

Newsletter 57: 6th February 2009



This is part of a monthly series of newsletters that will help explain the process and progression of 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. New information will be underlined.

Contents

- > Convergence Programme position
- > Partner's Perspective. Cornwall's digital future. Nigel Ashcroft, Cornwall Enterprise
- > European Regional Development Fund Convergence Investments
- > Strategic Investment Frameworks
- > European Social Fund Convergence investments
- > Related Programmes

The Convergence Programmes are investing in a higher value, more knowledge based economy. The table below summarises the value of Convergence investments as at 6 February 2009.

Convergence Programme position as at 6 February 2009

| All monetary figures are £ million | TOTAL | ERDF Programme | ESF Programme |
|--|---------|----------------|---------------|
| Programme budget | 500.20m | 347.00m | 153.20m |
| Value of investments contracted | 111.10m | 42.60m | 68.50m |
| Value of investments endorsed (but not contracted) | 21.10m | 14.36m | 6.74m |
| Actual project spend to date | 1.08m | 1.04m | 0.04m |
| N+2 spend target by end 2009 | 43.20m | 30.00m | 20.60m |

NB. The Programmes' budgets are set in Euros so the pound sterling figures are estimates and will vary with the exchange rate during the life of the Programmes.

Glossary

Contracted: Contracts signed by both the applicant and the organisations managing the Programmes (South West Regional Development Agency for ERDF and Department for Work and Pensions for ESF).

Endorsed: Investments awaiting final exchange of contracts.

Spend: Money claimed from the European Union by projects for work in progress.

N+2 spend target: The amount of money the Programmes must spend on a yearly basis. The first target is for 2009.



Partner's perspective

Cornwall's digital future

Nigel Ashcroft, Cornwall Enterprise

Successes so far

"After the success of Objective One's actnow project, which ensured all telephone exchanges in Cornwall were broadband enabled and helped over 10,000 businesses get connected, the temptation could have been to congratulate ourselves at a job well done. In fact with nearly 90% of Cornwall's broadband enabled businesses stating that the internet is now critical to their business, and 90% operating more efficiently as a result, we'd be right to congratulate ourselves!"

Vision for the future

"But one thing we do know about technology is that things just keep getting faster, more powerful and more sophisticated. This is why Cornwall's vision of the future aims to ensure that we become a leading edge centre of broadband connectivity. Our aim of driving economic transformation by building a high earning knowledge economy, lowering our carbon footprint and continuing to tackle our peripherality will need to take advantage of all that the future brings."

Next generation broadband

"This means upgrading our digital infrastructure to provide 'next generation' broadband: faster, affordable, more reliable connections as future-proofed as possible. The Convergence Programme will deliver this under Priority Axis 3, Transformational Infrastructure."

Next steps

"The Partnership Delivery Board has selected the preferred way forward to maximise coverage of next generation broadband across the whole county. To complement this there will also be a number of locations, perhaps two or three of our strategically important towns, that will be completely future-proofed."

Convergence investment

"The investment will be made by using Convergence investment to 'gap fund' a major private sector investment. The upgraded infrastructure will be owned and operated by the private sector to ensure its ongoing sustainability in terms of maintenance and future investment."

Private sector investment

"The competitive process of selecting a preferred investor or group of investors is being led by Cornwall County Council, supported by specialist technical and legal expertise. It reports to a management board that includes senior representatives from Cornwall County Council, the South West Regional Development Agency, Business Link, Combined Universities in Cornwall and the private sector. This is, however, a lengthy process, and the final selection is unlikely to be known until after summer in 2009. In order to comply with European Union guidance, the process needs to be done in a technology neutral way, and will include in-depth dialogue with selected potential investors that successfully pass through the pre-qualification stages."

Progress to date

"Real progress has been made to date. A voluntary Preliminary Information Notice (PIN) has been published across the European Union, and an information day was

held in early December for potential investors. The day was very well attended, and there was a real buzz of excitement as wider industry went away knowing Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly was open for business and sharing our digital vision of the future."

Nigel Ashcroft
Head of Enterprise Services
Cornwall Enterprise

News

New tenders for skills investments

The Learning and Skills Council is currently tendering for organisations who can deliver further ESF Convergence investments in skills and training. Details will be made available at

> www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/SouthWest/esf/funding-opportunities/

ERDF Convergence investments

Details of contracted European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Convergence investments, including Pool Innovation Centre, Truro Penwith College, Truro-Falmouth branch line, the Peninsula Dental School, business support and Watson Marlow Pumps Ltd can be found at

> www.convergencecornwall.com/convergence-investments/

Strategic Investment Frameworks

Potential investments

Potential Convergence investments in specific locations have been outlined for St Austell, St Blazey and the Clay Area; Newquay and St Columb Major; Bodmin; and Camborne, Pool and Redruth. Others are being developed for Falmouth; Penzance and the Isles of Scilly; and Truro.

> www.convergencecornwall.com/what-is-convergence/strategic-investment-frameworks.php

ESF Convergence investments contracted

New investments

Investments managed by the Learning and Skills Council

Eight new ESF Convergence investments in training and skills have been announced by the Learning and Skills Council and are outlined below.

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Community Grants Programme

The Community Grants Programme will help small third sector organisations support disadvantaged people within their communities through a wide variety of activities such as confidence building, basic skills, work experience, and mentoring.

Cornwall Clusters

This project aims to develop sustainable cluster groups that are responsive to local circumstances, promote the benefits of training to employers and upskill the workforce. It is particularly focussed on Penwith; Camborne, Pool and Redruth; St Austell and the Clay Country; North Cornwall/Caradon; and Newquay.

| | |
|---|---|
| <u>FLAG (Families Learning and Growing)</u> | <u>FLAG offers opportunities for parents and children to learn together, improving literacy, numeracy and IT skills, building self confidence and motivation for further learning.</u> |
| <u>Higher Education Interventions</u> | <u>This investment will provide working people with opportunities to gain higher level qualifications. It will widen access to higher level skills training and provide progression pathways, thereby raising workforce skills.</u> |
| <u>Higher Education Routeways</u> | <u>A Higher Education Community Development Worker will work within disadvantaged communities to encourage unemployed individuals to undertake higher level training. Practical and financial support will be available to address barriers and support progression to further training and employment.</u> |
| <u>Involve</u> | <u>'Involve' will build the capacity of the Voluntary Community Sector to work effectively with young people and workless adults by offering them exciting, innovative and individually tailored programmes designed to enable them to move into mainstream provision, training or employment as appropriate.</u> |
| <u>Rural Land Based</u> | <u>This project focusses on the rural land based industries and aims to widen participation in relevant vocational, management and leadership qualifications.</u> |
| <u>Workforce Cornwall</u> | <u>Workforce Cornwall is designed to improve the knowledge and skills of people working with children and young people in Cornwall to help transform services and working practices, and improve outcomes for children and young people.</u> |
| <u>More information</u> | More information about Learning and Skills Council ESF Convergence investments: > www.convergencecornwall.com/convergence-investments > www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/SouthWest/ |
| <u>Helping people into work</u> | Investments managed by Department for Work and Pensions/Jobcentre Plus Three ESF Convergence investments to help people overcome barriers to work have been contracted: Cornwall Works Plus, Cornwall Works for Social Enterprise and Cornwall Works for Learning Disabilities. For details, please refer to > www.convergencecornwall.com/what-is-convergence/news.php?id=22 . |
| <u>Higher Education investments</u> | Investments managed by Government Office for the South West Convergence is supporting the Graduate Placement Programme, Unlocking Cornish Potential, and other investments are being developed. > www.convergencecornwall.com/what-is-convergence/media-releases.php?id=289 . |

Related European Programmes

Rural Development Programme for England

Accessing the Rural Programme

The Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) can be accessed through the Rural Development Gateway on telephone 0845 600 9966 or at

> www.sw-ruralgateway.info.

> www.defra.gov.uk/rural/rdpe/index.htm.

> www.southwestrda.org.uk/what-we-do/regeneration/eafrd/introduction.shtm.

European Fisheries Fund Programme for the UK

Fisheries Programme

In Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly over £7m is available through the European Fisheries Fund. It is open for applications and a facilitation service is provided by Steve Bailey on 07876 035733, 01503 240384 or s_bailey@seafish.co.uk.

> www.mfa.gov.uk.

More detailed information about Convergence, links to key organisations and websites can be found on our website

Freephone helpline 0800 028 0120
www.convergencecornwall.com
