



ESIF Funds Growth Programme Board

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 of 1 March, under the 3 rounds of the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) Growth Programme, a total of £155m had been awarded in grants to 968 projects across the Tourism Infrastructure, Food Processing, Business Development and Tourism Co-operation themes.

Of this £155m, a total of £152m has been paid out. To date jobs created are 5,130 exceeding those contracted by 92 and as businesses continue to expand this figure will continue to increase.

In addition, there are 17 contracts for funding totalling £69m under the Rural Broadband Infrastructure offer.

There are now only 7 Growth Programme and 1 Rural Broadband Infrastructure Scheme projects left to complete. These are being supported by the RPA to finish and submit final claims as soon as possible.

EAFRD GROWTH PROGRAMME UPDATE

Total Scheme Delivery Update

1. As of 28th November 2023, £155m of grant funding had been awarded to 968 projects under the three closed rounds of the RDPE Growth Programme.
2. Of the £155m that has now been awarded, £152m has been paid to projects. In total 5,038 FTE jobs were contracted, and RPA records show that this has been exceeded and 5,130 have been 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. Since 1 July 2022, EAFRD Growth Programme payments have been made from domestic funding.

Rural Broadband Infrastructure Fund

5. 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.
6. There is currently 1 live RBIS contracts and 16 closed projects where £52m has been paid to projects. The infrastructure funded is forecast to 'pass' 15,282 business premises and 60,244 other premises, to the benefit of a population of 152,160.

Emma Friend

11th March 2024

ANNEX 1

Table 1. Project outputs to date by theme.

| Rounds 1-3 | RDPE Growth Programme | Food Processing | Business Development | Tourism Infrastructure and Cooperation |
|-------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| FTE Jobs Forecast | 5,038 | 2,543 | 1,758 | 737 |
| FTE Jobs Created | 5,130 | 2,384 | 1,822 | 924 |

Figure 1. Growth Programme Rural Broadband Infrastructure Scheme, Round 1, 2 and 3 contracted and spend actual figures 1st March 2024.

