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Document Title	Consultations on European Funding Proposals 2014-2020

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Designation	Head of Policy & Partnerships
Date	19/06/13

For Office Use Only:	
Library Reference	144/13
Date Received	19/06/13
Bulletin	June13

REPORT TO: Members' Library Service

DATE:

BY: Executive Director (Support Services)

SUBJECT: Consultations on European Funding Proposals 2014-2020

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update Members on the latest position with regard to the proposed new European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF) Programme 2014–2020.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Since 1997, East Lothian Council has benefited from access to a number of European funding programmes to support a variety of projects, e.g. LEADER Programme, Business Gateway Plus, Outdoor LUPS, East of Scotland Renewable Rural Supply Chain Development. The Scottish Government is carrying out two parallel public consultations seeking views on the proposals of the implementation of 2014–2020 European Structural Funds and the Rural Development Fund (Scottish Rural Development Programme).
- 3.2 From the EU Budget 2014–2020 Scotland is expected to receive around €1billion in this combined pot of funding.
- 3.3 The European Commission's proposals for the 2014–2020 funding period require all European Structural and Investment funds (Structural, Cohesion, Rural Development and Fisheries Funds) to be closely aligned with Europe 2020 goals of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth – and closely aligned with each other.
- 3.4 The consultation covers both the specifics of what should be supported by the Funds, but also the proposals for how the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) can be made to work together in Scotland.

Responses will feed directly into the development of the Operational Programmes (OPs) and the Partnership Agreement (PA) which are due to be sent to the Commission for approval in the autumn.

3.5 This is the first time that Structural, Rural Development and Fisheries Fund programmes will have been integrated and this will bring with it some significant changes as well as some challenges. The two consultations are an opportunity to provide feedback on the proposals for common governance and delivery arrangements across all the ESI Funds.

3.6 Both consultations will inform the final design of operational programmes and governance and delivery arrangements in Scotland:-

- Annex 1 – Consultation response on European Structural Funds 2014–2020.
- Annex 2 – Consultation response on Scotland Rural Development Programme 2014–2020.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 That Members are aware of the ability to access European funding for project support over the period of the programme, 2014 to 2020.

5 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 This report is not applicable to the wellbeing of equality groups and an Equalities Impact Assessment is not required.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 **Financial** - Opportunity to access future funding support for eligible projects.

6.2 **Personnel** - None.

6.3 **Other** – None.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Consultation on the Scottish Rural Development Programme – <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/05/9633>

7.2 Consultation on the European Structural Funds Programme - <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0042/00422165.pdf>

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DATE	18 June 2013

Annex 1:

CONSULTATION: EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL FUNDS 2014 – 2020 PROGRAMMES



RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please note this form must be returned with your response to ensure that we handle your response appropriately.

1. Name/Organisation

Organisation Name

East Lothian Council

Title Mr Ms X Mrs Miss Dr Please tick as appropriate

Surname

Leslie

Forename

Jacqueline

2. Postal Address

Economic Development

East Lothian Council

John Muir House

Haddington

Postcode EH6
5EW

Phone 01620 827829

Email
jleslie@eastlothian.gov.uk

3. Permissions - I am responding as...

Individual	/	Group/Organisation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Please tick as appropriate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

(a) Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site)?

Please tick as appropriate

Yes No

(b) Where confidentiality is not requested, we will make your responses available to the public on the following basis

(c) The name and address of your organisation **will be** made available to the public (in the Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site).

Are you content for your **response** to be made available?

Please tick ONE of the following boxes

Please tick as appropriate
 Yes No

Yes, make my response, name and address all available

or

Yes, make my response available, but not my name and address

or

Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address

(d) We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Please tick as appropriate

Yes

No

CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

Question 1 – Are there other areas you think the Partnership Agreement should address?

It is positive that there will be a Scottish Chapter within the Partnership Agreement allowing the opportunity to tailor the Scottish Operational Programme and support specific priorities in Scotland. The 3 key expectations (Building business competitiveness and innovation; tackling the high proportion of the population with low level or no skills; and make the economy environmentally friendly and resource efficient) are areas that the Scottish and UK governments are trying to addressing. These areas that are to be addressed within the Partnership Agreement are all aims that East Lothian Council and partners desire to be addressed (East Lothian Community Planning Economic Development Strategy), and align with national and local policies and objectives.

Question 2 – Do you think these thematic objectives will best address Scotland’s short-term and long-term challenges?

Yes - in principle these thematic objectives should address the short-term and long-term challenges of Scotland. They are cross-cutting themes and objectives that afflict all parts of Scotland. The objectives align to Scottish Government and local policies that are trying to address these challenges and by focusing extra resources on these areas progress should occur.

Question 3 – Do you think there are any other thematic objectives which should be addressed?

No - the 3 thematic objectives (building business competitiveness and innovation; tackling the high proportion of the population with low level or no skills; and make the economy environmentally friendly and resource efficient) must be addressed in order to tackle the economic challenges and by having more themes would make the programme too broad and dilute the potential to affect change in these areas that need resourcing.

Question 4 – Do you think the Scottish Themed Funds will address Scotland’s key challenges?

The outline of the 3 funds would in theory address the key challenges of Scotland, e.g increase the number of people working; improve the business environment, etc. There is concern over the concentration of interventions in order to have the greatest impact; that these concentrations / focusing of resources will be in particular areas of the country and more rural smaller areas may be overlooked. Rural areas have specific issues that need to be addressed but perhaps are not viewed as on the same scale as larger city areas but nevertheless have a detrimental impact within a smaller economy. Although concentration on specific challenges will have a positive impact, equity of accessibility throughout Scotland is essential to address the key Scottish challenges.

Question 5 – How do you think the governance and delivery arrangements will impact on your sector?

We require greater clarity on the governance and delivery arrangements to assess the impact on local authorities and in particular the impact to East Lothian.

Question 6 – How do you think the governance and delivery arrangements will impact on your organisation?

East Lothian is a smaller local authority. We have concern over the resource implications and capacity to delivery and manage on the scale of other larger areas; not being able to influence the focus of programmes; and unable to access required funds to address local rural issues and challenges.

Question 7 – Are there any unidentified governance or delivery arrangements that could aid simplification of the future programmes and ensure that the Structural Funds complement each other?

Audit and compliance must be clearly defined at the outset and not altered as the programmes goes on. It will require consistency throughout the lifetime of the programme.

Question 8 – What other delivery options do you think would be feasible for delivering youth employment initiatives?

It would seem feasible for this to be delivered under the Scottish theme of competitiveness, innovation and jobs, in line with Local Employability Partnerships and other Community Planning local structures.

Question 9 – What other measures could be taken to reduce the audit and control pressures?

The introduction of the unit costs, and more use of procurement and contracting would be a significant step forward. Again consistency from the start of the programme and throughout is vital.

Question 10 – Do you have any further comments on the proposals?

No.

Annex 2:

Scotland Rural Development Programme 2014-2020



RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please Note this form **must** be returned with your response to ensure that we handle your response appropriately

1. Name/Organisation

Organisation Name

East Lothian Council

Title Mr Ms Mrs Miss Dr Please tick as appropriate

Surname

Smith

Forename

Susan

2. Postal Address

John Muir House

Brewery Park

Haddington

East Lothian

Postcode EH41 3HA

Phone 01620 827282

Email

ssmith@eastlothian.gov.uk

3. Please indicate which category best describes you or your organisation (Tick one only)

INDIVIDUAL WITH PRIMARY INTEREST IN:	
Farming	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forestry	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deer or game management	<input type="checkbox"/>
General land management (or interest in a combination of land uses)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other rural community issues	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other - Please State:	<input type="checkbox"/>
ORGANISATION WITH PRIMARY INTEREST IN:	

Public Bodies (National)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local Authorities and other local public bodies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Environmental and Nature conservation organisations, charities and representative bodies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deer or game management organisations, charities and representative bodies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Farming organisations, charities and representative bodies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forestry organisations, charities and representative bodies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing organisations, charities and representative bodies	<input type="checkbox"/>
General land management organisation, charities or representative bodies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local community organisation, charities or representative bodies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other - Please State:	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Permissions - I am responding as...

Individual / **Group/Organisation**
 Please tick as appropriate

(a) Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site)?

Please tick as appropriate
 Yes **No**

(b) Where confidentiality is not requested, we will make your responses available to the public on the following basis

Please tick ONE of the following boxes

Yes, make my response, name and address all available

or

(c) The name and address of your organisation **will be** made available to the public (in the Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site).

Are you content for your **response** to be made available?

Please tick as appropriate
 Yes **No**

Yes, make my response available, but not my name and address

or

Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address

(d) We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Please tick as appropriate

Yes

No

SCOTLAND RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (SRDP) 2014-2020: CONSULTATION QUESTIONS:

We are inviting written responses to this consultation paper and respondents can reply to all of the questions, or a selection, depending on where their interests lie. Everything you tell us will help us design a better SRDP. The consultation takes place over an eight week period and closes on **Sunday 30 June 2013**.

Please send your response with the completed Respondent Information Form to either:

SRDP2014-2020Consultation@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

or

SRDP 2014-2020 Consultation
D Spur
Saughton House
Edinburgh
EH11 3XD

SECTION 2 : SETTING THE CONTEXT

Question 1: Given the EU's Common Strategic Framework approach do you agree or disagree that EU funds in Scotland should be marshalled into three funds (paragraph 27)?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

East Lothian Council agrees that the EU Funds should be marshalled into the three funds, namely building business competitiveness and innovation; tackling the high proportion of the population with low level or no skills; and making the economy environmentally friendly and resource efficient. The three funds will improve the co-ordination between the various funds and ensure better targeting and focusing of resources on the key Scottish challenges. East Lothian Council and local partners will deliver on these key aims via the East Lothian Community Planning Economic Development Strategy.

Question 2: Do you agree or disagree with the proposed establishment of a single Programme Monitoring Committee to ensure all EU funds are targeted effectively (paragraph 29)?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

East Lothian Council agrees that a single PMC should ensure a more coherent and complementary use of EU resources as there will be a single vehicle monitoring implementation and performance. There is concern however over the potential concentration of interventions. The concern is that these concentrations/focusing of resources will be in particular areas of the country and more rural smaller areas, often deprived on a number of levels, may be overlooked. Rural and semi-rural areas have specific issues that need to be addressed but perhaps are not viewed as on the same scale as larger city areas but nevertheless have a detrimental impact within a smaller economy. Although concentration on specific challenges will have a positive impact, equity of accessibility throughout Scotland is essential to address the key Scottish challenges.

SECTION 3: OUR INVESTMENT PRIORITIES FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Question 3: Given the need to prioritise our spending in the future programme (paragraph 11) which articles do you see as a priority for use within the next programme?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

In consultation, our rural stakeholders suggested that easier access to funding small proposals – eg. environmental, access, use of technology - would be a priority. The East Lothian Community Planning Economic Development Strategy sets the context for economic development interventions in East Lothian and activities that supports its aims would be encouraged in collaboration with our rural community.

SECTION 5: STRATEGIC TARGETING OF INVESTMENTS

Question 4: Do you agree or disagree that we should geographically target our investment to areas where support will make the greatest contribution to our priorities?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

Where targeting can make the greatest contribution to economic priorities through the East Lothian Community Planning Economic Development Strategy.

SECTION 7: DELIVERING THE SRDP: PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

Question 5: Do you agree or disagree that support for small local businesses should be provided through LEADER?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

Appropriate funding interventions to SME's can give significant outcomes and impact but the focus of the Leader programme post 2014 appears to be community led local development which may or may not facilitate local SME

development and support. Also, LEADER bureaucracy may be cumbersome for SME's and other sources of funding may be available.

Question 6: Do you agree or disagree to the proposal to disband RPACs and replace with a more streamlined assessment process as explained in Section 8?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

Our rural stakeholders favour a more streamlined assessment process.

Question 7: Do you agree or disagree that LMOs should be removed from the future programme, given the spending restrictions we are likely to face and the need to ensure maximum value from our spending?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

Our rural stakeholders have advised that the programme needs to very much more targeted.

Question 8: Do you agree or disagree that the Forestry Challenge Funds be discontinued, with WIAT being funded through Rural Priorities and F4P funding being provided via LEADER?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

No view

Question 9: Do you agree or disagree that Food and Drink grants be decided via the wider decision-making process for business development

applications or should they remain separate and managed within the Scottish Government as is the current practice?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

Agree that business development applications should remain separate and managed within the Scottish Government.

Question 10: Do you agree or disagree with crofting stakeholders that a Crofting Support Scheme is established in the new programme that will fund all grants relevant to crofting?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views

No view

Question 11: If a Crofting Support Scheme is developed, do you agree or disagree that crofters (and potentially small landholders) be restricted from applying for other SRDP schemes which offer similar support?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

No view

Question 12: Do you agree or disagree on whether support for crofting should extend to small land holders of like economic status who are situated within crofting counties?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

No view

Question 13: Do you agree or disagree with the proposed replacement of the Skills Development Scheme with an Innovation Challenge Fund?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

No view

Question 14: Do you agree or disagree with the measures proposed by the New Entrant Panel (paragraph 92) to encourage new entrants to farming?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

As per consultation with our rural stakeholders, we favour actions to encourage new entrants into farming but any flaws with the current scheme should be taken into account.

[Empty box]

SECTION 8: APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS FOR AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT, LANDSCAPE AND FORESTRY

Question 15: Do you agree or disagree with the proposed case officer approach to the assessment of applications?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

Our rural stakeholders have advised us that the previous system was very difficult to access and relied on experts who knew how the system worked which was very costly to applicants.

Question 16: Do you agree or disagree with the proposed single entry route for applications with a two level assessment process?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

Our rural stakeholders have advised us that the previous system was very difficult to access and relied on experts who knew how the system worked which was very costly to applicants.

Question 17: Do you agree or disagree with the proposed negotiation of variable intervention rates rather than setting fixed intervention rates?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

Variable intervention rates are worthy of consideration.

Question 18: Do you agree or disagree with the proposed setting of regional budgets across the Rural Development Regulation (RDR) articles?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

Regional budgets are worthy of consideration.

Question 19: What support and assistance do you think applicants will need for this application process to work effectively?

Please explain your views.

Local expertise is welcome and anything that could be done through the process would be worthy of consideration.

SECTION 9: INTEGRATED INVESTMENTS

Question 20: Do you agree or disagree with the value of developing a descriptive map of holdings to help farmers and stakeholders understand the potential ecosystem value of specific holdings?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

No firm view.

Question 21: Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to allow applicants to submit single applications which set out all investments/projects that the applicant would like to take forward on their land?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

Yes in principle.

SECTION 10

Question 22: Do you agree or disagree that it would be helpful to allow third party applications for specific landscape scale projects?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

Question 23: Do you agree or disagree with public agencies working together to identify priority areas that could benefit from a co-ordinated third party application?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

Yes within limits.

Question 24: Do you agree or disagree with the establishment of a separate fund to support collective action at the landscape scale?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

It should be a level playing field.

SECTION 11: ADVISORY SERVICE

Question 25: Do you agree or disagree with broadening the Whole Farm Review Scheme to include biodiversity, environment, forestry, water pollution control and waste management?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

There should be a focus on farm business development.

Question 26: Do you agree or disagree that we allocate SRDP budget to advice provision when we move to the next programme?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

Loans can make a difference and can complement other sources of funding.

SECTION 12: FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Question 27: What are your views on the merits of providing loans for specific purposes and/or specific sectors?

Please explain your views.

Loans can make a difference and can complement other sources of funding.

SECTION 13: VOLUNTARY MODULATION

Question 28: Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to maintain the current level of transfer from Direct Payments to SRDP in the new programme period?

Agree Disagree

Please explain your views.

No firm view.

SECTION 14: EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EQIA)

Question 29: Please tell us about any potential impacts, either positive or negative; you feel the proposals in this consultation document may have on any of the equalities characteristics listed in paragraph 136.

No firm view.