

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE EDC 01-01(p6)**

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Wednesday 17 January 01</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>2.00 – 5.30pm</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Committee Room 1, National Assembly for Wales Building</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Objective 1 - Update</b>

**Project Approvals**

As at 31 December, 32 projects had received formal approval for funding of up to £47.1 million. These include a major integrated business support scheme for small and medium-sized tourism businesses, run by the Wales Tourist Board, which will receive up to £6.3 million in European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) support. A list of approved projects is attached (Annex A).

WEFO staff have met, and continue to meet, with Regional and Local partnerships to report back on how projects have scored. Where there are no financial constraints, and partnerships have confirmed their endorsement, projects submitted in September/October will proceed to formal approval.

Following the PMC WEFO is putting interim arrangements in place in order to ensure that the programme momentum is maintained. Existing partnerships have been asked to work with WEFO to take forward new projects seeking support in 2001.

**Programme Monitoring Committee**

The Objective One Programme Monitoring Committee met on 15 December in the WDA offices at Penllergaer, near Swansea. The PMC discussed the report of the Task and Finish Group (see below). It also agreed to release the resources necessary for three fast track projects to proceed towards approval and set up a number of working groups to assist WEFO in making decisions in certain over-subscribed measures.

A summary of the PMC meeting is attached (Annex B).

**Task and Finish Group**

The Committee received a copy of the report of the Task and Finish Group at its last meeting. This was discussed by the Programme Monitoring Committee at its meeting on 15 December and was accepted by the PMC, which advised WEFO to adopt and implement the report (subject to considerations of regularity, propriety and value for money) . An Implementation Sub-Group has been set up to discuss the best ways of putting the Group’s recommendations into practice, taking into account the views of the

European Commission and the issues of regularity, propriety and value for money. This sub-group met for the first time on 5 January.

Welsh European Funding Office

January 2001

ANNEX A

OBJECTIVE ONE APPROVED PROJECTS (31 DECEMBER 2000)

Priority	Measure	Organisation Name	Project Name	ESF Funding
4	2	Careers Services Assoc'n Wales	Youth Gateway	£1,371,636
1	4	CELTEC	Skills for Business	£369,412
4	3	City & County of Swansea	Swansea Skills Service	£1,418,239
4	1	Cyfle	Cyfle New Entrant Scheme 2000	£131,725
4	1	EMPLOYMENT SERVICE	Interactive Programme Centre	£3,000,000
1	4	Further Education Funding Council for Wales	Knowledge Exploitation Fund	£3,689,963
1	4	Higher Education Funding Council for Wales	Business and Management Skills	£2,467,617
2	4	Higher Education Funding Council for Wales	High level skills Sci,Tech, Eng,ICT	£2,685,413
4	1	Isle of Anglesey County Council	Môn shared apprenticeship	£9,082
4	2	Menter Fachwen	Prosiect Anableddau Gwynedd	£722,009
4	5	Merthyr Tydfil C. B. C.	Pathways to Employment	£429,622
4	1	N W Wales Employment Zone	N Wales Employment Intermediary	£6,319,771
4	3	Neath Port Talbot C B Council	New Learning Network for NPT	£3,096,536
1	4	University of Wales Swansea	Cymru Prosper Wales	£1,420,393

4	2	WEA North Wales	Outreach in the communities	£620,254
4	2	West Wales TEC Ltd	Initial Guidance and Training	£124,910

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Organisation Name</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>ERDF Funding</b>
4	4	Further Education Funding Council for Wales	Welsh Learning Network/ Rhwydwaith Dysgu Cymru	£2,636,380
1	5	Conwy County Borough Council	New York Enterprise Centre (Penmaenmawr)	£145,467
1	5	Denbighshire County Council	Denbighshire Strategic Industrial Site Development	£699,040
5	6	Ceredigion County Council	Support for Local Economic Development in Ceredigion	£129,800
1	5	Caerphilly County Borough Council	Tredomen-Penalta Sustainable Urban Village – Phase 1	£760,000
6	3	Pembrokeshire County Council	Business Premises & Infrastructure, Cleddau Bridge	£1,034,677
1	1	Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Local Financial Support for Small & Medium Enterprises, Blaenau Gwent	£247,500
1	1	Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council	Grant Scheme for Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs), Rhondda Cynon Taff	£1,418,750
1	1	Torfaen County Borough Council	Integrated Grant Scheme Providing Business Support, Torfaen County Borough Council	£467,061

1	1	Bridgend County Borough Council	Business Support Framework, Bridgend County Borough Council	£315,500
1	1	Anglesey County Borough Council	MONFENTER, Isle of Anglesey County Council	£216,000
1	1	Gwynedd Council	Gwynedd Business Development Package	£731,500
2	3	Welsh Development Agency	Opto-electronics Cluster Development - Sector Champion	£210,000
1	5	Welsh Development Agency	Speculative Development Programme for NW Wales - Phase 1	£2,864,000
1	1	Welsh Tourist Board	Integrated Business Support for Tourism SMEs	£6,300,000
1	1	Wales Co-operative Centre	Retaining Wealth Through Credit Union Development	£2,062,702

## ANNEX B

### OBJECTIVE 1 PROGRAMME MONITORING COMMITTEE

#### Summary of meeting held on Friday 15 December

#### 1. Chair's introductory remarks

Christine Chapman, the new chair of the Objective 1 PMC, expressed her delight at her appointment and gave her commitment to doing whatever was necessary to ensure that the one off opportunity afforded by Objective 1 was successful.

#### 2. Minutes

The possibility of recording the meetings would be investigated. This would facilitate the preparation of minutes.

### **3. Task and Finish group report**

Grenville Jackson, on behalf of the Task and Finish group gave a presentation on the substance and outcomes of the report. A very full discussion followed.

In conclusion the PMC:

- Approved the report in its entirety subject to Commission advice and WEFO input
- Advised WEFO to adopt and implement the report (subject to considerations of regularity, propriety and value for money)
- Advised that an Implementation Group should be set up as soon as practicable consisting of the Task and Finish group members with the addition of PMC members Lyn Thomas and Anne Beynon and WEFO. The first task of the group would be to establish a working timetable.
- Advised that a Policy group be set up as soon as practicable. Nominations would be sought from the Partnership. Members of the group would be selected by a sub-group of the PMC, chaired by Christine Chapman.

### **4. Programme update report**

The PMC agreed:

- That resources would be made available to allow 3 fast track projects to proceed towards approval (Retaining Wealth through Credit Union Development, Finance Wales, Integrated Business Support for Tourism SMEs)
- That resources for projects submitted on 29 September under Priority 1 measure 1 would be limited to 50% of grant sought. All capped schemes could however be reviewed at 6 months following their approval.
- That in view of the need to move the programme forward, sub groups of the PMC (constituted as working groups) would be set up. These would assist WEFO with decisions to be taken in respect of projects submitted under Priority 1 measure 3 (Developing Competitive SMEs) and Priority 4 measure 2 (Social Inclusion). A working group would also consider Feasibility Studies submitted and the issue of spend outside the programme area.
- That the Sites and Premises Partnership be asked to continue with the work underway in identifying strategic employment sites
- That in respect of Priority 5, the previously recommended population density criteria of 4 persons per hectare should continue to apply to Priority 5 measures 4 and 6
- That a population density of 4 persons per hectare should be applied in respect of Priority 5 measure 8 for the time being but that further work was needed to devise more robust criteria which were appropriate to the measure
- That resources should be allocated on an indicative basis to local partnerships in respect of Priority 5 measures 4 and 6 using the formula detailed in Paper PMC(00)21A, Annex B subject to comments received from the PMC. Draft figures which illustrated the methodology set out in the paper were circulated and comments were invited from PMC members by 7<sup>th</sup> January.
- That some resources should be allocated now, on an indicative basis to Local Partnerships

and the Regional Partnership in respect of Priority 3 using the formula set out in Paper PMC (00)21B

## **5. Priority 3 Spatial Targeting**

This item was discussed and the possibility of awarding the population balance to Pembrokeshire was raised. There was some sympathy for this action but it would require further investigation and information from Assembly statisticians. The matter would be taken forward to the next PMC meeting.

## **6. Local Action Plan Summaries**

Local Partnerships were thanked for the hard work undertaken in summarising their plans within a very tight timescale. Full discussion on the plans was deferred to the March meeting of the PMC in order to take into account issues arising from the T & F group report.

## **7. Composition of Local Partnerships**

The PMC welcomed the progress made by the Local Partnerships in respect of improving the gender balance. There remained 3 Local Partnerships which had not, as yet, achieved the standard set by the PMC. Visits would be made to the non-complying partnerships to offer suggestions or assistance. The Chair offered her help in this matter.

## **8. Technical Assistance Strategy**

The PMC agreed:

- to amend the initial allocation of technical assistance per partnership from up to £50,000 for 2000 to up to £100,000 for the period January 2000 to December 2001 at a 50% grant rate.
- Written comments from PMC members would be submitted to WEFO in respect of the other recommendations. An amended strategy would be required to be drawn up, taking into account issues identified in the T & F group report.

## **9. Advance payments for voluntary organisations**

- The PMC recognised potential adverse impacts on processing but advised WEFO to pursue vigorously the development of a system to enable voluntary organisations to receive advance payment of ERDF.
- The PMC also requested WEFO to pursue the question of advance payments of ERDF to other sponsors with the Assembly Finance Group as a separate issue
- Letters would be sent from the Chair on these matters.

## **10. FIGG**

A paper was tabled for agreement by written procedure. The paper outlined the proposed procedure for opening the programme early in the new year and asked for PMC approval of the FIGG scoring criteria.

Secretariat

December 2000