



GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership

Board Paper – 8th October 2019

Agenda Item 5	ESIF Programme Update October 2019
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Supporting Papers	Item 5 ESIF Financial Summary (Commercial in Confidence)
Confidentiality	Item 5 ESIF Financial Summary (Commercial in Confidence)
Purpose	To inform the Board of delivery progress to date of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) Programme in Gloucestershire
Summary	<p>The current funding programme covers 2014-2020. GFirst’s ESIF Strategy continues to be the main source document for implementation of the funding in Gloucestershire. The local ESIF committee (chaired by Adam) has performed well. There has been very satisfactory progress across all three funding streams (ERDF, ESF and EAFRD) The attached confidential document provides a financial summary of the current position.</p> <p>ERDF: Gloucestershire is on track to use the total allocation of ERDF funds. This has been used to support successful projects across all priority axis (PA1 - Innovation, PA2 – Broadband, PA3 – SME Competitiveness, PA4 – Low carbon and PA6 – Environment). Of the £17,755,697 available, £9,989,628 has been contracted. Calls for the remaining £6,333,000 across PA1, PA3, PA4 and PA6 were published in June. The outline application deadline was the 30th September. Following considerable activity by the technical assistance team, there is a good pipeline for all these opportunities, and confidence is therefore high that the majority of the available funds will be spent in Gloucestershire. Any unspent local funds will be collected centrally and be the subject of a new national call by the end of 2019.</p> <p>Brexit (ERDF): The UK Government has confirmed that funding for projects contracted under ERDF will be secure regardless of the outcome and timetable for Brexit, as long as the grant funding agreements are signed in 2020 and the projects completed by June 2023</p> <p>ESF: This fund covers work on employability, social inclusion and skills/lifelong learning. All skills projects have been in delivery since 2017. Projects include: Goal apprenticeship support, entrepreneurial skills, EDGE Employment Pathfinder, STEM skills and Skills for low carbon.</p>

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	<p>The social inclusion (via Big Lottery) and employability (via DWP) ‘first stage’ projects have been delivering and discussions are ongoing with the Managing Authority (DWP) to plan for what will follow these projects. Planning is underway at a national and local level to establish the final phases of ESF delivery.</p> <p>EAFRD: Gloucestershire’s focus to date has been on Rural Tourism, with £2,893,392 available. Following considerable awareness activity the response has been strong. £2,213,143 has been contracted, and the remaining £680,249 will be contracted soon. This leave a pipeline in excess of £2m which puts Gloucestershire in a very strong position to benefit from anticipated national calls to be announced in the New Year (subject to Ministerial approval). These calls are expected to be for ‘Business development’, ‘Tourism infrastructure’ and ‘Food processing’.</p> <p>Brexit (EAFRD): All EAFRD funds must be spent by September 2021. If the national calls go ahead, they would be launched in October 2019, with the process accelerated to Funding agreements by September 2020, and all claims made by September 2021.</p>
Implications, impacts or risks	There are limited risks associated with the programme at this stage.
Decision required	None required. The Board is asked to note the current position.
Recommendations	n/a

For further information about any points raised in this Board paper, please contact Mally Findlater:
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