



<b>Local Management Committee</b>	LMC/2012/Oct /Paper 1
Subject: <b>East of England European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Competitiveness Programme 2007-20013</b>	
Minutes from July 2012 LMC meeting	
Report by <b>Nina Cunningham, Manager Programme Management team, DCLG</b>	
Contact <b>Tel 0303 444 6413</b> <a href="mailto:nina.cunningham@communities.gsi.gov.uk">nina.cunningham@communities.gsi.gov.uk</a>	

## Summary

This paper provides the a summary of the key points made in April LMC meeting

### Summary of Key Points

- Progress towards the N+2 target in 2012 of £14.17 million stands at £3.47 million expenditure in July.
- A project showcase was provided by the Sustainable Design-Led Innovation (SDI) project.
- Progress within the last quarter of the 'Programme delivery action plan' has led to a successful project managers event in June, Project review meetings and MCIS training sessions for ERDF project managers.
- There was a discussion about outputs. It was agreed that the next LMC would have a more focused discussion on start up business indicator to better understand progress against the programme target.
- A particular irregularity issue was discussed. It was agreed that LMC members would pass on any Audit Authority issues to East of England PDT
- The challenges of securing match funding commitment from public and private partners were discussed.
- Carol Sweetenham provided an informative update on the ERDF and ESF 2020 programmes.
- Jason Middleton provided a LEP portfolio paper, which included practical recommendations for better LEP / ERDF programme collaboration. The LEPs provide useful economic updates for their areas.
- Progress for the Low carbon venture capital fund was discussed.
- Technical Assistance funding was discussed and it was agreed to have TA funding for LEPs as an agenda item at the next meeting.

**Recommendation 1:** LMC to approve the July 2012 LMC minutes

## **Local Management Committee (LMC)**

### **Draft Minutes of meeting 13 July 2012 held at Cranfield University, Bedfordshire**

Chair	Neil O'Connor	DCLG
Members	Michael Large Angela Rowney Ian Gregory Jason Middleton Lorraine George Paul Witcombe Liz Wade Tracey Cox	EEBG Luton CFO BIS Local New Anglia LEP South East LEP Hertfordshire LEP Central Bedfordshire Council Skills Funding Agency
Officers	Nina Cunningham Tom Davies Howard Partridge	DCLG DCLG DCLG
Advisor	Merja Toikka	DG Regio
Observers	Caroline Ricketts Tom Hunt Sarah Murray Guy Mills	Office of Geoffrey Van Orden MEP Office of Geoffrey Van Orden MEP Brussels office Cambridgeshire County Council
Guests	Fiona Charnley Justyna Spurtacz Carol Sweetenham	Sustainable Design-led Innovation Sustainable Design-led Innovation DCLG
Apologies	George Kieffer David Morrall Andrea Stark Paula Grayson Zoe Manning Laurie Heseldon Adrian Cannard Cllr Roy Davis Glenn Athey Geoffrey Van Orden David Lloyd Tim Hutchings Kathy Pollard Cllr. Graham Butland	Deputy Chair LMC DCLG Arts Council Equality & Diversity chair University of Essex TUC EELGA Luton Borough Council GCGP LEP MEP Hertfordshire County Council Herts Chambers of Commerce Liberal Democrat deputy leader of Suffolk CC EELGA (Con)

Mark Mitchell	COVER
Bob Blake	South East & East of England Summit Skills
Andy Wood	New Anglia LEP
Stuart Agnew	MEP
Vicky Ford	MEP
David Campbell	MEP
Bannerman	
David Sillett	RDPE
Robert Sturdy	MEP
Gio Pisanno	Environment Agency
Vanessa Winters	Environment Agency
Emma Cooney	Southend Borough Council
Angus Grey	Department of Work Pensions
John Gourd	Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership chair

### **Item 1: Introduction and apologies**

1. LMC chair Neil O'Connor opened and confirmed the list of apologies. Neil asked that any declarations of interest should be stated during the meeting and Nolan rules signed by members if not done so already. The meeting was declared not quorate.
2. **Action: Andy Wood New Anglia to be removed from the LMC circulation list and replaced by Jason Middleton as the key contact.**

### **Item 2: Project showcasing, Sustainable Design-Led Innovation (SDI) project.**

3. Dr. Fiona Charnley and Justyna Spurtacz gave an informative presentation describing the business support services they provide to SMEs. SDI is based at Cranfield University and their website is <http://www.centrefordesign.com/SDI>. The presentation included showcasing a number of 'eco' products which the project has helped to develop. As well as explaining how the project worked, they also covered progress to date and key strengths of the project. A short discussion followed regarding how the relevant LEPs could promote the project to SMEs.
4. **Action: PDT secretariat to circulate a copy of the PowerPoint presentation.**
5. **SDI to provide a list of events and local case studies so the Herts LEP can promote the project.**

### **Item 3: Minutes of the LMC meeting April 2012**

6. Neil O'Connor reported that a number of comments had been received on the draft minutes of the April LMC meeting. The majority of comments received would be incorporated and minutes re-circulated for approval. Matters arising from the last LMC meeting included the circulation of Hertfordshire LEP presentation and the BIS monthly surveys to LMC members. Angela Rowney mentioned that there was an additional paper accompanying her ESF update paper (8) paper which she could share with interested parties upon request.
7. **Action: It was agreed to amend and recirculate the minutes by 1 August 2012.**

#### **Item 4: ERDF Programme Delivery update and item 5 - ERDF and match funding (paper3)**

8. Neil advised that agenda items 4 and 5 be combined. Howard Partridge summarised the Programme Management paper providing a financial update for the programme, current funding agreement awaiting signatures, and 2012 performance update including an update on the programme delivery action plan. Howard informed the group that progress towards the N+2 target in 2012 of £14.07 million stands at £3.47 million expenditure in July. This represents a slippage on the forecast for this time of the year of about £1.2 million. Howard confirmed that progress within the last quarter of the 'Programme delivery action plan' has led to
  - a) a successful project managers event in June where the focus was on ensuring that projects were made aware of their role in achieving the N+2 and outputs 2012 target and sharing good practice and 1:1 advise surgeries to help them achieve this
  - b) Project review meetings with project managers to resolve delivery issues and
  - c) MCIS training sessions to enable projects to upload their claims themselves has been completed for one third of projects.

Once b) and c) are completed, these measures should continue to help improve the projects' financial performance. Howard stated that some PDT staff resource had been transferred from programme management team to contract management team. The PDT is also requesting additional resource from the Head of Programme at DCLG who is due to meet with the PDT on the 20 July. Howard Partridge concluded that the best opportunity to achieve the N+2 2012 target is to ensure that the contracted projects deliver in line with their contracted spend profile.

9. Neil O'Connor summarised Howard's update stating that it is going to be challenging to meet N+2 2012 spending target. Neil asked LMC members if they had any ideas for addressing this issue.
10. Lorraine George asked whether an additional focused bidding round call could help attract the right type of projects and asked which type of projects the PDT were looking for. Howard Partridge responded that the PDT is not pursuing focussed calls at this stage of the programme as it narrows rather than widens opportunities and requires additional resource to do so. To ensure that all programme indicators are met, projects that focus on achieving business start ups, job creation and in particular jobs safeguarded and created for women are required which the PDT is actively seeking. Projects which support Superfast broadband are overdue with only one (Suffolk) full application submitted to date.
11. Michael Large considered that in order to address performance issues, there should be more of a focus on addressing project delivery issues and issuing 'more challenge' to grant applicants before approval is granted. In addition, there needs to a focus on resolving issues in order to reduce the amount of time it takes to go from an outline application to a full application stage. Howard responded that the PDT does emphasise the importance of meeting bidding round deadlines to applicants and compliance with the timeline between stages. Howard confirmed that an emphasis is already placed on assessing resources for the project start up phase. Howard also commented that experience has shown that if the person developing the project is different to the person who eventually manages it, this can often give rise to difficulties in delivery.
12. Paul Witcombe advised the group that negotiating with the potential grant recipients on what is financially realistic for their proposal is as important as having a more challenging CDG. Paul asked the question whether an 'on demand' approach to accepting proposals might work better given some of the difficulties recently experienced in attracting new projects? Howard responded that 'Bidding Round' deadlines have proved useful to date to focus applicants on delivering their application on time and he gave the huge rush to meet the June deadline for all forms as an example.

Howard Partridge then referred to the indicators summary table on page 7 of the paper which shows progress on achieving outputs since the last LMC meeting e.g. total SME's assisted 2858, Total Jobs created 487.88 Jobs safeguarded 1182.41, Private sector leverage £15.65m and Public sector leverage £6.1696m. Howard noted that the number of SMEs assisted is on track although jobs created is behind schedule.
13. Jason Middleton asked why only 12 new businesses have been created to date for the programme? Howard outlined that this output can only be counted when the SME becomes registered after ERDF support is

provided. Neil O'Connor asked what the profiled programme target for this output which Nina Cunningham stated that it is 132. Jason commented that a figure of 12 would easily be achieved each year by a typical team of economic development officers within a local authority. Howard commented that the way that the output as defined is unhelpful. Neil advised LMC that for the next LMC meeting, the ERDF secretariat would 'dig deeper' and provide additional information on this particular indicator. Paul Witcombe stated that the current economic environment is very challenging for achieving such outputs.

14. **Action: It was agreed that the next LMC would have a more focused discussion on start up business to better understand progress against the programme target.**
15. Ian Gregory asked for more information about the irregularity issue mentioned on page 2 of the paper. Howard Partridge began by stating that the irregularity had not been confirmed at this stage and explained that it related to a sector specific project which was contracted at the end of 2011 which included retrospective spending. Howard provided some background on the process involved, stating that the ERDF team judged that the case for additionality was sound. In addition, Moore Stephens carried out an Article 16 audit and had verified that the accounting procedures were robust and that there was a clear audit trail for costs claimed. On this basis the applicant was offered ERDF funding. Subsequently, DCLG's Article 16 Audit team had taken a different view and decided to carry out further investigations. Howard stated that as the PDT is working closely with both the project and Audit Authority, it is hoped that the total value of the irregularity can be reduced. As an interim measure, all payments to the project have now been suspended until the irregularity is resolved. Neil O'Connor mentioned that this poses another risk to meeting N+2 2012 target and also could increase the national error rate.
16. Ian Gregory posed three questions – 1) what is the risk to the applicant, 2) how long will this issue take to resolve and 3) is there a risk that the whole programme could be suspended? Howard Partridge responded that as 1) the applicant is a private sector organisation this could affect them and possibly their willingness to continue the project. 2) Howard stated that the issue will take several months to resolve. 3) With regard to issue of programme suspension Carol Sweetenham confirmed to the group that as the 'Annual Control Report' is carried out on a national basis, it is difficult to predict the overall error rate. Carol stated there was however a possibility depending on how big the confirmed irregularity was, that the East of England programme could be interrupted. Carole stated that while 'suspension' of the programme was unlikely- nothing could be ruled out.
17. Jason Middleton highlighted the reputational risk to the ERDF programme if the business does indeed have to close as a result of their involvement with the programme. He also stated that if a project receives an Article 13 audit report that is supportive, it is unhelpful to go back and

change the requirements imposed on a project at a later stage because of an Article 16 audit report about the same issue.

**18. Action: LMC members to pass on any Audit Authority issues to East of England PDT**

19. Neil O'Connor invited Nina Cunningham to summarise communications activities that are mentioned in the paper. She mentioned the recent project managers event at Ely and highlighted the "Low Carbon Economic Growth, ERDF investment for competitiveness" event which took place on the 14 June in Brussels at which British Ambassador Jonathan Brenton and Agnes Lindemans, Head of Unit, European Commission, DG REGIO both delivered speeches. In addition, three ERDF project managers and their small business beneficiaries in the East of England gave speeches. Neil complimented the Programme Management report for being more concise purposeful than previous iterations.

20. Merja Toikka welcomed the proposal that Neil had mentioned earlier for new ideas from LMC members to support delivery of the ERDF programme although in future she would prefer to have see some concrete proposals in the programme management paper on how the PDT aims to tackle delivery problems. Merja gave the following advice, for reflection with a view to helping the PDT to take pertinent actions towards attainment of the key physical targets and the strategic objectives of the East of England Operational Programme:

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21. Merja considered that Priority Axis 1 and Priority Axis 2 progress in key physical targets would be important towards the OP strategic objectives. She mentioned a Defra study (in 2009) (which she would circulate) as worth visiting for guidance on low cost or no cost business resource efficiency possibilities the MA PDT could apply to create for further projects (cheaply by transfer of advice). For the Priority Axis 3 construction and refurbishment projects, she questioned whether these are really needed as previous Operational Programmes produced a lot of hub m2 that are partly vacant at the moment and that conflicts with the best practise that normally one firstly creates the new businesses and afterwards provides premises for them. She referred to how the current Operational Programme cannot do capital investments; it was meant to focus on soft projects. She invited the PDT to check that constructions signed so far are eligible expenditure.
22. She advised the PDT to focus on rapidly creating new contracts under Priority Axis 1 and Priority Axis 2. The PDT can create new contracts for another 17 months until the end of 2013 to try to ensure the achievement of the Operational Programme key physical targets and the strategic objectives. Such contracts could then create eligible expenditure until end of 2015. Hence, timely proactive actions for new contracts by the

PDT, in line with the Operational Programme strategic objectives, are of essence.

23. She advised the PDT to apply a firm push for project outline applications to full applications to contracts to contract delivery in order to have speedy delivery of contracted projects, which she considered is currently a weak point. She emphasised the continued rationale for low carbon projects and referred to how both UK and EC studies show that potential for low carbon investments (trillions in euros) and green jobs (20 million new green jobs) are significant in Europe. She again referred to the Defra study (of 2009) as evidence of this.
24. Merja advised the PDT to mainstream commercially viable projects for creating new businesses and green jobs to the whole region to learn from them. And to invest additional money to delivering PA1 and PA2 projects well.
25. Merja advocated promoting the Operational Programme and the Low Carbon Innovation Fund (LCIF) outside official web-sites. She noted that potential interested business and communities circles do not usually feel that it is necessary to consult the CLG web-site. Feedback that she has received shows that visibility and knowledge of the Operational Programme and the LCIF are not yet necessarily spread throughout the region.
26. Merja advised that Technical Assistance budget should be used to mainstream and promote ERDF Operational Programme's best project outcomes with the low carbon theme throughout the East of England region to create maximal visibility and learning possibilities for all relevant circles in the region. She commented that feedback from monitoring committee members has shown that official Operational Programme communication channels do not necessarily have the desired effect.
27. Merja also commented that the ERDF co-financed LCIF fund performance continues to be below target. The Fund is an impressive vehicle but feedback shows it is not sufficiently well known in the region. Here again the official web sites are not enough as a means to achieve high visibility. She advised the PDT to encourage the LCIF Fund Manager to effectively promote the LCIF to achieve better performance



levels for the Fund. Further, in line with the rationale of the Operational Programme and LCIF, a subsequent legacy fund would optimally operate in the same fields as the LCIF.

28. Merja stated that she was impressed by the SDI presentation today and recommended that the PDT should do a focused piece of work on the 'top 10' products developed by the programme as a way of raising awareness of the good work being done. Neil O'Connor thanked Merja and reiterated his request to LMC members to contact the PDT if they had any other ideas to support programme delivery and promotion.
29. **Action: Merja agreed to circulate the Defra report on resource efficiency to LMC members before the next LMC**
30. **Action: PDT to give due consideration to developing some PR around the top ten products funded by the ERDF programme by next LMC.**

#### **Item 5 Match funding**

31. Michael Large asked whether obtaining match funding was made difficult by the process and machinery of the programme process or is it a consequence of the tight economic environment that exists at the moment? Howard Partridge responded that in some cases, it is a problem of 'organisational will' on the part of the applicant in conjunction with a lack of human resources and gathering partners together to achieve secure sufficient match funding. Merja commented that the economic situation is challenging across Europe although Scotland and Wales do not seem to be suffering as much with regard to delivery problems as evidenced in the East of England. She advised that the PDT should focus on meeting output targets, especially for priority axes 1 and 2.
32. Howard Partridge confirmed to LMC members that match funding is much more dispersed, since the closure of the Regional Development Agency which has meant that securing match funding commitment from public and private partners is now more difficult. Paul Witcombe stated that the Technology and Strategy Board's apparent antipathy to offering match funding is another example of this problem of engaging partners for secure match funding. Howard stated that experience has shown that the private sector has had difficulties in complying with the required audit trail to evidence match funding where e.g. they have shown a reluctance to comply with releasing details of salaries and are therefore less likely to be a partner in a project.
33. Neil O'Connor mentioned to LMC that the papers for today's meeting included a summary sheet of contracted ERDF projects in the East of England and that paper 3 does include a plan for ensuring better delivery performance.

## Item 6 – 2020 programme update

34. Carol Sweetenham provided an informative update on the ERDF and ESF 2020 programmes. Carol informed the group that considerable negotiation will occur between July and Autumn before final decisions are made. The East of England will be classified as 'a more developed region' where the split of funding is currently proposed at 80% on 3 priorities including 30% SMEs, 30% Innovation, and 20% Low carbon and energy efficiency. The remaining 20% of allocated funding is still to be determined but could include ICT.
35. Key issues which DCLG intend to apply to the next programme include 'Localism', 'Links' across various funding streams (such as ESF, RDPE and the Fisheries fund) and 'Liability' (ensuring that liability to the department is minimised once the programme has ended). In terms of future administration of the fund which is still to be confirmed, Carol confirmed that the current system of administering the English ERDF programme is seen to be working well.
36. Angela Rowney queried if the fund were to be administered at a more local level how small could the area be? Carole confirmed that if this option was agreed, that the area is likely to be based upon a Nuts 2 area.
37. Guy Mills asked what the timetable for starting the next programme would be. Carole confirmed that the partnership agreement is due to be agreed in September and signed off together with the budget in March 2013. While delivery is hoped to start mid 2014, this could be delayed by as much as a year if decisions are not forthcoming from Brussels. In response to Michael Large's query regarding staff retention between programmes if there is going to be a delay in the start date, Carol confirmed that this should not be an issue as there is always an overlap between programmes. Howard reminded the group that experience has shown that the longer the delay in starting the programme the harder it is to get performance on track.
38. Lorraine raised the issue of 'conditionality' and whether LEPs would be expected to have sub regional innovation strategies in place in advance of the programme start date? Carol was not aware of this requirement and agreed to look into it further. Merja emphasised the 'low carbon future for EU' and drive for 'sustainable jobs' will be a key requirement of the next programme.
39. Jason requested that the next programme should be as open as possible to be best placed to reflect local needs. Carole agreed that sufficient latitude will be important to the success of the next programme.
40. Ian Gregory confirmed that Sue Baxter is leading on a range of meetings for BIS between now and autumn. Carol concluded the discussion by encouraging members to get involved with influencing the process.

## Item C – LEP Portfolio update (Paper 4)

41. Jason Middleton provided a summary of his paper, which included LEP priorities that fit with the ERDF programme. Jason proposed five practical recommendations for LMC consideration. These were:
- Each LEP produces a bullet point summary of its key priorities, which can be used by the ERDF Core Team to quickly see which types of proposed ERDF activities have the strongest links with each LEP.
  - Each LEP is asked to produce a simple one side list of the activities that it would like to take forward, some of which could be eligible for ERDF funding.
  - LEPs are asked to include links to the ERDF Programme on their websites, to encourage potential applicants to have easier access to programme information.
  - The ERDF website has links back to LEP websites so that potential applicants are aware of how their proposals link with LEP priorities.
  - The ERDF Core team ask that any project being developed discuss their activity with the appropriate LEP(s), so that LEPs are aware of activity being developed in their areas and can form links with activity where appropriate.
42. Paul agreed with proposed recommendations stating that any future collaboration between the ERDF programme and the LEPs needs to be about collaboration, knowledge sharing and avoiding duplication. Liz agreed that given the limited resources sharing information where possible is a good way forward. Guy suggested that 'East-ish', an informal grouping of LEPs is well placed to coordinate the recommendations.
43. In response to Jason's comment regarding a current lack of resource within LEPs to identify suitable match funding, Howard advised that rather than looking for match funding in the first instance, a more productive option might be to generate project ideas that have specific alignment with ERDF and political will which could then be used to attract the required match funding. Neil confirmed that these recommendations are a good start for the recognition of priorities and he would like to keep this issue on the agenda for addressing these synergies in LEP reports to LMC. Neil thanked Jason for the report.
44. **Decision: LMC agreed with the recommendations proposed in paper 4 and that 'East-ish' would help to develop these further.**
45. **Action: PDT to advise LEPs of relevant pipeline projects in advance of CDG meetings.**
46. **Action: PDT and LEPs to promote each others weblinks on their respective websites.**

### **Item C – LEP updates**

47. Jason Middleton provided a verbal update on the New Anglia (NA) LEP. Jason updated LMC on a national LEP meeting he had presented at in relation to EU funding and LEPs. Jason relayed that a key message from the smaller LEPs was that although they wanted to engage with EU funding, they needed to be better resourced to do so.
48. NA published their Green Economy manifesto (which includes useful case studies) in May and aims to develop their Enterprise Zone in line with their green economy aspirations. Other updates included:
  - NA recent RGF bid is focused on Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft, Norwich and Ipswich aims to provide gap funding to high growth businesses where the banks are unable to provide this funding.
  - The Business Information portal was launched in March for which a steering group for the portal is being formed.
  - The sector growth strategy has been finalised and currently awaits approval from the LEP board
  - The LEP is looking to build on the successful ERDF REV Active project through developing a cross LEP project which is due to go to be submitted within the current bidding round.
49. **Action: Jason to circulate notes from the EU funding meeting he attended to LMC members in advance of the next LMC meeting.**
50. **Action: Jason to share good practice in relation to the Green economy pathfinder with other LEPs within the East of the England.**
51. SEMLEP Update: Liz Wade stated that the only focus of SEMLEP is on delivery and building the Enterprise Zone (EZ) at Northamptonshire. The £7m Growing Places Fund has been ring fenced for this EZ. Liz stated that the deficit in infrastructure (transport, broadband infrastructure) is closely related to achieving growth and is therefore SEMLEP's top priority. Michael Large asked if the LEP representatives could outline in their papers what resources/expertise that they have in place as this would help identify gaps which could be potentially filled by other organisations.
52. **Action: Liz Wade agreed to identity the resources/ expertise for SEMLEP so that any gaps could be identified and potentially filled by other organisations.**
53. Greater Cambridgeshire Greater Peterborough (GCGP) update: In the absence of Glenn Athey, Guy Mills provided an update on this LEP. Guy confirmed that Neville Rayner had resigned as chair and GCGP is recruiting a new chair. Other updates included:

- Glenn Athey is working on a strategy and action plan for the LEP.
  - A planning application is due to be submitted in July / August for the Alconbury Airbase EZ
  - A Memorandum of Understanding for the EZ will be put in place between developers and Local Authorities rather than using a Local Development Order.
  - Priorities have now been established for the Growing Places Fund.
54. South East LEP: Lorraine George confirmed that a team of three is now in place and work on an action plan for ERDF projects is in train (including one for the Harlow area). Lorraine confirmed that a paper on EU funding and financial instruments had been taken to the last board meeting in June.
55. Herts LEP: Paul Witcombe stated that the recent event in Westminster presenting a Growth Plan for the LEP was seen as a success. Herts LEP are looking for quick returns on investment from the Growing Places Fund which could eventually support delivery of their action plans. Paul reiterated that the focus of the LEP is on consolidating the established industrial base and supporting clusters especially those within the Life sciences sector. Other updates included:
- An audit for the life sciences sector is being carried out which will build on the strong Research and Development base within the county.
  - £11m of their £16m Growing Places has been allocated for initiatives at Elstree studios, Maylands and Watford Health campus.
  - A new funding officer is due to start at Herts LEP at the end of July. Paul confirmed that depending on capacity, he was happy in principle to share this resource with other LEPs.
  - Two new posts are starting which are reliant on the County Council funding.

#### **Item D Cross cutting themes**

56. Neil stated that this item was for information only. Sarah asked whether the sub group will be providing any advice in relation to addressing the shortfall in female jobs created and safeguarded outputs. Neil confirmed that the Equality and Diversity Group does discuss these issues at the CGD meetings. Neil confirmed that this issue would be covered at the next LMC meeting.
57. **Action: Chair of EDG to include an update on the status and actions required in relation to meeting ED programme targets.**

#### **Item E- Low carbon venture capital fund**

58. Neil invited any comments on the Low Carbon Innovation Fund. Merja queried why progress on the fund continued to be slow when compared with other members states and asked the committee what else could LMC members do to support this project. In response to a query relating to the whether LEPs could be involved with LCIF legacy fund co-investment e.g. using Growing Places funding as co-investment and whether the low carbon rules would continue to be applied.? Merja confirmed that the same ERDF rules would be applied to the LCIF legacy funding. A number of LEPs present queried whether they could receive additional information about the SME's funded to date and how they could better promote this project. Sarah Murray asked that the LCIF is made aware of and attend LEP business-focussed events where appropriate.
59. **Action: PDT to provide LMC members with the geographical spread of companies in receipt of LCIF.**
60. **Action: LCIF and LEPs to share lists of events where LCIF can be promoted.**

#### **Item D: ESF**

61. Guy Mills queried why the ESF family provision referrals in relation to ESF were so low and asked for clarity over the 'Stronger families initiative' from DWP and whether ESF could be used to match fund this work. Liz Wade mentioned that she was impressed by the jobs figures in the paper. Angela said that she could circulate the extra paper referred to the paper if any LMC member wants it.

#### **Item E: Any Other Business**

62. Jason Middleton queried whether ERDF Technical Assistance (TA) funding could be used to fund LEP engagement with the ERDF programme and proposed that the next LMC should discuss this issue. Jason Middleton reported back from a recent DCLG event that he understood that other LEPs are accessing TA for current and future programme preparation work. Neil agreed that the PDT would seek clarification on TA funding arrangements between other PDTs and LEPs and to discuss this issue at the next LMC meeting.

**63. Decision: To have TA funding for LEPs as an agenda item at the next meeting.**

64. Neil confirmed that the next meeting would be held on the 19 October with the venue to be confirmed

65. The meeting was followed by a tour of the Oasis project at Cranfield University.

ERDF PDT, July 2012