



GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership

Board Paper – 18th August 2020

Agenda Item 5a	ESIF Programme Update August 2020
Paper Author & contact details	Mally Findlater mally.findlater@gfirstlep.com
Supporting Papers	Item 5a (i) ESIF Financial Summary (Commercial in Confidence)
Confidentiality	Item 5a (i) 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>The information on all projects has recently been updated, and can be viewed here: www.gfirstlep.com/projects/</p> <p>ERDF: Gloucestershire has committed the majority of the county’s 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 £17,686,971 available, £15,862,257 has been allocated. The majority have been contracted, with a few in the final stages of their Grant Funding Agreement negotiations. This leaves a shortfall of £1,824,714. Although a few projects slightly reduced their projects, this shortfall was mainly due to a project in PA4 – Low carbon being withdrawn by Gloucestershire County Council, due to the complexity of stakeholder match and commitment. PA4 has been difficult in all regions, and we have done well to deliver the successful Target 2020 and 2030 projects (spending £1,806,129). We were able to commit slightly higher than our original allocation in PA2 and PA3, as we took advantage of the opportunity to reprofile across the priority axis.</p> <p>Prior to Covid, the intention was for any unspent local funds to be collected centrally and be the subject of a new national call. However, this has changed, and the allocation is an unfolding picture. An early initiative is the allocation of ERDF funds to bolster Growth Hub activities: Gloucestershire has benefitted.</p>

Agenda Item 5a

	<p>ESF: This fund covers work on employability, social inclusion and skills/lifelong learning. A total of £18,444,612 has been committed to Gloucestershire’s skills projects, which have been in delivery since 2017. Projects include: Goal apprenticeship support, entrepreneurial skills, EDGE Employment Pathfinder, STEM skills and Skills for low carbon. The social inclusion (via Big Lottery) and employability (via DWP) projects have been delivering well 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 initially through local calls was on Rural Tourism. £2,309,175 has been allocated to a large number of small projects (minimum £20K). With a healthy pipeline, the county’s rural businesses were then well placed to respond to a national call with the broader focus of ‘Business development’, ‘Tourism infrastructure’ and ‘Food processing’. Applications are being processed and we look forward to hearing whether any Gloucestershire businesses have been successful.</p>
<p>Implications, impacts or risks</p>	<p>There are limited risks associated with the programme at this stage.</p>
<p>Decision required</p>	<p>None required. The Board is asked to note the current position.</p>
<p>Recommendations</p>	<p>n/a</p>

For further information about any points raised in this Board paper, please contact Mally Findlater: mally.findlater@gfirstlep.com