

## Newsletter 36: 29<sup>th</sup> February 2008

This is part of a fortnightly series of newsletters that will help explain the process and progression towards the Convergence Programmes for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. The newsletters will contain the most up to date information about Convergence as it evolves over the coming months. Updated information will appear in bold blue type.

### PARTNERS' PERSPECTIVE

#### TOLERANCE – Mark Yeoman, The Partnership Office

Tolerance and regional development

“ ‘Some People Are Gay – Get Over It’ says one of the billboards outside my office. This got me thinking about the importance of tolerance in regional development.

Skilled people

“The Convergence mission is to build a more wealth creating economy, in particular one built on the greater use of knowledge, technology and innovation in business. One of the key underlying drivers of economic development is highly skilled and educated people – not simply in terms of educational achievement but experience, creativity and entrepreneurial flair.

More than university provision

“So what helps shape this and its impact on business? Without doubt having university provision is important, both in terms of graduates / postgraduates but also in research and the links to business – but is it enough on its own?

From knowledge to economic gain

“Education levels measure potential. How best can this be converted into economically productive work? And from a local perspective if we are investing in Research & Development, Innovation etc here in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly how can this economic gain be made to happen here? As we all know knowledge is mobile! Greater levels of Higher Education are a necessary step but insufficient on its own.

Maximise potential

“We need to make the education / innovation / economic impact in the same location happen – it will not be an automatic response. We must maximise its potential for wealth generation here in Cornwall.

Factors working together

“Technology, workforce skills, business support in all its forms (from finance to workspace), growing the diversity of the business base itself – will all play their part.

## **Diversity**

**“But we also need to be open to new perspectives, new ideas and all people – diversity of ideas, people and approaches is the bedrock of business innovation. We need:**

- **to be open-minded, meritocratic, tolerant of risk and orientated to self expression, innovative and entrepreneurial;**
- **mechanisms that increase the productivity of entrepreneurial activity;**
- **tolerance or openness to difference to make the most of all our local talent;**
- **to ensure that there are the minimum of barriers for all people to play their full role in the economy;**
- **to attract the broadest range of talent across racial, ethnic and other lines – we simply do not know who or from where the next Richard Trevithick will come; and**
- **to build knowledge transfer networks to spread new ideas across firms and industries both from within and from outside.**

## **Openness and tolerance**

**“Without this broad approach to openness and tolerance we will not be able to maximise the investments in Higher Education, Research and Development, innovation or business support as we will be neither maximising our available talent pool nor availing our economy of the full range of ideas and opportunities available to it.**

## **Economic impact**

**“Diversity, openness and tolerance will help power our economic development.”**

**Mark Yeoman  
Deputy Director  
The Partnership Office**

## WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT CONVERGENCE

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Why did Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly qualify for Convergence? | Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly were awarded Convergence status when the European Union's budget for 2007-2013 was decided. At that time the most up to date figures (an average for 2000-2002) showed that Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly's Gross Domestic Product (GDP, a measure of wealth creation) was less than 75% of the European Union average, allowing this area to qualify for Convergence. Economic growth since then means it is unlikely that Cornwall will qualify for this level of funding again, so it is essential to maximise the impact of Convergence investments. |
| Focus of ERDF Convergence Programme                               | The ERDF Convergence Programme, which began in January 2008, will focus on business support, modern economic infrastructure and increasing innovation and research and development.  |
| What activities will be eligible for ERDF investment?             | Details of activities which will be supported can be found in Section 6 of the ERDF Convergence Operational Programme which can be found at <a href="http://www.objectiveone.com/O1htm/01-convergence/recentnews.htm">www.objectiveone.com/O1htm/01-convergence/recentnews.htm</a> under '14 December 2007'.   |
| How can I apply for ERDF Convergence investment?                  | The majority of activity in this Programme will be commissioned, so there will be very limited opportunities for people to bid into the Programme. If opportunities arise they will be publicised through <a href="http://www.objectiveone.com">www.objectiveone.com</a> under 'Convergence'.  |
| Commissioning   | Commissioning teams have begun to identify and develop investments which partners believe have the potential to transform the economy of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Once proposals have been tested and agreed the Programme will commission activity to implement them.  |
| ESF Programme for England   | The national ESF (European Social Fund) Operational Programme, which will invest in skills and employment, includes a ring-fenced allocation of c. £133m of European investment and specific priorities for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. It can be found at <a href="http://www.esf.gov.uk">www.esf.gov.uk</a> .  |
| What activities will be eligible for ESF investment?              | ESF investment will focus on tackling barriers to work, improving the workforce's skills and research and graduate activity. Further details can be found in the national ESF Operational Programme and the ESF Convergence Framework for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly which are available from <a href="http://www.esf.gov.uk">www.esf.gov.uk</a> and <a href="http://www.swrsp.org.uk">www.swrsp.org.uk</a> respectively.  |
| ESF Co-Financing, tendering and procurement                       | ESF projects will be delivered by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and the Department for Work and Pensions (Jobcentre Plus) through contracts with specific organisations. Those who have been successful in the first round of the LSC tendering process are expected to be announced soon.<br><br><b>The Department for Work and Pensions' preferred provider will be identified in March, contracts will be awarded in April and project delivery will take place from June 2008.</b>   |
| Call for proposals for graduate placements                        | <b>A new call for proposals to provide graduate placement schemes for the ESF Convergence Programme is now available at <a href="http://www.gosw.gov.uk">www.gosw.gov.uk</a> and at <a href="http://www.objectiveone.com">www.objectiveone.com</a> under 'Convergence, Recent News'.</b>   |
| Further details   | Further information can be found at <a href="http://www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/esf-procurement/">www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/esf-procurement/</a> and   |

[www.dwp.gov.uk/supplyingdwp/what\\_we\\_buy/european\\_social\\_fund.asp](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/supplyingdwp/what_we_buy/european_social_fund.asp).

ESF newsletter More information about the ESF Programme for England and Gibraltar can also be found in the e-zine, 'ESF at Work', at [www.esf.gov.uk/news/e-zine/](http://www.esf.gov.uk/news/e-zine/).

European investment in the Convergence Programmes The table below summarises European investment in the ERDF and ESF Convergence Programmes.

|                  | £           | €         |
|------------------|-------------|-----------|
| ERDF             | c. £311.4 m | c. €458 m |
| ESF              | c. £133.3 m | c. €196 m |
| Total investment | c. £444.7 m | c. €654 m |

Rural Programme in the South West The Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) allocates Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly c. £55m (EU investment plus UK match-funding) for the socio-economic parts of the Programme, which will be delivered by the South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA).

Rural investment themes The Rural Programme will focus investment on skills development, social enterprise, business support, supply chain and adding value, resource management, sustainable tourism, biodiversity and landscape and community-led development. Further details can be found in the Regional Implementation Plan at [www.southwestrda.org.uk](http://www.southwestrda.org.uk).

Access to funding from the Rural Programme Funding is being made available in two ways: groups, organisations and businesses will be able to ask for help through a Rural Development Gateway, and the South West RDA will commission larger projects and services.

Further information The approved RDPE Programme Document can be found at [www.defra.gov.uk/erdp/rdp07\\_13/progdoc.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/erdp/rdp07_13/progdoc.htm). Additional information can be found at [www.objectiveone.com](http://www.objectiveone.com) under 'Convergence', [www.southwestrda.org.uk/what-we-do/regeneration/eafrd/introduction.shtm](http://www.southwestrda.org.uk/what-we-do/regeneration/eafrd/introduction.shtm) and [www.defra.gov.uk/erdp/rdp07\\_13/index.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/erdp/rdp07_13/index.htm).

Budget for Fisheries Programme The Fisheries Programme has allocated £26.42 million to England and £7.3 million to Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

European Fisheries Fund Programme The UK's National Strategic Plan (NSP), outlining objectives and priorities for UK fisheries 2007-13, has been submitted to the European Commission and can be found at [www.defra.gov.uk/marine/fisheries/grants.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/marine/fisheries/grants.htm).

Formal consultation The European Fisheries Fund (EFF) Operational Programme, which will outline investment priorities, will be subject to a formal consultation (expected to begin in April 2008) before approval by the European Commission.

Further information For further information about the Fisheries Programme please see [www.southwestrda.org.uk/what-we-do/policy/european-prog/european-programmes.shtm](http://www.southwestrda.org.uk/what-we-do/policy/european-prog/european-programmes.shtm) and [www.mfa.gov.uk/](http://www.mfa.gov.uk/).

## WHAT WE DON'T KNOW

The detail of the Fisheries Programme Work is underway in the Marine and Fisheries Agency (MFA) to develop the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) Operational Programme.

More detailed information about Convergence, links to key organisations and websites can be found in the 'Convergence' section of the Objective One website [www.objectiveone.com](http://www.objectiveone.com).