

## **ESI Funds Growth Programme Board**

### **1. Progress on EAFRD Growth Programme**

**Purpose:**

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

**Recommendations**

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

**Summary:**

As at 3 March under the 3 rounds of the RDPE Growth Programme, a total of £170m had been awarded in grants to 1,054 projects across the Tourism Infrastructure, Food Processing, Business Development and Tourism Co-operation themes.

Of this £170m, £105m has been paid out, contracting 6,078 FTE jobs, of which 1,812 have already been created.

In addition, there are 17 contracts for funding totalling £69m under the Rural Broadband Infrastructure offer. These projects are now underway and at varying stages of delivery.

All allocated RDPE Growth Programme funding has, therefore, now been committed to projects.

In addition to this update paper a 2<sup>nd</sup> RDPE Socio-Economic Scheme case study brochure will be circulated which shows the type and breadth of projects funded under the 2014-20 Programme.

## **EAFRD GROWTH PROGRAMME UPDATE**

### *Delivery Update*

1. As at 3 March, £170m of grant funding had been awarded to 1,054 projects under the three rounds of the RDPE Growth Programme. The Rural Payments Agency completed the contracting stage of the final round of this scheme on schedule in June 2021. All allocated RDPE Growth Programme funding has, therefore, now been committed to projects.
2. Of the £170m that has now been awarded, £105m has been paid to projects. To date, 6,078 FTE jobs have been contracted and 1,812 created.
3. The main EAFRD Growth Programme has provided funding to projects under four separate Measures within the EU Rural Development Regulations: Measure 4.2 (Food Processing); Measure 6.4 (Rural Business Development); Measure 7.5 (Tourism Infrastructure); and Measure 16.2 (Tourism Cooperation).
4. Under the Tourism Infrastructure Measure, 125 projects have been awarded £27m of grant funding and £20m has so far been paid out to projects.
5. Under the separate Tourism Cooperation Measure, which was only offered in Round 1, 12 projects were contracted which have now completed and £552k has been spent.
6. Food processing contracts totalling £74m have been awarded to 259 projects. To date spend is £43m.
7. There have been 658 Rural Business Development projects contracted under Measure 6.4, worth £68m. Of this, £42m of funding has been paid to date.

### *Rural Broadband Infrastructure Fund*

8. In addition to the four Measures being used under the main EAFRD Growth Programme, a fifth Measure (7.3) is the basis for the Rural Broadband Infrastructure Fund, which is supporting Local Authorities to bring superfast broadband to some of the most remote parts of rural England.
9. There are currently 17 live RBIS contracts, totalling £69m. The infrastructure funded is forecast to 'pass' 15,383 business premises and 61,001 other premises, to the benefit of a population of 154,053.
10. Projects are now in the delivery stage: eight Local Authorities have made claims and a total of £13.9m has been paid. All projects need to be completed and claims made by 31 December 2022.
11. Some broadband projects have indicated delays to project delivery due to shortage of workers with the necessary skills and of some components. However, all are working to a final claim date of 31 December 2022.

### *Socio-Economic Scheme Case Study Brochure*

12. A second RDPE Socio-Economic Scheme case study booklet which shows the type and breadth of projects funded under the 2014-20 Programme will be circulated to the Growth Programme board.
13. As well as Growth Programme projects it covers the full range of socio-economic schemes, including Countryside Productivity, LEADER, the Water Environment Grant scheme, the England Coast Path and the European Innovation Partnership.
14. The booklet is still officially a draft as we are in the process of gaining agreement from project holders to use their details.
15. The studies are available for monitoring and evaluation work and will be used as part of the ex-post evaluation.

Tony Williamson

8 March 2022

## ANNEX 1

**Table 1. Rural Broadband infrastructure offer.**

<b>As at 3 March</b>	<b>Rural Broadband</b>
Total Budget	79.5
Full Applications received	23
Value of Grant Sought (£m)	86
Number withdrawn/rejected	6
Number Contracted	17
Value of contract (£m)	68.9
Value of grant paid to date (£m)	13.9
Number Projects closed	-

**Table 2. Project outputs to date by theme.**

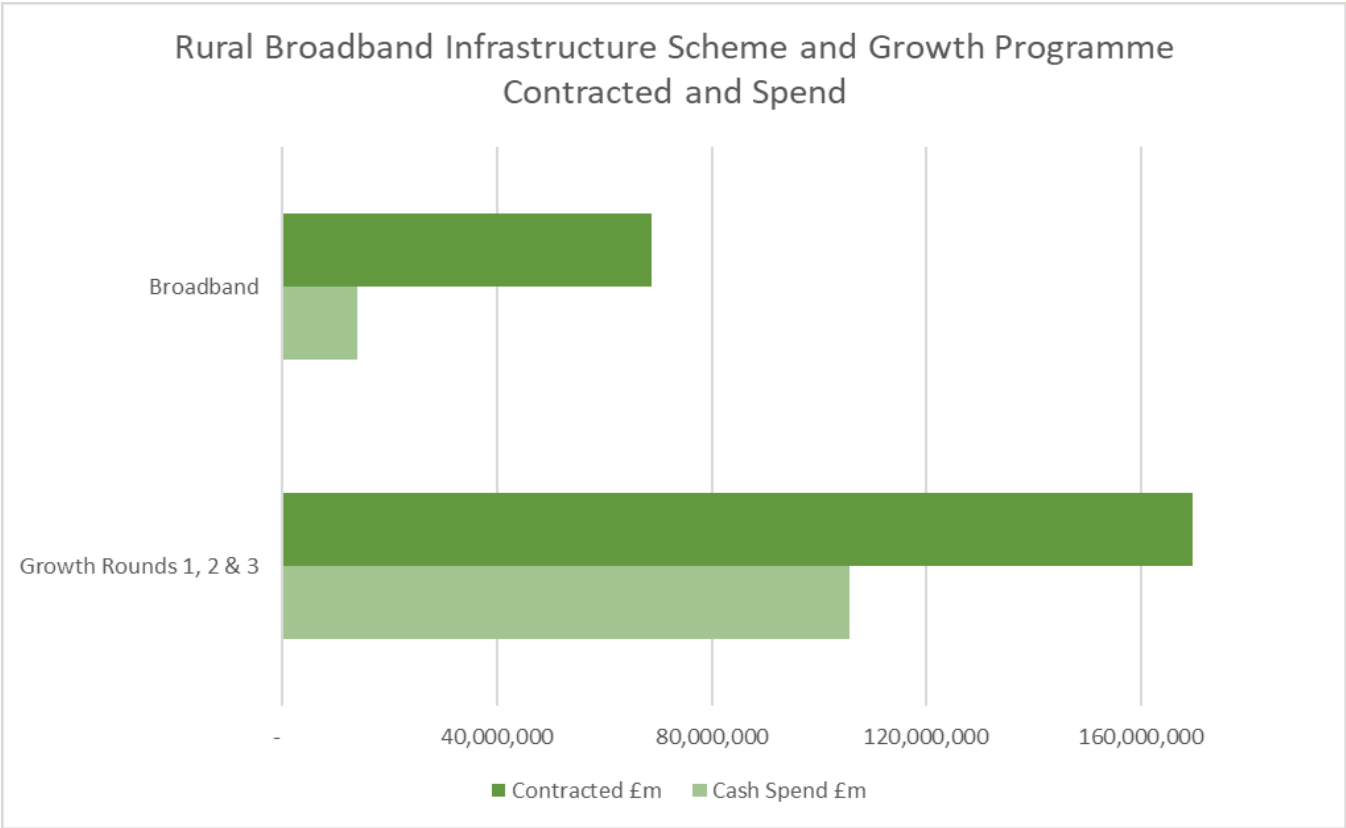
<b>Rounds 1-3</b>	<b>RDPE Growth Programme</b>	<b>Food Processing</b>	<b>Business Development</b>	<b>Tourism Infrastructure and Cooperation</b>
FTE Jobs Forecast	6,078	2,966	2,004	1,108
FTE Jobs Created	1,812	877	526	408

**Table 3: Total number of RDPE Growth Programme projects, funding committed and spend by theme as of 3 March 2022.**

<b>Theme/Measure</b>	<b>No. of Projects</b>	<b>Funding Committed £m</b>	<b>Spend to Date £m</b>
<b>Food Processing (M4.2)</b>	259	73,533,567	43,182,692
<b>Business Development (M6.4)</b>	658	68,197,362	42,074,987
<b>Tourism Infrastructure (M7.5)</b>	125	27,474,368	19,816,773
<b>Tourism Cooperation (M16.2)*</b>	12	601,362	552,431
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,054</b>	<b>£169,806,659</b>	<b>£105,074,452</b>

\*Theme offered in Round 1 only.

**Figure 1. Growth Programme Rural Broadband Infrastructure Scheme, Round 1, 2 and 3 contracted and spend actual figures 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022.**



**Figure 2: Percentage Growth Programme Spend per Theme as at 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022.**

