

PMC Meeting 2 – Agenda

Ireland Wales Programme 2007-13 (INTERREG 4A)

Programme Monitoring Committee - Meeting 2

Agenda for Meeting on Friday June 13th 2008, 10am

Venue – St Brides Hotel, Saundersfoot, Pembrokeshire, Wales

1. Opening and Introduction
2. Minutes of PMC 1. Waterford October 19th 2007 PMC (02) 01
3. Matters Arising
4. Programme Update Report PMC (02) 02
5. Annual Implementation Report PMC (02) 03
6. Steering Committee – Rules of Procedure PMC (02) 04
7. Development Officer Report PMC (02) 05
8. Publicity and Communications PMC (02) 06
9. Regions for Economic Change PMC (02) 07
10. Any Other Business

Ireland Wales Programme 2007-13**Draft Minutes of the Programme Monitoring Committee - October 19th 2007****2007 - 2013 Ireland Wales Programme Monitoring Committee (1st Meeting)**

1. The meeting was held at the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly, O'Connell Street, Waterford, Ireland. Attendance at the meeting is as shown in Annex 1. Apologies had been received from Cllr Tom Richards, who was represented at the meeting by Mr. Gwyn Evans. Apologies were received from Tom Doyle, Pauline Dooley, Cathal Kelly who was represented by Brian D'Arcy, Ivan Grimes who was represented by Dolores Keating, Professor Lyn Plunkett and Judith Stone.

Item 1: Opening and Introduction

2. Stephen Blair, Joint Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting, and extended a particular welcome to all of the visitors from Wales, Barbro Andersson, European Commission Desk Officer for the Programme and Cllr Conal Kavanagh, Cathaoirleach of the Southern & Eastern Regional Assembly. Following an invitation from Mr. Blair, the attendees introduced themselves to the meeting. Mr. Blair informed the meeting that the Programme was the first of the cross border programmes approved by the EU.
3. Damien O'Brien, Joint Chair, noted that his team were handing over from the Interreg IIIA Programme, and that the new programme offered the opportunity to build on the success of the previous Programme. He congratulated the Southern & Eastern Regional Assembly and Barbro Andersson on their handling of the negotiation process that led to the early approval of the new programme. Mr. O'Brien sent his best wishes and that of the Committee to Cllr Tom Richards, who sent his apologies due to ill health.
4. Stephen Blair advised the meeting that a revised agenda and some additional paperwork was circulated at the beginning of the meeting. This was to take account of the fact that the Monitoring Committee for the last programme could not simply be dissolved and merged into the new Committee but that two separate meetings would have to take place with separate agendas. This would be explained in more detail in the latter part of the meeting. The Committee agreed to work with the revised agenda.

Item 2: Background to the Ireland Wales Programme - PMC (01) 01

4. Stephen Blair introduced this paper which provided the Committee with background information on the Programme. He noted that all parties were committed to the delivery of a quality Programme to benefit communities in Ireland and Wales and to maintain high standards while doing so. He outlined the priorities and themes, noting that the Programme focus had been determined by a new regulatory regime and a changed policy focus in the EU which was underlined by the fact that the INTERREG Community Initiative had been mainstreamed, therefore putting the Ireland Wales Programme at a higher level of EU focus.
5. Mr. Blair advised that the Managing Authority would strive to have the OP fully implemented over the next seven years, in the context of the new regulations and legal framework. He noted that the new Managing Authority have gained a lot from our Welsh

colleagues, and thanked the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) for their help in getting the Programme to this stage. He further noted that the Regional Assembly has considerable experience in managing programmes as it is the Managing Authority for a new Objective 2 programme and the old Objective 1 in transition programme. He advised the meeting that the Audit Authority for the new programme is the ERDF Financial Control Unit in the Department of Finance, assisted by the Internal Audit Section in the Welsh Assembly Government.

6. As the Operational Programme was approved on 17th September 2007, this now enables work to move onto and make progress with more operational issues. The Programme will be delivered through projects which would be sought through calls for proposals. Mr. Blair advised that today the Committee was putting in place the legal mechanisms and procedures in place to enable the first call for proposals to be launched.
7. Gwyn Evans requested a discussion on the Development Officers, and was advised that the matter would be dealt with later in the meeting.

Item 3: Programme Monitoring Committee: Functions - PMC (01) 02

8. Stephen Blair introduced this paper, which outlined to the meeting the functions of the Committee, with the main task being to monitor the quality and effectiveness of the Programme. Damien O'Brien further noted that the Committee had a role in offering constructive challenge to the Managing Authority and encouraged Committee members to enquire fully into the workings of the Programme.
9. Cllr Goronwy Edwards raised a query regarding the Committee membership and why there were only two Welsh elected members compared to three Irish elected members. Damien O'Brien noted that for the new Programme, the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) had decided against having a political representative on the Committee, but did wish to be represented by officials, while the WLGA had decided to retain its political representation. Stephen Blair noted that a numerical balance had been struck between Ireland (10 seats) and Wales (10 seats), with each jurisdiction having its own institutional arrangements. In Ireland, there is one Assembly member for each of the three constituent NUTS III Regions which is a longstanding and accepted practice. Damien O'Brien acknowledged that the WLGA had a strong interest in the programme but said that it was up to individual organisations, including WAG, to decide how they wished to be represented. The main consideration was to ensure that representatives have the relevant expertise to do the job that is required.
10. Following a query from Tracey Burke on declaration of interests, Stephen Blair advised the Committee that this matter is more relevant in relation to Steering Committee membership. He noted that the issue had been less apparent with regard to the PMC, but encouraged any member to acknowledge any such issues, through the Chair, should they feel it necessary.

Item 4: Programme Monitoring Committee: Rules of Procedure - PMC (01) 03

11. Stephen Blair introduced this paper, which outlined the rules of procedure for the Committee, noting that the Committee can set its own rules and procedures which can be adjusted when required over the lifetime of the Programme. He informed the meeting that the new set of rules is largely a continuation of the rules which were used under the last

programming period. Damien O'Brien noted his approval and confirmed that they worked well for the last programme.

12. Amendments - Stephen Blair suggested two amendments to the rules, as follows:

- Quorum to comprise 3 representatives from each Member State (amendment to PMC (01)03 Annex Point No. 3).
- The Joint Chairs (through the JTS) to be notified of a Member's absence and name of alternate in advance of a meeting (amendment to PMC (01)03 Annex Point No. 8).

The Joint Chairs recommended the adoption of the rules, with the stated amendments.

13. Following a query from Derek Walker on the issue of unavailability of Members, Stephen Blair said that while he would encourage continuity of membership he agreed that if a Committee Member is unavailable for a meeting, an alternative person from their organisation can attend (see PMC(01)03 Annex Point No. 8). Damien O'Brien agreed, saying that while it is important to build up expertise, a degree of flexibility is needed.

14. Gwyn Evans raised the issue of public meetings and proposed a clear preference be made for holding meetings in public PMC (01)03 Annex Point No. 7). Stephen Blair endorsed this point and proposed the following amendment:

- Committee meetings will be held in public, unless the Joint Chair deem it necessary to hold a meeting in private (amendment to PMC (01)03 Annex Point No. 7).

15. Barbro Andersson noted in relation to the quorum, that 50% participation should be encouraged and is seen as best practice from a Commission perspective. Stephen Blair noted that transport links between Wales and Ireland was the reason for the amendment (3 representatives from each Member State), but stated that the matter was open to review.

16. Following a query from Barbro Andersson, Stephen Blair proposed the following amendment:

- That the European Commission be added as advisors to the Committee (amendment to PMC (01)03 Annex Point No. 1).

17. Following a proposal from Barbro Andersson, Stephen Blair noted the following amendment:

- A minimum of one meeting will be held per year (amendment to PMC (01)03 Annex Point No. 4).

18. In summary, Stephen Blair noted the following amendments would be made to the Rules of Procedure, following which they would be circulated to the Committee:

- PMC (01) 03 Annex - Point No. 1

That the European Commission be added as advisors to the Committee.

Adopted by the Committee

- PMC (01) 03 Annex - Point No. 3

Quorum to comprise 3 representatives from each Member State

Proposed by Cllr Conal Kavanagh, seconded by Derek Walker and adopted by the Committee

- PMC(01) 03 Annex - Point No. 4

A minimum of one meeting will be held per year.

Adopted by the Committee

- PMC (01) 03 Annex - Point No. 7

Committee meetings will be held in public, unless the Joint Chair deems it necessary to hold a meeting in private.

Adopted by the Committee

- PMC (01) 03 Annex - Point No. 8

The Joint Chairs (through the JTS) are to be notified of a Member's absence in advance of a meeting.

Adopted by the Committee

If a Committee Member is unavailable for a meeting, an alternative person from their organisation can attend.

Adopted by the Committee

Action: Revised Rules of Procedure, with amendments, to be circulated to the Members.

Item 5: Selection Criteria - PMC (01) 04

19. Stephen Blair introduced this paper, outlining the project selection criteria for the Programme. He noted that under Article 65 of the 1083/2006 Regulation, the selection criteria need to be approved within six months of the approval of the Operational Programme. He further noted that the proposed selection criteria, system and methodology have been tested. He stated that true collaboration in this process had taken place between the teams in Ireland and Wales, and that the resulting proposal is both realistic and workable.
20. Simon Baily outlined that the selection criteria were in place to ensure all projects know on what basis their projects are selected. He detailed the evolution of the criteria from Interreg IIIA, and outlined the proposed new scoring system of 8 core selection criteria plus 4 priority/theme-specific questions per project, with a maximum possible score of 300. He further outlined how refinements took place from the IIIA scoring system, including the new weighted scoring criteria, which aim to differentiate between strong, medium and weak projects, and focusing on issues which are central to the successful delivery of the programme (see PMC(01)04 No.13). He noted that the selection criteria take account of the new regulations, and recommended their adoption.
21. Following a query from Simon Bilsborough, who endorsed the new criteria, Stephen Blair advised that a project score is just a guide for the Steering Committee, a scoring exercise done by the JTS, noting that the Steering Committee have the ultimate decision-making authority on project approval.
22. Simon Bilsborough felt that the statement in PMC (01) 04 No.12 was misleading in relation to the shortcomings of the IIIA scoring system, noting that the former scoring system made it unclear to differentiate between average projects, rather than strong or weak projects, which were clear. Mike Pollard and Gwyn Evans agreed with the above comments but all of the above strongly endorsed the new criteria.

23. Derek Walker endorsed the new criteria, noting that Wales can learn from the Irish approach to social partnership. He proposed an amendment to the criteria stating that social partnership should be incorporated into the selection criteria, which was supported by Carys Thomas:

Simon Baily proposed (a) a question on social partnership could be included in the application form or (b) a reference to social partnership could be included in Core Selection Criteria No. 2, rather than No. 4. Stephen Blair noted that social partnership is national policy in Ireland and Wales and accordingly it was taken into account when drafting the programme. Derek Walker made it clear that it should be in the selection criteria rather than the application form, and that the issue was not just about an understanding of policy, but incorporating these principles into the development and implementation of projects. Simon Baily agreed to examine the matter further to find the most appropriate way of incorporating this amendment into the criteria.

24. Following a query from Carys Thomas on a glossary and definition of terms (equal opportunities, equality), Stephen Blair noted that such terms were defined in the Operational Programme and in Article 16 of the General Regulation 1083/2006, noting that there was a wider definition in place, to exclude discrimination. Brian D'Arcy agreed with Stephen Blair on this matter and also asked whether the comments of the Irish and Welsh Equality advisors will be taken on board in relation to the weighting of equal opportunities according to the theme under which they are submitted. Simon Baily advised that the core criteria are designed to apply to all projects regardless of their activity as they are designed to measure how the project contributes to the core aims of the programme including equal opportunities. As a result it would not be possible to agree to this but he did agree to take advice from Irish and Welsh Equality advisors regarding the best way to score projects in relation to the equal opportunities criteria.
25. Following a query from Cllr Conal Kavanagh on the range of scores achieved in the testing phase, Simon Baily outlined the results of the tests which ranged from less than 100 out of 300 for weak projects, from 150-200 out of 300 for medium quality projects to 280 out of 300 for the strongest project tested.
26. Ian Keating noted in relation to the first criteria under Priority 2 Theme 1 which dealt with awareness raising campaigns that a number of campaigns are already underway in Ireland and that anything undertaken in terms of this programme would need to complement what is already in place.
27. In summary, Stephen Blair asked for agreement on the Selection Criteria, subject to the following amendment, which was agreed by the Committee:
- Social partnership should be considered in project development and implementation and be reflected in the selection criteria, the amendment is to be done by the JTS.

Action: JTS to amend the selection criteria based on the point above.

Item 6: First call for proposals information package - PMC (01) 05

28. Simon Baily introduced this paper, outlining the information package for the first call for proposals. He noted that the documents were in draft form and outlined the contents of each document. He advised the meeting that the first call will be in early November.

Stephen Blair noted that a lot of work had been done to prepare this agenda item and the Joint Chairs thanked all involved. Stephen Blair advised that a data management system was being introduced to assist in the management of the programme, in particular with regard to the electronic processing of application information.

29. Cllr Goronwy Edwards and Gwyn Evans noted that the text on the application form was small and difficult to read, and inquired if the form could be more user-friendly and created in Microsoft Word rather than Microsoft Excel. Simon Baily advised that the text size will be increased to make it more readable and to ensure that the form will be as user friendly as possible. He noted that the form was created in Microsoft Excel in order to facilitate electronic inputting of all the information from the application form into the data management system. This process should facilitate a number of efficiencies in the work of the JTS most notably more efficient processing of applications. He noted that the JTS are working hard to make the form as user-friendly as possible but advised that this needed to be balanced against the need of the data management system. Stephen Blair noted that best practice had been looked at across the EU, and the system in question is tried and tested which has been used in a number of INTERREG programmes across many Member States. He noted that the form would be refined and made as easy as possible for all types of organisations to use. (Ref: PMC (01)05 Annex I: Grant Application Form)
30. Tracey Burke queried if there was any intention to advise on what is/is not expected or recommended when completing the application form. Stephen Blair noted that the Development Officers could be of assistance in this regard (Ref: PMC (01)05 Annex I: Grant Application Form) and whose involvement is now to be made mandatory.
31. Following a query from Carys Thomas on the budget for the WIN 2 Scheme, Simon Baily informed the meeting that an indicative budget of €100,000 was allocated for the Scheme, with Stephen Blair noting that the Scheme will be funded under Priority 3 - Technical Assistance. (Ref: PMC (01)05 Annex I: Grant Application Form)
32. Emyr Thomas enquired if the application form had been tested, noting that a lot of voluntary groups may not have the necessary I.T. skills to complete a detailed form in Microsoft Excel. Simon Baily agreed with the suggestion of testing the form in many different scenarios, noting that the JTS and WEFO will test all aspects of it before it is available publicly. He noted that the form had evolved from the IIIA form, and Mike Pollard commented on the added value of the new programme, noting the importance of learning from the experience of the last programme in relation to this issue. (Ref: PMC (01)05 Annex I: Grant Application Form)
33. Brian D'Arcy stated his appreciation for the work done on this matter to date, and queried if the documents in Annex I – IV were in draft form? Simon Baily confirmed that the documents were in draft form at this stage and also advised that he had discussed the written comments of the Equality Authority with Mr D'Arcy's colleague and that the suggested changes would be made to the application form. (Ref: PMC (01)05 Annex I: Grant Application Form)
34. Stephen Blair advised Committee Members to submit any observations they may have on the application documents to the JTS. (Ref: PMC (01)05 Annex I: Grant Application Form)

Action: JTS to edit application form to make it more user-friendly with larger text and to circulate the completed application documents to the PMC members once it is ready.

35. Gwyn Evans noted that the Operational Programme refers to renewable energy, while the Implementation Plan refers to bioenergy, and queried if this was intentional. Stephen Blair noted under Priority 1, innovation can encompass any sector, including energy and Priority 2 focuses on climate change. He noted that the documents will be revised to ensure a common language exists in both. Simon Baily advised that consistency in this matter will be addressed, and this issue was also raised at the stakeholder meeting earlier in the year. (Ref: PMC (01)05 Annex II: Programme Implementation Plan)

Action: The JTS to edit the Programme Implementation Plan check for consistency with the Operational Programme in relation to renewable energy/bio energy.

36. Gwyn Evans queried if the eligible organisations for the WIN 2 Scheme would be the same as for the Programme itself. He was concerned that if the eligibility criteria were the same for both, therefore allowing large organisations to get access to WIN 2 Scheme funding, this was not the best use for these funds. Simon Baily advised that a clear preference would be given to those organisations that are most in need of such funding. (Ref: PMC (01)05 Annex III: WIN 2 Scheme)
37. Gwyn Evans queried the added value of an additional 25% funding for projects if they submit an application which goes before a Steering Committee. Simon Baily advised that this part of the Scheme aimed to incentivise WIN 2 Scheme beneficiaries to submit an application. (Ref: PMC (01)05 Annex III: WIN 2 Scheme)

Action: The JTS to amend the WIN 2 Scheme documents to reflect that clear preference would be given to organisations most in need of funding.

38. Gwyn Evans raised a query on the Welsh Development Officers. He noted that under the IIA and IIIA Programmes, the Development Officers were employed by local authorities, and their posts were partly funded by Steering Group organisations and by Technical Assistance. Noting that Development Officers for the new Programme would be employed by WEFO and be part of the JTS (consistent with the Irish Development Officer, based in the JTS in Waterford), he raised some issues of concern in relation to what will be a new working relationship between project sponsors and the Development Officers. Praising the work of the previous Officers and noting that experienced people have been lost as a result of this change, he hoped the new officers would be fully trained in project development and would build new relationships with project sponsors. He called on WEFO to reconsider this change if it was not too late; noting that he felt insufficient consultation had taken place on the matter.

Damien O'Brien acknowledged the good work done by the Development Officers in the last Programme and their importance in relation to its successful delivery. He noted that their role in the new Programme will actually be enhanced as all projects will have to work closely with them. On the issue of consultation on the new working arrangements, Mr. O'Brien advised the meeting that a common job description was agreed between WEFO and the Managing Authority and was circulated to the two partnerships involved and consultation was entered into with both groups. Following consultation, during which one partnership raised concerns over the new reporting relationships, a meeting was held with the Chairs of the two Wales regional partnerships on 22nd August. Following this meeting WAG took the decision to directly employ the Development Officers and wrote to the Chairs setting out the reasons for this decision. He noted that assurances had been given to both partnerships (copy of correspondence available if required) that the officers will be located

in the relevant areas, and will continue to provide a quality service in each area. They will also retain strong links with the partnerships. He advised the meeting that recruitment was underway for the new positions, with Richard Hooper from WEFO acting in the role at present. Referring to the concerns raised by Mr. Evans, he noted the main advantage was the clearer reporting relationships, in contrast with the old Programme, where the officers were funded from a variety of sources but reporting to only one. It will promote greater integration with the JTS in terms of project development, remove any potential perceived conflicts of interest and also contribute to cost saving as the WAG can absorb some of the operating costs. Mr. O'Brien concluded by noting that the WAG has acted in the best interests of the Programme in relation to this decision. Stephen Blair reiterated the important role which the Development Officers have in the Programme, noting that Antoinette Jordan is in place as the Irish Development Officer, and looking forward to working with Richard Hooper in Wales.

39. Stephen Blair concluded by looking forward to the first call for proposals, noting that the new Programme website www.irelandwales.ie will go live in conjunction with the first call, and will contain all necessary application documents and details. He stressed the need to get the message out to as wide an audience as possible, through electronic means, advertising and press. It will be an opportunity to attract new partners and will be a busy time for the Development Officers.

Item 7: JTS Work Programme - PMC (01) 06

40. Simon Baily introduced this paper, which outlined the JTS work programme. He noted that a new Joint Technical Secretariat had been set up, based in Waterford, which will have a staff of eight with five already in place and the rest to be introduced on a phased basis. A Contact Office in WEFO will also be established, to ensure the level of joint working which operated during the last programme is continued. He also thanked colleagues in the Regional Assembly for their work in managing the recruitment of the new team. Damien O'Brien referred to the WEFO Contact Point for the new Programme which will operate from Mike Pollards unit, noting that WEFO will continue to have responsibility for the 2000 – 2006 Programme and have retained experienced staff.
41. He then outlined the work programme of the JTS, and said that the current focus is on completing preparations for the first call which is expected in early November with calls anticipated every six months after that. However he did also say that this would be kept under review depending on how the early rounds progress. He also made reference to details of the Communication Plan, website and national information day in Dublin.
42. Cllr Goronwy Edwards enquired if there would be similar event in Wales to the Irish information day in Dublin. Damien O'Brien informed the meeting that the joint launch of the Programme would take place in North Wales in early December, to coincide with the first call. Stephen Blair noted that the Members of the PMC would be invited to attend.
43. Cllr Conal Kavanagh welcomed the new JTS staff, and queried whether there would be a set allocation of funds for each round in order to ensure that all of the funding was not allocated at a very early stage. Stephen Blair advised the Committee that it was an issue for the Steering Committee to decide how many projects are selected in each round and that project quality will be the most important factor in this regard.
44. Cllr Conal Kavanagh enquired if there were any mechanisms in place through which to encourage new groups to participate in the Programme, or for funds to be shared out

among categories of groups. Stephen Blair noted that no ring-fencing of funds or sectors will take place and that the most important issue to consider was project quality. However it is hoped that projects will be from a wide geographical and sectoral background.

The JTS Work Programme was adopted by the Committee.

Item 8: Steering Committee Membership - PMC (01) 07

45. This paper was introduced by Stephen Blair. He explained that the PMC has the power to appoint the Steering Committee who will be responsible for project selection. The recommendation was to retain two committees, one for each Priority. The Committees will be jointly chaired by the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly and the Welsh Assembly Government. The membership will be drawn from Ireland and Wales from officials of government departments and state agencies with the expertise to carry out the job. The paper set out their likely composition and Mr Blair requested observations from the meeting.
46. Emyr Thomas noted that Priority 2 had fewer Welsh environmental representatives, in particular in relation to land use, in-shore waters and the rural environment. He suggested that his organisation the Countryside Council for Wales could fill this gap.
47. Gwyn Evans noted the recent establishment of the Climate Change Commission in the UK and whether they could be included on Priority 2. Damien O' Brien agreed that this was a useful suggestion but that it may be a little early to include them. However the matter would be kept under review. He also proposed that the WLGA should be represented as members on both Steering Committees and that further consideration would be given to Further Education sector representation on the Priority 1 Steering Committee
48. Gwyn Evans queried the proposed Arts Council membership on Priority 2 in both Ireland and Wales. Mike Pollard advised that they were included as the Arts and Heritage are specifically referred to in Priority 2 of the Programme.
49. Councillor Goronwy Edwards noted that the Welsh Local Government Association were members on Priority 2 but were only advisors on Priority 1. Damien O' Brien agreed that this was inconsistent and that they will be members of both committees.
50. Derek Walker referred to the proposed membership of Priority 1 and noted that it took no account of social partnership and that the membership of both committees should be reviewed to take account of this. Carys Thomas also made reference to this in relation to the Community and Voluntary sector. The Joint Chairs agreed with the proposal and agreed to review the membership accordingly. However both stressed the need to ensure that the membership had the necessary expertise to carry out the job properly.

Item 9: Future Meetings - PMC (01) 08

51. Stephen Blair noted that the next meeting will be held at a venue in Wales in late spring/early summer 2008 and that meeting venues will alternate between Ireland and Wales.

Item 10: Any Other Business

52. Launch of the Programme: Stephen Blair noted that there was a new requirement for a Communication Plan (see Implementation Regulation), within which there was a requirement for one major publicity event per year as well as a formal launch of the programme. A copy of the Communication Plan, when prepared, will be provided to Committee members. The launch, at senior ministerial level, is likely to take place in early December in North Wales and will be a joint event.

Annex I - AttendanceJoint Chairs

Stephen Blair	Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly
Damien O'Brien	Welsh European Funding Office

Members

Councillor Conal Kavanagh	Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly
Councillor Pat Hand	Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly
Councillor Ted Howlin	Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly
Councillor Gorowny Edwards	Welsh Local Government Association
Gwyn Evans	Welsh Local Government Association
Simon Billsborough	Welsh Assembly Government
Tracey Burke	Welsh Assembly Government
Niall Mac Sweeney	Dept of Finance
Dolores Keating	Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly
Carys Thomas	Children's Rights Alliance
Emyr Thomas	Countryside Council for Wales
Derek Walker	Wales TUC

Advisors

Barbro Andersson	European Commission
Ian Keating	Dept of Environment, Heritage and Local Government
Brian D'Arcy	Equality Authority

Officials

Simon Baily	Joint Technical Secretariat
Cathal Reilly	Joint Technical Secretariat
Antoinette Jordan	Joint Technical Secretariat
Sandrine Bertin	Joint Technical Secretariat
Orla Kelly	Joint Technical Secretariat
Mike Pollard	Welsh European Funding Office
Diana Wilson	Welsh European Funding Office
Richard Hooper	Welsh European Funding Office

Annex II - Actions - Ireland Wales Programme 2007-13 PMC

1. The JTS to amend the Rules of Procedure as summarised in point 18 of the minutes and circulate to the PMC members.
2. The JTS to amend the core selection criteria to reflect the wish of the membership to have social partnership specifically mentioned in the criteria and to circulate the revised criteria to the PMC members.
3. The JTS to edit the application form to make it more user-friendly with larger text and to circulate the final application material to the PMC members once it is ready.
4. The JTS to edit the Programme Implementation Plan and check for consistency with the Operational Programme in relation to renewable energy.
5. The JTS to edit the WIN 2 Scheme documents to reflect that clear preference would be given to organisations most in need of funding.

Ireland/Wales Programme 2007-2013

Programme Monitoring Committee

Programme Update Report

Issue

1. Progress with the Programme since the meeting on October 19th 2007.

Recommendation

2. Members are invited to note the latest position with the Programme.

Background

First Call

3. The first call for proposals was closed on January 18th 2008 and 15 applications for funding were received by the closing date. They were split as follows:
 - Priority 1 Theme 1 – 9 applications
 - Priority 1 Theme 2 – 2 applications
 - Priority 2 Theme 1 – 3 applications
 - Priority 2 Theme 2 – 1 application

Steering Committees

4. The applications went through a detailed appraisal procedure which was carried out by the JTS and culminated with two Steering Committee meetings in Trim, Co Meath on April 30th and May 1st.
5. At the meeting 14 of the 15 applications were considered. One project PRISMe was withdrawn prior to the meeting due to problems regarding their match funding.
6. The total project cost of the 14 applications was €24.4 million with a related ERDF grant request of €18.2 million. This was equivalent to 36.5% of the total ERDF grant allocation for the entire programme.
7. In the case of Priority 1 the Committee approved 4 of the 10 applications worth a combined total of €4.4 million in ERDF grant support, equivalent to 14.96% of the total allocation for Priority 1.

8. In the case of Priority 2 the Committee approved 2 of the 4 applications with a combined total of €1.9 million in ERDF grant support, the equivalent of 9.37% of the total allocation for Priority 2.
9. Under the last Ireland Wales Programme, some projects were given a type of partial approval, contingent on further information being supplied; the Committee decided that they do not wish to grant that type of approval this time and that decisions would be to either reject the application in total or accept the application in total allowing however for certain instances where the Committee may wish to clarify a small number of points with particular projects which would not affect the substance of an actual application. At the same time the Committee agreed that to decide on the application as presented was the best course of action.
10. Where the Committee was content to approve a project on the basis of the information presented but wished to ensure minor points of clarification or suggested improvements were incorporated in the project as part of the approval, the Committee would make clear its wishes and instruct the JTS to resolve such points with projects on the Committee's behalf. Should new or more substantive points emerge in the course of the JTS' contact with projects, these points should be remitted to the PSC for further consideration.
11. The Committee agreed that outputs and value-for-money were primary concerns, particularly given that the average grant being sought was over €1.3 million compared to €450k for the last Ireland Wales Programme, and that a sharp eye would be kept on mainstream funding to ensure no duplication of existing provision.
12. A detailed analysis of the approvals for Round 1 is available in the Annexes to this document.

Issuing of Subsidy Contracts

13. Formal notification has been sent out to the projects under consideration advising whether they had been approved or rejected and the reasoning behind the Committee's decision.
14. In relation to rejected projects the Development Officers are on hand to provide advice and support for applicants who may wish to submit a revised proposal in the second round.
15. In relation to the approved projects the Project Officers are working closely with the Lead Partners to ensure that all outstanding issues have been dealt with satisfactorily and the aim is to issue subsidy contracts to the projects in question as soon as is practicable.

Second Call

16. The plan is to formally open the second call for proposals in mid-late July. This is to allow time for the JTS to make the necessary adjustments to both the application material and the guidance notes in line with the experience gained and the lessons learnt following the first call for proposals.
17. The deadline for the submission of applications will be late September. Following analysis of the applications received the Steering Committee meetings will take place in early 2009. It will not be possible to set a date until we know the precise number of applications.

N+2

18. The N+2 rule means that the financial allocation for 2007 needs to be spent by the end of 2009 in order to avoid decommitment of funds by the European Commission. The figure in question is €4,203,657. This will be kept under constant scrutiny.

Secretariat

May 2008

ANNEX I – APPROVALS BY THE STEERING COMMITTEE AT MEETINGS IN TRIM CO MEATH

PROJECT TITLE	PARTNERS	PROJECT COSTS €	ERDF GRANT €
Vision Project (visualisation & innovation project)	Coleg Menai (Lead Partner)	642,971	473,247
	Institute of Technology Tallaght	717,647	509,184
	TOTAL JOINT PROJECT COST	1,360,618	982,431
Channel Cluster Project-Food & Drink, Ireland Wales	Menter a Busnes Cyf (Lead Partner)	809,405	607,052
	Irish Exporters Association	750,000	562,500
	TOTAL JOINT PROJECT COST	1,559,405	1,169,552
WISE - Wales Ireland Sustainable Enterprise	Institute of Technology Carlow (Lead Partner)	725,454	544,091
	Engineering Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB)	480,544	360,408
	TOTAL JOINT PROJECT COST	1,205,998	904,499

Sustainable Learning Networks in Ireland and Wales (SLNIW)	Waterford Institute of Technology (Lead Partner)	1,030,801	773,081
	Aberystwyth University	823,117	617,338
	TOTAL JOINT PROJECT COST	1,853,918	1,390,419
Green Communities	Keep Wales Tidy (Lead Partner)	1,051,572	788,679
	An Taisce	537,170	402,879
	TOTAL JOINT PROJECT COST	1,588,742	1,191,558
Ecojel Project (manging the opportunities & detrimental impact of jellyfish in the Irish Sea)	Swansea University (Lead Partner)	612,083	459,061
	University College Cork	354,931	265,879
	TOTAL JOINT PROJECT COST	967,014	724,940

ANNEX 2 - ANALYSIS OF APPLICATIONS: ROUNDS 1

	Received by deadline	Withdrawn	Considered by Steering Committees	Approved	Rejected
P1 T1: Innovation and competitiveness	9	1	8	3	5
P1 T2: Skills for competitiveness and employment integration	2	0	2	1	1
P2 T1: Climate Change and Sustainable Development	3	0	3	2	1
P2 T2: Sustainable Regeneration of Communities:	1	0	1	0	1
Total above	15	1	14	6	8

ANNEX 3

GEOGRAPHICAL SPREAD OF PROJECTS

FIRST CALL FOR PROPOSALS

<i>Geographical Spread</i>	<i>No. of approved projects</i>
TOTAL APPROVED	6
Welsh Areas	
All Of Welsh INTERREG Area (Including Irish Sea)	2
All Of South West Wales	1
All Of North Wales	
Cross Local Authority Areas	3
Pembrokeshire	
Gwynedd	
Carmarthenshire	
Ceredigion	
Anglesey	
Conwy	
Denbighshire	
Adjacent Counties	
Swansea	
Wrexham	
Flintshire	
Irish Areas	
All of the Irish INTERREG Area (Including Irish Sea)	3
Cross Regional Authority Areas	2
South-East Regional Authority Area	1
Mid-East Regional Authority Area	
Dublin	
Waterford	
Kilkenny	
Meath	
Carlow	
Wexford	
Kildare	
Wicklow	
South Tipperary	

Adjacent Counties	
Cork	
Kerry	

The Programme is also financing limited amounts of activity in areas which are adjacent to these counties. These are the counties of Cork and Kerry in Ireland and the local authority areas of Swansea, Wrexham and Flintshire in Wales.

ANNEX 4

IRELAND/WALES INTERREG IIIA PROGRAMME ANALYSIS OF APPLICATION ROUNDS 1 - APPLICATIONS AND APPROVALS BY SECTOR

Number of applications/approvals

		Total	Irish partner			Welsh partner		
			Private *	Public	Voluntary	Private *	Public	Voluntary
Priority 1 Theme 1	Applications	8	5	6	0	6	6	0
	Approvals	3	1	2	0	2	1	0
Priority 1 Theme 2	Applications	2	1	1	0	1	1	0
	Approvals	1	0	1	0	0	1	0
Priority 2 Theme 1	Applications	3	0	3	1	0	2	1
	Approvals	2	0	1	1	0	1	1
Priority 2 Theme 2	Applications	1	1	0	0	0	2	0
	Approvals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Priority 1 plus	Applications	14	7	10	1	7	11	1
Priority 2	Approvals	6	1	4	1	2	3	1

* includes projects from private non-profit making organisations. Also as many projects have more than one Irish or Welsh partner the figures may appear to be unbalanced in places.

ANNEX 5 - FINANCIAL INFORMATION & INDICATOR DATA – ROUND 1 PROJECTS

PRIORITY 1: KNOWLEDGE, INNOVATION AND SKILLS FOR GROWTH

Financial Profile:

Priority	Total Grant Available €	Round 1 Commitment	
		(€million)	As % of Grant Available
Total for Priority	29,720,147	4,406,903	14.96%

Outputs: Priority 1

Outputs: Theme 1, Innovation and competitiveness

Outputs/ Results	Programme target	Total Predicted
Outputs		
Number of joint projects aimed at promoting and developing entrepreneurship and the development of new businesses including cross border business clusters	11	2
Number of joint projects aimed at promoting and developing innovation in SMEs including linkages with HE/FE institutions	11	2
No. of SME's assisted	300	160
Results		
No. of gross direct new jobs created	10	21
Number of new SMEs created	15	3
No. of new products/ processes developed	20	42

Outputs: Theme 2, Skills for competitiveness and employment integration

Outputs/ Results	Programme target	Total Predicted
Outputs		
Number of collaborative training projects that address the skills needs of SMEs and industry in the cross border region	9	12
Number of joint projects aimed at improving and enhancing systems of learning and workforce development	4	1
Number of joint projects aimed at providing access to training and education for immigrants and disadvantaged groups	5	1
Number of beneficiaries undertaking cross border training courses/modules	500	300
Results		
Number of beneficiaries receiving certified qualifications	350	Up to 60

PRIORITY 2: CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE REGENERATION

Financial Profile:

Priority	Total Grant Available €	Round 1 Commitment	
		(€ million)	As % of Grant Available
Total for Priority	19,813,431	1,856,066	9.37%

Outputs: Priority 2

Outputs: Theme 1, Climate Change and Sustainable Development

Outputs/ Results	Programme target	Total Predicted
Outputs		
Number of cross border projects focusing on awareness raising or responding to challenge of climate change	9	2
Number of collaborative projects protecting and/or enhancing the natural environment.	9	1
Results		
Number of new cross-border links established	9	6
No. of measures implemented which react to the challenge of climate change	9	3
No. of enhancements undertaken	9	100
No. of projects disseminating results to stakeholders and/or communities or reports published	9	5

Outputs: Theme 2, Sustainable Regeneration of Communities

Outputs/ Results	Programme target	Total Predicted
Outputs		
Number of joint projects focusing on sustainable community regeneration action.	14	0
Results		
Number of new community, social enterprise or cultural links established	7	0
Number of new measures implemented	14	0
Number of gross direct new jobs created	6	0

Ireland Wales Programme 2007-13 (INTERREG 4A)

Programme Monitoring Committee

Annual Implementation Report

Issue

1. Annual Implementation Report for the Programme for 2007.

Recommendation

2. The Committee is asked to approve the Annual Implementation Report.

Background

3. As per the requirements of Article 67 of the General Structural Funds Regulation the JTS has prepared an Annual Implementation Report for the calendar year 2007.
4. The document sets out the activity that took place during the calendar year 2007 and provides the following based on the structure required by the Commission. This is:
 - a. Introduction
 - b. Overview of the Implementation of the OP
 - c. Implementation by Priority
 - d. Major Projects
 - e. Technical Assistance
 - f. Information and Publicity
5. The Regulation requires that the report is submitted to the Commission by June 30th 2008. **Members are asked to provide any amendments at the meeting itself or in writing no later than June 23rd.** At that stage the JTS will amend the document as appropriate and submit it to the Commission for approval.

Secretariat

June 2008

Ireland Wales Programme 2007-13 (INTERREG 4A)

Programme Monitoring Committee

Steering Committees Rules of Procedure

Issue

1. The rules of procedure for the Steering Committees

Recommendation

2. The Committee is asked to approve the draft rules of procedure for the Steering Committees.

Background

3. The Steering Committees met for the first time on April 30th and May 1st to consider the applications received following the closure of the first call for proposals.
4. At the meetings they considered a paper which outlined their role and rules of procedure. The paper was significantly influenced by the good practice established during the 2000-2006 Ireland Wales INTERREG IIIA Programme. A copy of the paper is at Annex I.
5. A common operating principle while developing this programme has been to build on the good practice established by our partners in the Welsh Assembly Government. The Steering Committees worked effectively in choosing good quality projects for grant support and the Rules of Procedure were helpful in fostering a good working relationship and a spirit of partnership among all concerned.
6. Both Steering Committees approved the Rules of Procedure and they are being submitted to this Committee for final clearance.

Secretariat

May 2008



Annex I

Role of Steering Committees/Draft Rules of Procedure

Background

1. Chapter 8 of the Ireland Wales Operational Programme (OP) document confirms that one or more Steering Committees (SCs) will be set up by the Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC) at its first meeting. The PMC agreed proposals at their inaugural meeting in October 2007 to appoint two SCs. The SCs will draw up their own Rules of Procedure which will be agreed by the PMC.

Role

2. The principal task of the Steering Committees is to undertake the joint selection of projects in compliance with the selection procedure and criteria approved by the PMC. One SC will be responsible for Priority 1 of the Programme and the other for Priority 2.

Composition

3. The Steering Committees will be jointly chaired by the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly and the Welsh Assembly Government. Membership of the Committees is drawn from representatives of the Managing Authority, Welsh Assembly Government, the Department of Finance, other relevant government departments, state agencies and sectoral agencies with a policy remit covering the OP's Priorities and Themes and Regional and Local Authorities. Gender balance will be promoted on the Steering Committee.
4. This will include Theme Leaders who have an overview of their respective theme and will provide sector specific advice and guidance to the Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) during the project appraisal process. This will replicate the good practice established with the role of the Measure Leaders for the last programme.

5. A representative of the Commission may participate in the work of the Committee in an advisory capacity. Equality and Sustainable Development representatives will be advisors to the Committee(s).
6. Other advisory groups may also be formed around specific issues of relevance to the Programme and experts from various sectors in relation to operation of the Programme can be invited by the Joint Chairs to meetings as and when this is considered appropriate.

Functions

7. The function of the Steering Committees is to examine all applications for ERDF grant assistance under the Ireland/Wales Programme and select which projects should be approved for grant assistance.
8. The membership list is outlined at Annex I.
9. In undertaking this task, the SCs will take into account:-
 - (i) the project selection criteria contained in the Programme and Project Management Guide and approved by the PMC. Each project will be assigned an indicative ranking based on the score that they received against these criteria.
 - (ii) the expenditure profiles set out in Annex II and III of the Operational Programme document.
10. Applications will be considered by the Steering Committees at the relevant meetings, following completion of the eligibility checking process by the Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) (outlined at Annex III). The Steering Committees will consider the indicative ranking for the project assigned by the JTS and evaluate the merits of the project against Programme and Priority/Theme level aims and objectives. Each Member of the Steering Committees will be responsible for considering applications across the whole respective Priority and therefore for making decisions collectively.
11. The Steering Committees will also consider observations and recommendations from relevant departments and agencies to ensure that projects comply with national and EU policy and legislation.
12. In considering the merits of applications, the SCs will have regard to such wider issues as:-
 - (i) *Overall programme strategy and the development of the programme across both main priorities*
 - (ii) *Overall quality of the project*

- (iii) *The degree of cross border cooperation*
- (iv) *The impact on the programme's Equal Opportunities cross cutting theme*
- (v) *The impact on the programme's Sustainable Development cross cutting theme*
- (vi) *The impact on programme targets*
- (vii) *Value for money and sound management of financial resources*
- (viii) *Compliance with national, regional and EU policies, including Social Partnership*
- (ix) *The degree of durability and sustainability of the project*

10. The Committees will be responsible for approving or rejecting applications. They will instruct the JTS to issue notification of the outcome of grant applications to project applicants, including the issue of grant offer letters to successful applicants. The Committee's decision is final

Meetings

- 11. Dates of Steering Committee meetings will be notified in advance and set in accordance with the timing of project rounds which form part of the JTS work plan which has been agreed by the PMC. The JTS will arrange a well publicised call for applications, by individual round and with agreed closing dates. Applications received by the agreed closing date will be appraised and considered at the next SC meeting.
- 12. Each Steering Committee will be expected to meet around twice a year. Meetings will be held in Wales and Ireland on a rotational basis, with the Chair determined by the location of the meeting.
- 13. The JTS will send the agenda and working papers at least 10 working days before the Steering Committee meetings, although exceptionally papers may be circulated at a later date. The minutes of meetings will normally be circulated in draft within 20 working days of the meetings. Members will be given 15 working days to comment on the draft minutes.

Participation at Meetings

- 14. Members will be eligible, subject to paragraph 15 below, to participate in all business transacted by the Steering Committees. Individual members who are unable to attend a particular meeting may be represented by their named alternates, provided that the Chair is notified before the meeting.
- 15. Members of the Steering Committees are required to declare any interest they may have in particular projects and will be requested leave the room for any discussions about any such project.

16. The Steering Committees will conduct their work on the basis of consensus. In the event of a disagreement, the Chair, using all appropriate channels, shall seek to resolve any differences arising within the meeting.

Written Procedure

17. At the initiative of the Chair, or with the agreement of the Chair, proposals, other than project applications may be submitted to the Steering Committees for adoption by written procedure. Members will normally be asked to give their written opinion on any such proposal within 15 working days. The proposal shall be deemed agreed by the Steering Committee in the absence of any written objections within that period.
18. Where written objections from any member are received by the JTS within 15 days, the Chair will determine whether:
 - (a) the proposal shall be deemed lost;
 - (b) discussion should take place with the relevant member concerning their objection; or
 - (c) the proposal should be referred back to the Steering Committees for further consideration.
22. A member may withdraw written objections to any proposal at any time and, when every written objection is withdrawn, the proposal shall be deemed agreed by the Steering Committee.
23. Following the 15 working day period, the JTS shall inform the Steering Committee:
 - (a) whether any proposal submitted to the Steering Committee for adoption has, in the absence of any written objection, been deemed agreed; or
 - (b) if any member has registered written objections to a proposal and, if so, what the Chair has determined.

Secretariat

24. A dedicated Joint Technical Secretariat has been established within the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly to deliver the Programme. The JTS will assist and advise the Committee in respect of the functions and procedures set out above. Programme Development Officers in Ireland and Wales will also support the work of the SC's.

Ireland Wales Programme 2007-13 (INTERREG 4A)

Programme Monitoring Committee

Development Officers Report

Issue

1. The report from the Development Officer Team

Recommendation

2. The Committee is invited to take note of the reports.

Background

3. The report is structured as follows
 - A: Report from Antoinette Jordan/Richard Hooper
 - B: Report from Rita Mc Garvey
 - C: Report from Patrick Lilly/Roger Seddon
4. Antoinette Jordan held the post of DO in Ireland from August 2007 to March 2008 and has since taken up the post of National Contact Point for the INTERREG IVB North West Europe Programme in the Regional Assembly.
5. Rita Mc Garvey has been the acting Development Officer since then and the permanent replacement for Antoinette, Siobhan Rafter, will be in the post from June 3rd.
6. Richard Hooper was the acting Development Officer for all of the Welsh area until March 2008 when Patrick Lilly and Roger Seddon were appointed.

A) ANTOINETTE JORDAN/RICHARD HOOPER

1. Project Development Activities

Meetings: Meetings took place with over 70 potential applicants from August 2007, in both Ireland and Wales, and more than one meeting took place with several applicants.

Telephone and Email Advice: Many queries were dealt with by phone and email.

Database: A database was created to assist the development process. Information on project applicants is recorded in the database, which had over 200 entries (representing over 200 contacts) at the close of Round 1. The database can also produce customised reports and is integrated with Microsoft Office to produce mailing labels, letters, emails, etc.

Information Pack: An “information pack” was developed to provide applicants with an initial source of information. A pack was given to each applicant who met with the DO (and some were sent by post). It contains the IIIA brochure, information booklet, contact details for the DO Team, WIN Scheme details, chapter 4 of the *Operational Programme*, the *Programme & Project Management Guide* (when available), Expression of Interest form, map of the eligible area – and any specific information requested, e.g. information on adjacency.

Expressions of Interest: An EOI form was developed and was available on the Programme website. It enabled potential applicants to register their interest in the Programme at an early stage of their project development, and the submission of an EOI was compulsory for all applicants who submitted an application in Round 1.

Events: Participation at various events took place, including key events organised by the JTS, the Member States and external events. Participation included presentations, information stands, one-to-one meetings, question and answer sessions and the provision of brochures, booklets and information. The Irish national launch of the new Interreg programming period took place in Dublin on 23 October 2007. The Programme launch took place in Llandudno on 7 December 2007. Waterford Institute of Technology hosted an Interreg information seminar on 14 December 2007. Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire County Councils hosted a workshop in Dublin for local authorities on 7 February 2008. A number of other events also took place.

Applicant Advice Sessions: The DO Team held 4 days of advice sessions in Aberystwyth (2 days) and Dublin (2 days) prior to the close of Round 1, from 7 – 11 January 2008. Potential applicants were invited to attend a 1-hour face-to-face meeting with the DO Team, and to submit draft application forms in advance. 20 meetings took place in total. This was a successful way of managing the high interest in the Programme.

2. Publicity

Communication Plan The Communications Plan was drawn up in accordance with Article 2 of the Implementation Regulation 1828/2006, and was formally accepted by Commission on 12 March 2008.

Website: The DO assisted in the development, content and updating of the Programme website.

Brochures/ Information Booklet: An 8-page information booklet was published in October 2007. This booklet is now updated regularly and is available for download on the website. It contains an overview of the Programme, a step-by-step guide to the application process and relevant contact details.

3. WIN2 Scheme

Development: Following on from the success of the WIN Scheme, the WIN2 Scheme procedures and documents were developed - workflow, rules & eligibility criteria, travel proposal form, travel claim form and a brochure. The scheme was approved by PMC1 on 19 October 2007.

Implementation: Potential applicants (except those from public authorities) were advised on the WIN2 Scheme and procedure. All of the documentation was made available on the Programme website. The following table shows the current situation:

WIN2	RECEIVED	APPROVED	REJECTED	DID NOT TRAVEL	CLAIMS RECEIVED	CLAIMS PAID	AMOUNT PAID
2007	3	1	1	1	0	0	€0.00
2008*	5	3	2	0	3	3	€784.50
Total*	8	4	3	1	3	3	€784.50

* (to 28/05/08)

Applications were rejected which did not comply with the rules and eligibility criteria, e.g. applicant not in the eligible area and travel taking place without prior approval.

4. Round 1

There was a lot of interest during the first round of the Programme, although it was evident early on that the majority of those interested were previous applicants who already had experience in the INTERREG IIIA Ireland / Wales Cross Border Programme.

As well as discussing their projects, all applicants were informed of the fundamental changes to the new Programme. In particular, the implementation of the lead partner principle and the direction towards more collaborative joint projects by focusing on the 4 co-operation criteria and the fact that all payments this time around would be paid in Euros. We also explained that it was important for applicants to take their time in developing projects and not to rush their applications through just to get them in under the first round.

15 applications were received by the JTS by the 18 January 2008 deadline. An expression of interest had been received from each applicant, and contact with the Development Officer Team had also been made, to varying degrees, by each. This contact ranged from on-going telephone and email contact, regular meetings, submission of draft application form in advance of the applicant workshops and attendance at the workshops – to informal contact at publicity events, occasional phone calls, and contact first made in January 2008, close to the deadline. Many applicants who had been working closely with the DO Team decided to wait until Round 2, rather than submitting an incomplete/unfinished application.

Reviewing of draft application forms: Many applicants availed of the opportunity for a review of their draft application form by the DO Team. Ideally this was to take place at the advice sessions held the week before the deadline. However drafts were being received up to the day before the deadline. Certain observations could be made in this time, however should an application have obvious issues, this would not allow the applicant sufficient time to edit/review their form.

Applicant advice sessions/workshops: The applicant advice sessions which took place shortly before the close of Round 1 proved very successful. The applicants who availed of this service appreciated the opportunity to meet with both DOs and to have their draft application forms considered. As a result, there were fewer queries in the week leading up to the close of the call and there were generally no “last minute panics”

B: RITA MC GARVEY – APRIL 2008-JUNE 2008

Rita McGarvey took up the role of Acting Development Officer on 1st April 2008. She replaced Antoinette Jordan. Antoinette took up a position within the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly on the North West Europe programme. Siobhan Rafter will take up the permanent Development Officer post on 3rd June.

Rita met with Patrick Lilly, the Development Officer for South West Wales, on 15th April in Waterford. A discussion took place on the systems in place, current expressions of interest and how to effectively communicate information between the Development Officer team. There was an opportunity to meet with both Roger Seddon and Patrick Lilly at the steering committee meetings in Trim, Co. Meath on 30th April and 1st May.

Progress since close of the First Call

Since the close of round in 18th January, there has been a high level of interest in the Ireland Wales programme from previous sponsors under the INTERREG 3A programme and new organisations. Previous project sponsors are keen to get involved in the new INTERREG 4A programme and build on their existing projects. There is particular interest from third level institutes, local authorities and the voluntary and community sector. A number of organisations are at an advanced

stage with their application preparations since the launch of the programme and keen to apply under round 2.

The Irish Development Officer plans to provide support and advice to the 8 rejected projects under Round 1.

Expressions of Interest

Over the period April to May 2008 there were approximately 20 expression of interest forms received, many of these interested in applying under Priority 2 particularly Priority 2 Theme 2 – Sustainable Regeneration of Communities. The Irish Development Officer has made contact with all organisations that submitted an expression of interest form and offered support and advice at the early stage of project development.

The Irish Development Officer has met with 11 applicants, a number of which have been initial meeting and the rest have been to discuss specific development areas and details on the application form. It is envisaged that there will be a higher number of applications submitted in Round 2 based on the level of enquiries, expression of interest forms and meetings.

Promotion of the Ireland Wales Programme

As part of the communication plan for the programme, five presentations have been given:

- 13th May in Waterford County Council Offices, Dungarvan – Programme presentation to a group of Senior Community and Enterprise Officers in the South East Councils.
- 16th May – Programme Presentation at the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly Annual Conference. Information desk set up.
- 20th May – Waterford City Community Forum – European Funding Information Session in Garter Lane Arts Centre.
- 22nd May – County Waterford Community Forum – European Funding Information Session in the Park Hotel, Dungarvan.
- 26th May – Presentation to members of the South East Regional Authority.

The programme web site is regularly updated with programme activity.

Development Database

At present there are approx. 235 contacts on the Development Database. The development database is regularly updated with correspondence from

organisations interested in the programme including expressions of interest forms, telephone conversations, emails received etc.

The new GECKO information management system will have a development section to record expressions of interest and contact with project applicants. This system will be accessible to the Welsh Development Officers.

Win 2 Scheme

To date there have been 8 applications under the WIN 2 scheme, 4 of which have been approved, 3 rejected and 1 applicant decided not to travel. (The main reasons for rejection were that applicants were situated outside the programme area or written approval for travel was not sought from the Managing Authority prior to their journey).

Future Plans

- Handover period between Rita McGarvey and Siobhan Rafter from 3rd June.
- Engage with first round project sponsors both approved (6 projects) and rejected (8 projects).
- Update the website with details on the call for Round 2 applications.
- Promotional activity to highlight details on the call for round 2 applications.
- Update relevant programme documents as appropriate.
- Plan a series of pre application workshops to give support and advice on completing the programme application form.
- In advance of the closing date for Round 2, organise a series of open days in Ireland and Wales to carry out final checks on applications.
- Develop a generic promotional brochure for the Ireland Wales programme

C: PATRICK LILLY/ROGER SEDDON

1. Introduction

Two new Development Officers (DO's) have been recruited, Mr Roger Seddon, NW Wales and Mr. Patrick Lilly, SW Wales. The DO's started their new roles in March 2008.

2. Development Activities

Activities include:

- Informing new / existing contacts/potential sponsors of our role. This has been the principal task.
- Liaise/build working relationships with both Ireland/Wales teams and establish contacts with Welsh Assembly Government Departments.
- Raise awareness of the DO's role with other organisations, (Local Authorities, Spatial European teams and other European Networks).
- Establish contact with local sources of expertise in activity areas upon which the programme impacts.

2. Current Position – projects in development

South West Wales

Priority/Theme	EOI's Submitted	Pre EOI Stage
Innovation & Competitiveness 1 : 1	3	4
Skills for Competitiveness & Employment Integration 1 : 2	4	4
Climate Change & Sustainable Development 2 : 1	4	7
Sustainable Regeneration of Communities 2 : 2	4	5

North West Wales

Priority/Theme	EOI's Submitted	Pre EOI Stage
Innovation & Competitiveness 1 : 1	3	6
Skills for Competitiveness & Employment Integration 1 : 2	4	7
Climate Change & Sustainable Development 2 : 1	3	6
Sustainable Regeneration of Communities 2 : 2	5	8

*Note – tables do not include unsuccessful applicants from the 1st round which may reorganise and reapply for the 2nd call.

3. Communication -

Activities include:

- Attendance at Spatial Planning Groups, shadow Spatial European Teams.
- Awareness events – including Territorial Co-operation day in Cardiff.
- Attendance at the Programme Steering Committee, County Meath.
- Workshop events.
- Visit to JTS team in Waterford.

4. Future Plans

- Engage with 1st round project sponsors both approved and rejected.
- Consolidate relations with Spatial European teams.
- Implement Communication plan.
- Explore the feasibility of workshops to facilitate project development.
- Wales DO's visit to JTS early July – meet/liaise with new permanent DO.
- Investigate methods of addressing emerging trends that include:
 - (a) Liaising with organisations and other funding streams to avoid duplication and ensure synergy.
 - (b) projects that specialise in research activity.

Ireland Wales Programme 2007-13 (INTERREG 4A)

Programme Monitoring Committee

Information and Publicity

Issue

1. Information and Publicity activities for the Ireland Wales Programme

Recommendation

2. The Committee is asked to take note of the contents of this paper which outlines the information and publicity activities that have been ongoing since the last meeting.

Background

3. Formal Launch of the Programme

The formal launch of the Programme took place in Llandudno on December 7th 2007. It was attended by roughly 200 people and was jointly launched by the Deputy First Minister of Wales, Mr Ieuan Wyn Jones and the Irish Consul General in Wales Mr Colm Mc Grady. It also celebrated the achievements of the old programme and featured presentations from successful projects as well as detailed information on the new programme.

4. Communications Plan

The Communications Plan was drafted during December and January by the JTS in consultation with partners in WEFO. It was formally submitted to the Commission by SFC on January 16th 2008. The Commission formally approved the plan on March 12th. Detailed implementation of the plan will be a priority for the Development Officers in the second half of 2008.

5. Launch of Programme Website

The Programme website www.irelandwales.ie went live on November 16th on the same day that the first call for proposals was launched. It was designed following detailed research of similar websites and the aim was to ensure a simple and easy to follow site where any information that you need is no more than three clicks away. Reaction from stakeholders has been generally quite positive. A partner search facility will be added to the site during the second half of the year.

6. New Programme Logo

The new programme logo was incorporated into the website design and features on all promotional material. It was designed by the JTS with assistance from the Welsh Assembly Government's Graphics Department. The design is simple and self explanatory which will clearly show what we are about in the years ahead.

7. Presentations to External Groups

The Programme team has made a large number of presentations to external groups since the last PMC meeting.

Secretariat

May 2008

Ireland Wales Programme 2007-13 (INTERREG 4A)

Programme Monitoring Committee

Regions for Economic Change

Issue

1. The European Commission's Region's for Economic Change (RFEC) Initiative

Recommendation

2. The Committee is asked to take note of the contents of this paper.

Background

3. As per Chapter 8 of the Operational Programme Document the Managing Authority is committed to facilitating the development of innovative projects that are related to the results of this initiative.
4. This will also be included as an agenda point on the PMC once a year to discuss possible suggestions for the programme and to provide information regarding the progress of networks involving organizations in the programme area.
5. Regions for Economic Change aims to ensure that the good ideas and practices developed in the interregional cooperation (INTERREG IVC) / urban development network (URBACT II) programmes are taken on board in the Convergence, Regional Competitiveness and Employment and European Territorial Cooperation Operational Programmes.
6. It introduces new ways to dynamise regional and urban networks and to help them work closely with the Commission, to have innovative ideas tested and rapidly disseminated into the Convergence, Regional Competitiveness and Employment, and European Territorial Cooperation programmes including the Ireland Wales Programme.
7. To help achieve these aims, RFEC introduces the following four elements:
 - Identification of 30 priority themes focused on economic modernisation and the renewed Lisbon agenda. Regions will be asked to conceive and

structure their networks around these themes, (but can still choose other themes if they prefer).

- Emphasis on a two-way bridge between thematic networking activities and the mainstream programmes of the Structural Funds (Convergence, Regional Competitiveness and Employment and European Territorial Cooperation)
- An enhanced joint communication effort, including an annual conference and annual innovation awards (RegioStars)
- A fast track option, where the Commission will offer its expertise to a number of networks funded under the interregional cooperation (INTERREG IVC) and urban development network (URBACT II) programmes. The participation of mainstream programme managing authorities in the networks and demonstrated commitment of network partners to the 'two-way bridge' (see 2, above) will be essential requirements of the 'fast track option' in order to ensure proactive introduction of best practice ideas into these mainstream programmes.

8. Financing for the networks projects linked to the initiative is possible under:

- INTERREG IVC, the 2007-2013 interregional cooperation programme
- URBACT II, the 2007-2013 cooperation programme on urban issues.

Benefits to participants

9. Regions for Economic Change is designed to help regions gain maximum benefit from the wealth of knowledge, experience and good practice available in other regions. Ideas, tools and approaches will be developed, experiences exchanged, and these then implemented through the Operational Programmes.

10. By reinforcing co-operation between regions, Regions For Economic Change will help to reduce resistance to new ways of doing things - the 'Not Invented Here' syndrome - and encourage the gaining of maximum benefit from the experiences of any specific region. Some networks, called 'fast track', will also benefit from the active support of the European Commission and require the participation of the Managing Authorities.

11. The 'fast track' networks impose no obligation on the Managing Authority other than to have an open mind to the possibility to use the Operational Programme to implement projects arising from the network and to participate actively in the work of the network.

12. The following projects have Irish and Welsh organisations as their partners. They have just been approved by either the INTERREG 4C Programme or the URBACT 2 Programme.

RAPIDE – Regional Action Plans for Innovation Development and Enterprise (INTERREG IV C)

This project deals with the role of the public sector in stimulating innovation in regions, in particular helping mainly small businesses bring innovative products to market more quickly.

By focusing on the good practices already identified in partner regions, gathered under the various national and European development programmes, the partners aim to develop robust, workable Action plans that each Region will implement.

Thirteen partners from eleven Member States will thus stimulate innovation in regions, increase economic growth and therefore contribute directly to the EU agenda for Innovation and Knowledge economy. This project will benefit from Fast Track assistance from the EC.

Lead Partner: South West England Regional Development Agency

- Open Cities – Openness and the Competitive Advantage of Diversity (URBACT II)

In an internationally open knowledge driven economy human capital is an essential, but highly mobile economic asset.

Cities that seek to succeed in knowledge driven economies have to:

- ❖ Build up human capital
- ❖ Attract human capital from outside
- ❖ Retain human capital.

To service global trading activities a diverse international population base can be very important. To maintain good quality local services migrants can also play an important part.

Cities that want to attract and retain international populations have to be 'open' cities that create a good 'offer' for international workers and foster a local climate that recognises and welcomes diversities and provides freedom of thought and speech.

The project starting point is a draft definition developed by the British Council (Towards Open Cities). The cities committed to take forward this project want to identify what makes a city open and attractive to international migrants – essentially how do we define Open-ness – what is an Open City ? – and how can cities develop more pro-active policies to create open cities to better attract or retain mobile international populations, which are important to both the competitive and convergence objectives of the European Union.

The project will also address how cities that attract migrants can be responsible towards cities that are losing population and how the successful integration of international populations can impact on attractiveness and competitiveness over the long term.

Lead Partner: Belfast City Council

Partners: Dublin - IE Madrid - ES Sofia - BG Vienna – AT

Secretariat

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