial set of calls for EAFRD applications, issued in five LEP areas in March, offered a total of £3.3m funding for the development of rural-based micro and small businesses and food processing enterprises. The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) invited 31 full applications, totalling £5.7m, and these are now being assessed.
3. A total of 41 further calls were issued in 26 LEP areas over the summer in 3 tranches, with a total value of £21.2m. These invited applications for business development, tourism and food processing projects, and ranged in size from £75k to £2.5m. The RPA are now assessing 102 outline applications, totalling £9m, received at the end of October in response to the July calls. The deadline for most of the August calls was the end of November and applications for the September calls are generally due in early January. A small number of the calls issued in August and September are open for 12 months with interim review points.

4. Defra and the RPA Rural Development Team are continuing to work closely with representatives of the LEP areas who have now issued calls in order to gain feedback on how the procedures and processes are working and how they might be improved further. This includes the discussion of options that might be made available to LEP Area ESIF Sub-Committees where they wish to accelerate the processing of applications.

26 November 2015
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