



# Building Sustainable Prosperity



**Tuesday 25 April 2006  
Greenmount College  
Antrim**

## **Minutes**

### **1. Attendance**

A list of attendees is attached at Annex A. Apologies received from Maella Bratton, Local Government, Robin Newton, Local Government, Gerry Maclochlainn, Local Government, Brendan Mackin, Trade Unions, Ann McKernan, Equality, Christine McCann, Chris Kirby, DTI, Pat Colgan, SEUPB & Trevor Polley, LGSFG.

Thomas Burns attended in place of Maella Bratton, Local Government.

### **2. Introduction**

The **Chair** welcomed everyone to the seventeenth meeting of the Monitoring Committee and in particular new representatives from the European Commission, the ERDF Paying Authority and DETI.

### **3. Minutes and Matters Arising**

3.1 The minutes of the meeting of 18 October were accepted subject to the following amendment:-

#### **Page 4 Para 5**

**Remove** *'Following a query from the European Commission, the Chair advised that the Managing Authority was confident that funding the new trains would meet all the European Commission regulations with regard to retrospective expenditure'*

**replace with** *'The European Commission advised caution with regard to retrospective projects. The Chair advised that the Managing Authority was confident that funding the trains would meet all European regulatory requirements.'*

#### **3.2 Action Points**

Reference : DW000064  
GOVERNMENT FINANCE SERVICES\Advice & Support\European Union Structural Funds\Building Sustainable Prosperity - BSP\Monitoring Committee Meetings

Reference : GH000218

GOVERNMENT FINANCE SERVICES\Advice & Support\European Union Structural Funds\Building Sustainable Prosperity - BSP\Monitoring Committee Meetings

The **Chair** updated the Members on progress on the Action Points from the previous meeting.

Following a request from a **Local Government representative**, The Managing Authority **agreed** to forward a copy of the paper provided earlier to the Committee by DE on Measure 3.4 Investing in Early Learning.

#### **4. Progress Report on Implementation of Programme**

The **Chair** outlined the contents of the Progress report.

A **Managing Authority representative** updated the Committee with a brief overview covering the financial progress of the Programme, key issues and the working groups.

- *Commitment and Applications*

Members were updated on the progress on applications, commitments and certified expenditure. They were advised that since the last meeting of the Monitoring Committee, the programme commitments have risen by 7.5% to 89.75%. Members were informed that the Programme has now received 2,275 applications and 1,038 have been approved, giving an overall approval rate of 45.6%. A number of applications were still in the process of being determined.

- *N+2 targets*

The Committee was informed that the 2005 N+2 targets for all funds were met with some comfort. Members were advised that the surplus from last years targets will contribute towards this years targets and that the Managing Authority and Departments will continue to monitor expenditure through forecasts and Bilaterals to ensure the 2006 targets are met. The Managing Authority's aim is to make regular claims during 2006 on a quarterly basis.

- *Publicity*

The Committee was informed that Managing Authority recently distributed 224,000 CSF Publicity leaflets using the 4 main newspapers as the outlet and further publicity measures are planned for the remainder of the year.

- *Environmental Sustainability*

Members were advised that a DPA score has now been recorded for 100% of the projects input on the Central Database.

- *Working Groups*

Members were informed that the Information Society Working Group is hosting a major 'eEurope4all' conference in Newry on 18-19 May.

- *Priority 1 Economic Growth and Competitiveness*

The **DETI representative** advised the Committee on the measures within this priority. Members were advised that these measures were showing good progress. The Committee was informed that Northern Ireland was now the leading broadband region in Europe and that the most recent figures show that Broadband taken up by households has increased by a further 3% between December 2005 and March 2006.

Following a query from the **Agri-rural representative** on the achievement of targets, the **Chair** advised that the Mid-term Evaluation and the further update of the Evaluation provided the most comprehensive and reliable guide to the performance of the Programme.

The **DETI representative** agreed to provide further information on the definition of 'engagements' in the indicators for Measure 1.5 to the **Agri-rural Representative**.

The **DRD representative** updated the Committee on Measure 1.6. Members were advised that the Measure continues to perform well.

- *Priority 2 Employment*

The **DEL representative** updated the Committee on the progress made in their measures. Members were advised that DEL Measures within Priority 2 are over 100% committed following a third call for projects held earlier this year and this would be recorded on the database when Letters of Offer were issued formally.

The **Chair** outlined the background to the DEL proposals to reallocate ESF funds to facilitate early closure of ESF Measures. Members were advised that these proposals are due to changes in classification of EU funding within the accounting system providing greater flexibility on when expenditure can take place. They were also advised that the current UK spending review cycle ends in 2007-08 and it provided advantages in bringing forward such EU income from 2007-08 to earlier years because 2007-08 will be the baseline year for Barnett calculations after CSR 2007.

Following a query from the **Voluntary and Community representative**, the **Chair** advised that the third-party projects which

have received a Letter of Offer for funding under these measures where reallocation has occurred would receive their full grant from DEL Public Expenditure. The **Chair** added the Audit and Control requirements for these projects remained the same as other EU funded projects.

The **Monitoring Committee agreed** to the DEL proposals to reallocate ESF funds to facilitate early closure of ESF Measures.

The **DE representative** advised that Measure 2.4 and 2.5 are progressing well and Members were informed that DE hoped to spend their full allocation on Measure 2.5 by the end of 2006.

- *Priority 3 Urban and Social Revitalisation*

The **DSD representative** advised that measures in Priority 3 were all progressing well.

The **DE representative** confirmed that Measure 3.4 has now spent its full allocation and has met all its targets.

Following an explanation of the rationale from the **DE representative**, the Monitoring Committee approved the revision of indicators for Measure 3.4.

- *Priority 4 Agriculture, Rural Development, Forestry and Fisheries*

The **DARD representative** advised the Committee that due to 2 unresolved issues the Department is unable to table the final proposals for the reallocation of EAGGF funding. Members were informed that the delay is due to an ongoing judicial review under Measure 4.8 and the completion of a selection process under Measure 4.9 and 4.10 which had been set-up to reallocate de-committed funds.

Members were also advised that FIGG continues to perform well and a further reallocation of funds will take place within the sub-measures in order to overcome a difficulty with private funding within the overall measure.

The Committee noted DARD's proposals to reallocate EAGGF funds to ensure that the allocation will be fully spent and N+2 targets are met: these proposals will be finalised at a later date when the issues referred to above are resolved.

- *Priority 5 Environment*

The **DRD and DOE representatives** provided updates on the progress within this priority.

Members were advised that DRD have allocated the Performance Reserve monies to fund a new water treatment scheme and that the DOE element continues to make steady progress.

The **Managing Authority agreed** to provide an update on expenditure to the Monitoring Committee following the June Drawdowns. They also agreed that they would provide a breakdown of the amount of Technical Assistance made available for Economic Appraisals.

The Monitoring Committee **noted** the progress and developments which have taken place in the Programme.

## 5. Response to Mid-term Evaluation Update

A **Managing Authority representative** advised Members that the paper provided outlined the Managing Authority's responses to the Mid-term Evaluation Update. Members were informed that the report was sent to the European Commission on 12 December 2005. The Managing Authority also advised that a number of proposals have been acted upon and more of the recommendations will be taken into account in the development of the new SF programmes for 2007-2013.

## 6. Draft Annual Implementation Report 2005

The **Chair** outlined the proposed way forward regarding the Annual Implementation Report.

Following a request from the **Voluntary & Community representative**, it was agreed that the Managing Authority would redraft section 6.10 (Working Groups) of the report.

The Committee **noted** the contents of the 2005 AIR and **agreed** to provide comments on the report to the Managing Authority by 12 May.

It was also **noted** that the final draft report would be issued for written approval before the end of May.

## 7. AOB

- *Future Funding*

The **Chair** updated the Committee on the current situation regarding the new round of funding. Members were informed that a 12-week consultation exercise on the UK National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) is currently underway which ends on 22 May 2006. Members were also advised that Concordia, NILGA and European

Commission are holding events to help raise awareness of this exercise. The **Chair** also encouraged Members of the Committee to respond to the NSRF consultation.

The **European Commission representative** advised the Committee that the new round of the Structural Funds would be specifically linked to the Growth and Jobs agenda agreed in Lisbon. They also informed that all SF programmes should include at least 75% of activities which support the Growth and Jobs Agenda as per the categories of expenditure defined in the draft ERDF regulation (so-called 'Lisbon earmarking').

The **Managing Authority** advised that any NI responses to the UK NSRF will be placed on the DFP website and will help inform the debate on the shape of the future programmes.

- *Retirement of the EAGGF Paying Authority Representative*

The Chair expressed thanks and best wishes to the EAGGF Paying Authority Representative, Gerry McWhinney, who is due to retire before the Autumn meeting of the Committee.

## **8. Date of next meeting**

It was **agreed** that the next meeting of the Committee will take place on 18 October.

**ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM BSP MONITORING COMMITTEE**  
**TUESDAY 25 APRIL**  
**GREENMOUNT COLLEGE, ANTRIM**

<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMING</b>
<b>18 October 2005 Action Points</b>	Managing Authority to forward the DE paper on Measure 3.4 to the Local Government representative	Immediate
<b>Progress Report</b>	The DETI representative to contact the Agri-rural representative to provide information on Measure 1.5 indicators	Immediate
<b>Progress Report Amendments to the Programme Complement</b>	The Managing Authority to amend the Programme Complement to reflect the changes agreed by the Monitoring Committee	Immediate
<b>Progress Report Draw-downs</b>	The Managing Authority to provide an update on expenditure to the Monitoring Committee	July 2006
<b>Progress Report Technical Assistance</b>	The Managing Authority to provide a breakdown of the amount of Technical Assistance made available for Economic Appraisals	Immediate
<b>Draft Annual Implementation Report 2005</b>	Managing Authority to redraft Section 6.10 Working Groups	Immediate
	Members to provide comments/amendments to Monitoring Committee Secretariat on draft AIR	By 12 May 2006

**BUILDING SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY PROGRAMME MONITORING  
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25 APRIL 2006**

**Members**

Bill Pauley	Chair
Linda Wilson	Deputy Chair
Brian Murphy	Environment
Miceal McCoy	Agri-Rural / Fisheries
Frances McCandless	Voluntary & Community
Arnold Hatch	Local Government
Thomas Burns (for Mealla Bratton)	Local Government
Gerry McWhinney	Paying Authority EAGGF/FIFG
John Neill	Paying Authority ESF
Philip McCartney	Paying Authority ERDF

**Observers / Advisors**

Ian Kidd	DETI advisor
Dave Bradley	DE advisor
Kieran McMahon	DOE advisor
Peter Neeson	DSD advisor
Pat Delaney	DRD advisor
Gerard Colgan	NISRA
Colette FitzGerald	BSP Managing Authority
Jon Denness	DG Regio, EU Commission
David Yormesor	DG Regio, EU Commission
Kyriacos Charalambous	DG Regio, EU Commission

**Other Attendees**

Theresa Lennon	NILGA
James Laverty	NICVA
Ernie Watterson	DSD
Bernie Traill	DFP
Janet Galbraith	DFP

**Apologies**

Pat Colgan	PEACE II Managing Authority
Christine McCann	Business
Anne McKernan	Equality
Brendan Mackin	Trade Unions
Gerry MacLochlainn	Local Government
Mealla Bratton	Local Government
Robin Newton	Local Government
Trevor Polley	Local Government Structural Funds Group

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Chris Kirby

DTI

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