

Newsletter 51: 17th October 2008

This is part of a fortnightly 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 appear in blue.](#)

The Convergence Programmes are investing in a higher value, more knowledge based economy. The table below summarises the value of Convergence investments as at 17 October 2008.

CONVERGENCE PROGRAMMES' POSITION AS AT 17 OCTOBER 2008

All monetary figures are £ Million	TOTAL	ERDF Programme	ESF Programme
Programme budget	500.20m	347.00m	153.20m
Value of investments contracted	90.30m	21.80m	68.50m
Value of investments endorsed (but not contracted)	18.40m	17.90m	0.50m
Actual project spend to date	0.07m	0.07m	0.00m
N+2 spend target by end 2009	43.20m	30.00m	13.20m

NB. The Programmes' budgets are given in Euros in the European Regional Development Fund Convergence Operational Programme and the European Social Fund Operational Programme for England and Gibraltar. The pound sterling figures above are estimates, as at 17/10/08, and will vary due to changes in 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.

NEWS

Business Support – call for expressions of interest The South West Regional Development Agency is seeking organisations who can deliver business support packages for the ERDF Convergence Programme. The first stage in this process is inviting interested organisations to make an expression of interest. Further details can be found at www.southwestrda.org.uk/what-we-do/policy/european-prog/open-call-for-expres.shtm.

ERDF CONVERGENCE INVESTMENTS CONTRACTED

ERDF Convergence investments Information about other contracted European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Convergence investments in the Truro-Falmouth branch line, the Peninsula Dental School, business support and Watson Marlow Pumps Ltd can be found at www.objectiveone.com/O1htm/01-convergence/recentnews.htm.

STRATEGIC INVESTMENT FRAMEWORKS ESTABLISHED

Definition Strategic Investment Frameworks (SIFs) provide a framework and justification for potential Convergence investments in specific areas in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Proposed individual investments within the SIFs will then be appraised and, if suitable, endorsed for investment.

Established investment frameworks The latest Strategic Investment Framework to be established is for Newquay and St Columb Major. Information about the SIFs which have been established for Bodmin and Camborne, Pool and Redruth can be found at www.objectiveone.com/O1htm/01-convergence/recentnews.htm.

Proposed frameworks Strategic Investment Frameworks are being developed for: Falmouth, Penzance and the Isles of Scilly, St Austell and the Clay Country, and Truro.

ESF CONVERGENCE INVESTMENTS CONTRACTED

Investments managed by Department for Work and Pensions/Jobcentre Plus

Helping people into work 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.objectiveone.com/O1htm/01-convergence/recentnews.htm.

Investments managed by the Learning and Skills Council

Investing in skills A range of ESF Convergence investments focussing on raising skills levels have been contracted by the Learning and Skills Council. Details can be found at www.objectiveone.com/O1htm/01-convergence/recentnews.htm and www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/SouthWest/.

Investments managed by Government Office for the South West

Higher Education investments The Graduate Placement Scheme is the first element of Higher Education investment contracted by the Convergence Programmes. Other investments in research, enterprise, higher level skills and raising aspirations are being developed. More detailed information can be found at www.objectiveone.com/O1htm/01-convergence/recentnews.htm.

PARTNER'S PERSPECTIVE

STRATEGIC INVESTMENT FRAMEWORKS - Mark Yeoman, Convergence Partnership Office for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

- Importance of place to a more knowledge based economy** “Place is a fundamental part of the development of a knowledge based and higher value added economy. Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly have, in spatial terms, a distributed economic base, with a number of towns important for economic regeneration. Much has been achieved in previous European programmes in re-establishing and enhancing the sense of place of many of Cornwall’s towns using heritage led physical regeneration schemes – this now needs to be developed through investment in modern business infrastructure. Therefore, the economic regeneration of place is an important part of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Convergence Programme.
- Integration of ideas and investment** “This will be done on a planned and phased basis, taking account of future demand and drawing linkages with existing strategies and investment opportunities in addition to European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund Convergence.
- Fit with the Operational Programme** “In order to help bring these complementary ideas, plans, needs and investment strands (including known private sector plans) together – and integrate them with the formal planning process – partners have been invited to bring forward Strategic Investment Frameworks (SIFs) for the towns named in Priority 4 of the ERDF Convergence Operational Programme (Camborne, Pool and Redruth; St Austell and the Clay Country; Truro, Falmouth/Penryn; Newquay; Bodmin; Penzance and the Isles of Scilly). Important in the success of these SIFs will be the active integration of the opportunities provided by the ESF Convergence Programme as people are key to successful economic regeneration.
- An acknowledged framework for activity** “Each SIF is subject to a high level appraisal by the South West Regional Development Agency’s specialist appraisal team and is considered through the Endorsement Advisory Group to ensure its coherence, fit with the ERDF Operational Programme, the adequacy of its governance structures, attention to the cross cutting themes, etc. A key factor in this consideration is the deliverability within the timeframe of Convergence of the proposals within each SIF.
- Each investment individually appraised** “In developing the package of proposed activity each SIF identifies an indicative contribution from Convergence – these are not fixed or ring fenced budgets.

Delivering economic outcomes “Once established each SIF gives the ERDF Convergence Programme confidence that individual investments coming into the Programme are part of a cohesive whole that meets the needs of the locality as well as those of the Operational Programme.

“Each individual investment proposition arising from the Strategic Investment Framework is appraised in the normal way by the South West RDA’S appraisal team via a fully worked up business plan.

“Once any issues arising from this rigorous process have been satisfactorily dealt with the proposition is submitted to the Endorsement Advisory Group – an advisory group to the Programme Monitoring Committee – for partnership sign-off.

“Once approved, the difficult work begins – delivering the investment designed to meet the aspirational agenda of the ERDF Convergence Operational Programme!”

Mark Yeoman
Deputy Director
Convergence Partnership Office for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

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 which provides advice about project proposals. They can be contacted by telephoning 0845 600 9966 or at www.sw-ruralgateway.info. For more information please see www.defra.gov.uk/rural/rdpe/index.htm, www.objectiveone.com/O1htm/01-convergence/post2006_faq.htm#Q4 and www.southwestrda.org.uk/what-we-do/regeneration/eafnd/introduction.shtm.

Progress to date By the end of September, the Rural Enterprise Gateway had received 136 enquiries from businesses in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Of these, 46 have come forward with outline proposals and applications for investment are expected from some of these within the next month.

Innovation Fund Work is advanced on an Innovation Fund which forms part of the RDPE South West Agricultural Resource Management initiative, which is being commissioned. The fund will encourage and help farmers to adopt and pilot new technology and methods which will improve farm profit/competitiveness through more efficient use and management of resources. The Innovation Fund will invest in on-farm capital schemes, as well as knowledge transfer proposals featuring innovative methods of training, advice, demonstration, etc, within the field of agricultural resource management. It is expected to be launched in December 2008 with an invitation for expressions of interest.

EUROPEAN FISHERIES FUND PROGRAMME FOR THE UK

Fisheries Operational Programme approved

The European Commission has now agreed the UK Operational Programme for the European Fisheries Fund. In Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly there is over £7m available to 2013 for projects which help secure a sustainable and profitable fishing industry. The scheme is now open for applications and facilitation service is provided by Steve Bailey on 07876 035733, 01503 240384 or s_bailey@seafish.co.uk. Further details are at www.mfa.gov.uk.

More detailed information about Convergence, links to key organisations and websites can be found in the 'Convergence' section of the website www.objectiveone.com.

Information is also available from the Partnership Office's helpline on 0800 028 0120.