

## Report of the Director of Place

External Funding Panel – 5 August 2015

### OVERVIEW OF CURRENT AND FORTHCOMING EUROPEAN AND EXTERNAL FUNDING APPLICATIONS

<b>Purpose:</b>	To provide an update on current and planned European and other External funding applications
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Swansea Bay City Region Economic Regeneration Strategy.
<b>Reason for Decision:</b>	1) Update on European and External funding applications 2) Approval to submit certain project enquiry forms
<b>Consultation:</b>	Legal, Finance and Access to Services.
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	1) That the proposed Workways + application and funding package be supported
<b>Report Author:</b>	Paul Relf
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Paul Cridland, Jayne James
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Wendy Parkin
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Kirsty Roderick, Catherine Window, Phil Couch

## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 This paper is an update on the European and External funding report to the 3 June 2015 External Funding Panel, aiming to provide:

- an update on European and External funding applications in progress or nearing approval
- early notification of proposed forthcoming funding applications and programmes

The applications are categorised by funding programme and theme. Information included in the previous report is not repeated.

## **2.0 Hafod & Morfa Copperworks site**

### WREN

2.2 A decision from WREN on the application approved at the 3 June 2015 meeting for £75,000 towards repairs to the Musgrave Engine House is still awaited.

### Heritage Lottery Fund – Enterprise

2.3 Following the submission of the project enquiry form approved at the 3 June 2015 meeting, HLF have requested further details and a site meeting to take place in August 2015.

## **3.0 City Centre Regeneration**

### European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Priority 4 Objective 4 proposal for Kingsway employment hub

3.2 Following agreement from the Panel to progress the WEFO Logic Table for the Kingsway Employment Hub, and agreement at Swansea Bay City Region Pillar 3, the proposal is going forward as a standalone component of a regional package of proposals from South West region. A meeting with WEFO has been scheduled for 21 August 2015 with the aim of securing agreement for the package of projects to proceed to the next application stage.

### European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Priority 4 Objective 4 Welsh Government 'Use it or Lose it' scheme submissions

3.4 The prioritised list including three Swansea proposals have now been agreed by Pillar 3 of the Swansea Bay City Region Board, has now been submitted to Welsh Government for inclusion in the national 'Use it or Lose It' business plan. Further detail on the next steps of the process is awaited from Welsh Government.

### URBACT III

- 3.5 Contact will be made shortly with the URBACT support unit to explore the proposed application for a problem solving partnership around the theme of innovation further.

### Parks for People

- 3.14 An opportunity has been identified to consider a submission to the Parks for People lottery-funded programme for a scheme that could combine reconfiguration of the Kingsway with an upgrade to Castle Square. More information will be provided in the next update.

### Alternative options for funding City Centre regeneration

- 3.15 Discussions underway.

## **4.0 European Social Fund**

- 4.1 Background detail on the European Social Fund can be found in the 3 June 2015 summary report to the panel.

### Cynydd and 'Symud 'Mlan

- 4.4 Pembrokeshire County Council are leading two proposals for working with young people who are either NEET or at risk of becoming NEET (not in education, training or employment) which are described in the previous report. Costings are yet to be finalised for these projects. Approval is likely to be delayed until November 2015 at the earliest.

### Workways +

- 4.5 Workways + will be the only employability project submitted for ESF support from the South West region. The project will focus on a narrow target group of those who are economically inactive, but living outside of Communities First wards. (Communities First wards will be served by the national 'Communities 4 Work' ESF project only – see separate report). The project will not support those who can readily access support from mainstream job centre support, or those who are not able to work.

Draft costings and proposed funding package are appended to the report.

As a point of principle, learning the lessons from previous programmes and projects and discussion in June 2014 at Executive Board, it is proposed that the European Office are formally part of the project management of all EU-funded schemes.

**Recommendation: That the proposed application and funding package be supported.**

## **5.0 Rural Development Plan 2014-2020**

- 5.1 A draft rural local development strategy was submitted to Welsh Government in September 2014 in consultation with Cabinet Member for Regeneration. The document has been approved but is to be subject to detailed annual review.
- 5.2 Welsh Government has now invited the submission of delivery profiles. Once accepted the Swansea Rural Local Development Strategy will be recommended for formal approval.
- 5.3 The Cabinet Report recommending the approval of the delivery of the Rural Development Plan 2014-2020 'LEADER' Programme was approved on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2015.
- 5.4 As part of the LEADER programme a small team of three officers within the European Team will be required to administer and support the Local Action Group, and report to Welsh Government. Following the approval of the Cabinet Report the next stage will be to appoint staff to undertake delivery of this programme.
- 5.5 The Rural Community Development Fund (RCDF) has now been launched by Welsh Government and includes themes around Access to Services and Village Renewal. Guidance for this capital scheme has recently been published and a deadline for the submission of Expressions of Interest has been set for 31<sup>st</sup> January 2016.
- 5.6 As a requirement of the RCDF scheme all applicants at community level must discuss their ideas and proposals with the LEADER Local Action Group (LAG) for their area before submitting their application to the Welsh Government. This is so that the LAGs may check the fit with the priorities of the Local Development Strategy (LDS) for Swansea and help to develop the community-led proposals.

## **6.0 European Fisheries Fund**

- 6.1 The current round of European Fisheries Fund is due to end on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015, with a number of projects successfully supported by the Swansea Bay Fisheries Local Action Group (SBFLAG), including the Fish is the Dish Education Programme that has been delivered to over 20 primary school classes throughout the Swansea Bay area.
- 6.2 Arrangements for 2014-2020 round of European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) are yet to be finalised by Welsh Government. The start date for the next programme is likely to be delayed until spring 2016.

6.3 The programme will be small scale with an indicative budget of £12M nationally covering all measures, but potentially very useful area of funding for fisheries and marine-related developments and studies. The funding will present an opportunity to build upon developments made under EFF and support other proposals.

## **7.0 Other European programmes**

7.1 A range of other opportunities exist, particularly through programmes designed for joint problem-solving through regions across Europe and beyond working together. Programme titles and weblinks to draft programme documents are provided as part of Annex A.

7.2 General characteristics of these programmes:

- Usually should include at least one other member state – varies between programmes
- Primarily revenue expenditure, only limited scope for capital works
- There must be a European dimension to project proposals – not just bolted on to a local initiative to secure funding.
- Opportunities to work with other cities and regions across EU to work on joint problems and issues.
- Grant rates usually generous, 75-80%.

As approved at the external funding panel meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2015, opportunities to access other European programmes will be actively explored.

## **8.0 Equality and Engagement Implications**

8.1 Every European programme is subject to a full Equality (and Environmental) Impact Assessment, which are available for public consultation as programme development progresses. Projects and strategies developed for submission to the programme must detail how they will address equality issues as a cross-cutting theme. The level of integration of equality into project and strategy design is part of the formal development and assessment process for every strategy and project seeking European funding.

## **9.0 Financial Implications**

9.1 A number of issues need to be considered based on experience from the current programming round:

- Statutory provision is not eligible for European funding support.
- Need to take advantage of flat rate costing methodologies where possible across all council EU projects/contracts, e.g. overheads in line with WEFO guidance.

- Ensure resourcing is proportionate to the scale of schemes being undertaken with costs to support European Team staff included in applications where appropriate, including appropriate finance, audit, grant claim and procurement expertise. This will also ensure all eligible costs required are included, e.g. external audit costs.
- Ensure provision is made to allow for ineligible expenditure and other project related costs such as prior service in relation to redundancy.
- Consider the implications on central services of scale of activities proposed and associated administration requirements.
- Ensure appropriate procurement
- Ensure match funding options are identified before the submission of application as resources become increasingly constrained as cash and staff resources continue to reduce, affecting the Council's ability to attract EU funding.
- Ensure there is robust document retention and storage to meet EU audit requirements

## **10.0 Legal Implications**

- 10.1 Documentation prepared to support implementation of current collaborative arrangements will need to be reviewed against updated WEFO guidance, taking into account lessons learned from current implementation arrangements.
- 10.2 Generally the terms attached to EU Grant Funding are legally binding and should be formally recorded in an appropriate document/contract. Any joint bid by Regional Partners should similarly be so recorded and governance issues clarified in terms of legal responsibility and decision making.

## **Background Papers:**

Workways+ Draft costings