

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment
Date:	21 April 2015
Title:	EU Programme – Project Opportunities
Reference:	6615
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

Contact name: David Fletcher

Tel: 01962 846125

Email: david.fletcher@hants.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

1.1. The purpose of this paper is to seek approval for Hampshire County Council to utilise resources in identifying, pursuing and securing appropriate project opportunities within the Economy, Transport and Environment portfolio of activities, supported through the EU programme being co-ordinated through both the Solent LEP and Enterprise M3 LEP.

1.2. This paper seeks to:

- Set out the background to the decision;
- Provide information on the forthcoming EU programme and the potential opportunities to secure funding;
- Make recommendations in relation to the suggested approach to such opportunities.

2. Background

2.1. For the 2014 – 2020 European funding period, in England the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) have been tasked with co-ordinating the European Structural Funds. These consist of revenue funding from three strands, namely, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) designed to support innovation, business growth, and low carbon technologies; the European Social Fund (ESF) focussed at promoting skills, employability and social inclusion; and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) for promoting rural development.

2.2. LEPs were asked to submit their draft strategies to central government in October 2013, setting out how they plan to spend the funds in their areas.

- 2.3. The Solent LEP area has secured £18.7M from ERDF, £17.9M from ESF and £1.4M from EAFRD over the life of the programme.
- 2.4. The Enterprise M3 LEP area has secured a total of £21.2M from ERDF, £17.3M from ESF and £4.5M from EAFRD.
- 2.5. It should be noted that the EU funding has to be matched on a 50/50 basis.
- 2.6. Whilst the LEPs will promote the competitive calls for proposals across the different EU funding streams, and will have a role in evaluating proposals, the final decisions and contracting arrangements will fall to the individual managing authorities, i.e. the Government departments responsible for each funding stream.

3. Potential Opportunities

- 3.1. The potential opportunities for Hampshire County Council's Economic Development function, in conjunction with appropriate partner organisations, could include:
 - Sector and technology growth related programmes (ERDF);
 - Rural tourism related programmes (EAFRD);
 - Growth Hub / business support related projects (ERDF).
- 3.2. It would be the intention of the Economic Development function to assemble appropriate combinations of partner organisations in order to develop and submit proposals, in response to specific calls for proposals where these align with our economic development related priorities.
- 3.3. In terms of contracting for the EU funding with the relevant managing authority, it would be usual for the County Council to be positioned as the contracting / accountable body, unless circumstances or the nature of the project suggested a more effective alternative approach. Expertise exists within the County Council's Economic Development team in relation to compliance with the requirements of EU funding contracts.
- 3.4. Progress on pursuing these opportunities will be reported to Members in the appropriate forum.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1. That the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment gives approval for Hampshire County Council to utilise resources in identifying, pursuing and securing appropriate project opportunities within the Economy, Transport and Environment portfolio of activities, supported through the EU programme being co-ordinated through both the Solent LEP and Enterprise M3 LEP.

- 4.2. That the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment delegates authority to the Director for Economy, Transport and Environment, in consultation with the Head of Legal Services and the Director of Corporate Services, to finalise and conclude appropriate partnership agreements, where necessary, with relevant partner organisations for the development and delivery of such projects.
- 4.3. That the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment delegates authority to the Director for Economy, Transport and Environment, in consultation with the Head of Legal Services and the Director of Corporate Services, to finalise and conclude appropriate contractual agreements with the relevant managing authorities for the funding streams for such projects.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	no
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:		
<u>Title</u> None.	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u>
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives		
<u>Title</u> England 2014 to 2020 European Structural and Investment Funds Growth programme handbook https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/england-2014-to-2020-european-structural-and-investment-funds-growth-programme-handbook/england-2014-to-2020-european-structural-and-investment-funds-growth-programme-handbook		<u>Date</u> 6 Nov 2014

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equality Duty

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

The decision relates to arrangements for the County Council to bid for European Funding and as such has no direct impact upon members of the public or individuals with protected characteristics. As projects are developed and potentially funded by EU funding streams, appropriate specific assessments will be undertaken.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1. Not applicable.

3. Climate Change:

3.1. How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

Not applicable.

- 3.2. How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

Not applicable.