



**Growth Programme for England**

**Cumbria ESI Funds Sub-Committee**  
**Minutes of meeting held 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018**  
**Cumbria Rural Enterprise Agency, Rural Enterprise Centre, Redhills,**  
**Penrith, CA11 0DT**

**Agenda:**

1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Minutes of meeting and action update
3. BBB
4. ERDF Update
5. EAFRD Update
6. AOB

**1. Welcome and introduction**

The Chair welcomed members to the sub-committee and apologies were noted (See Annex B).

The declaration of interest pro-forma was circulated for members to complete.

- Rachel Lowthian declared an interest in BSUS, Eco Innovation, CUSP and EDGE projects.
- Andrea Hines declared an interest under PA2, agenda items 4b and ICTIS and Reedlands business Park project

**2. Minutes of 12<sup>th</sup> September meeting and action update**

Minutes of the 12<sup>th</sup> September meeting were agreed as a true copy.

Verbal updates were provided for:

**Previous Action 1:** EAFRD to provide an update regarding the decision of the RPA programme eligibility following on from the 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2018 meeting

**Previous Action 2:** Meeting to be held between LEP and MHCLG regarding P3 funding call.

**Previous Action 3:** Call templates require updating following ESIF comments.

**Members noted updates, actions are closed.**

**2a. Previous Action 4:** Slippage information to be broken down at project level.

An overview of the project level slippage report was provided to the committee. Members informed that although ERDF has met their N+3 target, the MA continues to work closely with GR to reduce project slippage. RP explained the steps taken by the MA to prevent and rectify project slippage against financial and deliverable targets. A report on project level slippage will be provided going forward at LEP committees. Members agreed that providing this information is useful.

Members requested information on the reason for project slippage and for this to be broken down at a project level. Members were informed that this information is not provided to other LEPs and to ensure consistency and fairness may not be provided, this request will be relayed to MHCLG.

**Action 1: Request for information on projects reasoning for slippage to be discussed with MHCLG.**

**Action 2: Meeting to be held between MHCLG and SF to discuss the level of detail provided within MI reports.**

**2b. Previous Action 6:** Determine if equality and diversity monitoring information is gathered, this will be discussed at the next meeting.

ERDF Equality and monitoring data collection information was discussed; members noted the position and will welcome these reports.

**This action is now closed.**

**2c. Previous Action 5:** VA to speak internally regarding the offer of additional support made by CE.

VA provided a paper in her absence to update members on the action, members noted information.

(See EAFRD update below for additional comments).

**This action is now closed.**

### **3. British Business Bank (BBB) Update**

SB delivered a presentation which provided an overview on BBB's objectives and current financial and investment position. A breakdown of the financial and investment position for the Cumbria area was provided. Discussions were held around the Northern Power House Investments funds (NPIF). Members explored the potential to increase their investment in NPIF.

Twenty applications were received in Cumbria in which seven progressed to investment. Members discussed concerns regarding the low conversion rate from applications to investments. SB discussed the reason for this. SB noted that the BBB is in the process of tracking applicants who do not reach investment stage, to collate data on the funding they are accessing.

Case studies of businesses that have accessed investment were presented. The Finance Hub has been launched this provides useful guides and tool kits to SME's to explore the support available. BBB are utilising social media platforms to promote the funds and attract new applicants. Members agreed that there is a need for the funding to be made more visible and for potential applicants of the fund to have a greater awareness and understanding.

**Action 3: CW to investigate if a link to BBB website is on the LEP website and if not to see if this can be made available.**

**Action 4: If members would like to be added to the BBB mailing list to receive the newsletter please email Marie Coulson who will forward this request on.**

Feedback was provided by CW regarding the work of Maria Ramsdale (Investment manager) stating she has a prominent, positive presence within Cumbria and provides a wider package of support.

### **4. ERDF Update**

4a. MHCLG provided project updates since the last ESIF sub-committee. The following was noted:

- Two full applications under PA3 and PA5 are due, members requested an update regarding the dates of which the applications are due.
- PA2 ICTIS project has entered into a funding agreement with MHCLG; the project will provide a further package of business support to SMEs in Cumbria.
- The appraisal of the PA3 business premises application is due to be completed; members requested an update on the status of the appraisal.

**Action 5: MHCLG to confirm the dates that the PA3 business support and PA5 flood defence full applications are due.**

**Action 6: MHCLG to provide an update regarding the status of the PA3 business premises application.**

4b. Management Information papers were introduced and discussed. A breakdown on the programme progress against allocations and the current slippage rate was provided. Current programme slippage on actual expenditure claimed is at 43%. Overall slippage on outputs was discussed. Members requested for output slippage information to be broken down at a project level.

A discussion was held prior to the meeting between JA and RP regarding ways to raise awareness and promote uptake of ERDF funds. RP asked committee members to raise awareness within the sectors they are representing to promote the access and uptake of ERDF funding.

Members discussed the interest observed from potential applicants within the current round of funding calls. Members discussed concerns and barriers to accessing the funds. The main barrier appeared to be the ability to secure match funding. Options to overcome these barriers were explored by members.

Members provided positive feedback regarding the work and support of Mark Joslyn (MHCLG), stating he has gone above and beyond to provide support to applicants.

**Action 7: Output slippage to be broken down at a project level.**

## **5. EAFRD Update**

A management Information report was provided for members to note.

The committee continue to raise concerns with the application and decision informing process. Committee members discussed concerns around the lack of explanation on how the department is working to rectify the delays in informing applicants of decisions and how far behind they are with this process.

## **6. AOB**

No other business.

**Date, time and venue of future meetings:**

All meetings will be held at Cumbria Rural Enterprise Agency, Rural Enterprise Centre, Redhills, Penrith, CA11 0DT, between 13:00 – 15:00 on the following dates:

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2019

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2019

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2019

## Annex A - Actions

### List of Agreed Actions from 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018 Cumbria Sub-Committee Meeting

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Action Assigned to</b>
<b>2.a</b>	<b>Action 1:</b> Request for information on projects reasoning for slippage to be discussed with MHCLG.	Ruth Pugsley
<b>2.a</b>	<b>Action 2:</b> Meeting to be held between MHCLG and SF to discuss the level of detail provided within MI reports.	Ruth Pugsley, and Sami Falou
<b>3</b>	<b>Action 3:</b> CW to investigate if a link to BBB website is on the LEP website and if not to see if this can be made available	Corinne Watson
<b>3</b>	<b>Action 4:</b> If members would like to be added to the BBB mailing list to receive newsletter please email Marie Coulson who will forward this request on.	Committee Members
<b>4a</b>	<b>Action 5:</b> MHCLG to confirm the dates that the PA3 business support and PA5 flood defence full applications are due.	MHCLG
<b>4a</b>	<b>Action 6:</b> MHCLG to provide an update regarding the status of the PA3 business premises application.	MHCLG
<b>4b</b>	<b>Action 7:</b> Output slippage to be broken down at a project level.	MHCLG

## Annex B - Attendee List

### Cumbria ESI Funds Sub-Committee 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018 meeting

#### Chair & Deputy Chair:

Name, title and organisation	Sector/Organisation Representing
Jackie Arnold (Chair)	Cumbria LEP/Private Sector
Ruth Pugsley	MHCLG

#### Sub-Committee Members:

Name, title and organisation	Sector/Organisation Representing
Alison Hatcher (AH)	Technical Officer Group
Andrea Hines (AH)	Allerdale BC
Sami Falou (SF)	BEIS
Rachel Lowthian (RL)	University of Cumbria

#### Others in attendance (non-members - including secretariat):

Name, title and organisation	Sector/Organisation Representing
Corinne Watson (CW)	Cumbria LEP
Marie Coulson (MC)	MHCLG – Secretariat
Sue Barnard (SB)	British Business Bank

#### Apologies:

Name, title and organisation	Sector/Organisation Representing
Maureen Stafford	DWP
Ken Gyles	Trade Union Congress
Daniel Heery	Business Co-Ordination Group
Chris Nattress	Lakes College
Will Johnson	MHCLG
Chris Edwards	Rural and Local Action Groups
Vicki Allonby	EAFRD
Aftab Khan	Equality and Diversity
Suzanne Caldwell	Cumbria Chamber
Paul Armstrong	University of Cumbria
Jo Lappin	Cumbria LEP
Alan Smith	Allerdale BC
Jeremy Westgarth	Environment Agency