



**Yorkshire and The Humber ERDF
Programme 2007-2013**
(includes South Yorkshire as a phasing-in region)
CCI 2007 UK 162 PO009

Communications Plan
December 2007

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1. Introduction

Communications policy is a fundamental tool in ensuring the transparency of actions financed by European Funds.

Article 69 of the Council Regulation (EC) n° 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 establishes the obligation for the Member State and Managing Authority of each operational programme co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund to provide information and publicise its operations.

Article 2 of Council Regulation (EC) n° 1828/2006 of 8 December 2006 establishes the Managing Authority's responsibility to prepare a communications plan to include, as a minimum, the following:

- the aims and target groups;
- the strategy and content of the information and publicity measures to be taken by the Managing Authority, aimed at potential beneficiaries, beneficiaries and the public, having regard to the added value of Community assistance at national, regional and local level;
- the indicative budget for implementation of the plan;
- the administrative departments or bodies responsible for implementation of the information and publicity measures;
- the indication of how the information and publicity measures are to be evaluated in terms of visibility and awareness of operational programmes and the role played by the Community.

This plan has been prepared with reference to the relevant regulations by drawing on communications expertise developed and lessons learnt during the 2000-2006 programming period.

A further significant influence on the drafting of the plan was the experience gained and lessons learnt through best practice exchanges including those funded by ERDF in the Interreg IIIc initiative that Yorkshire and The Humber

region participated during the previous programming period -S3 – Sharing Solutions on Structural Funds (see www.S3-interreg.net).

Progress in implementing the plan will be regularly reported to the monitoring committee and be part of the annual and final implementation reports along with any major amendments to the plan.

The annual implementation report for 2010 and the final implementation report will both contain a chapter assessing the results of the information and publicity measures in terms of the visibility and awareness of the 2007-2013 Yorkshire and The Humber ERDF Programme. Experience gained during implementation will be used to refine the plan and address any shortcomings that become apparent to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.

The 2010 evaluation will contribute evidence when revisiting this Communications plan, so that it can be amended and adapted in response to new challenges and emerging needs for the second half of the programming period.

This plan was discussed and was agreed by the Programme Monitoring Committee on 20 December 2007.

2. Responsible Unit for Information and Publicity

In accordance with **Regulation (EC) 1828/2006 Article 2(d)** the administrative department/body responsible for implementing the information and publicity measures in the Yorkshire and the Humber ERDF Programme 2007-2013 is:

Team:	ERDF Communications
Organisation:	Yorkshire Forward
Address:	Victoria House, Victoria Place, Leeds LS11 5AE
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3. Aims and target audiences

3.1 Objectives

In accordance with **Commission Regulation (EC) n° 1828/2006** Article 2 (a) the aims of the information and publicity measures in the Communications Plan of the Yorkshire and the Humber ERDF Programme for 2007-2013 are as follows:

- to inform potential beneficiaries, as well as authorities and organisations, and raise awareness of the opportunities on offer by the joint assistance from the European Union and UK Government contained in the Yorkshire and the Humber ERDF Programme for 2007-2013;
- to inform and raise awareness amongst citizens of the Yorkshire and The Humber region of the role that European Structural Funds play in European Regional Policy and how the European Regional Development Fund is managed in Yorkshire and The Humber region;
- to inform the programme's partners and stakeholders about the programme's management, progress being achieved and raise awareness of issues that may impact on its management and delivery;
- to inform project organisers, and programme managers and raise awareness of the responsibilities they have under the regulations (with particular reference to information and publicity), provide guidance and advice to help ensure compliance;
- to publicise the achievements of the Yorkshire and The Humber ERDF Programme for 2007-2013 to inform and raise citizens' awareness of the projects carried out with European aid in Yorkshire and The Humber region and the impact that the projects make.

3.2 Target Audiences

To be effective communications should be targeted and where possible, tailored to meet the needs of its audience in terms of style, language and delivery. Many target audiences have been identified but they can be classified in two main categories depending on the subject areas of communications that they require.

A) Information about the opportunities on offer:

- Potential and actual beneficiaries
- Local authorities
- Statutory organisations
- Non-governmental organisations and agencies
- Businesses
- Trade, business and commercial associations and organisations
- Educational institutions
- Voluntary and community organisations
- Project operators and promoters
- Programme managers

The aim for communications of this category is to provide clear, timely and appropriate information so that the opportunities on offer are equally available to all who may wish to apply. Transparency of information and equality of opportunity are two essential cornerstones to ensure the successful delivery of the programme.

B) Information about the programme, its policy context, its management, achievements and progress:

Programme Partners (including)

- European Commission and officials
- UK Government departments

- European, national and local politicians and other representatives
- Regional and local partners
- Potential and actual project operators, promoters

Citizens

- Yorkshire and The Humber
- UK
- European Union

The focus here is to strengthen the understanding of the role that the European Regional Development Fund plays in the lives of the region's citizens, raise awareness of the actions financed through European funds by providing appropriate and timely information on the way in which the funds are managed, actions that are undertaken and the impact that the actions are having.

4. Content and strategy of information and publicity activities

The strategy designed to execute the information and publicity measures is coherent with the characteristics of target groups and the category of information required.

4.1 Activities to inform and raise awareness of the opportunities available:

Publication of the content of the programme, including an indication of the involvement of the Structural Funds concerned, circulation of these documents and their availability to those who request them.

Commission Regulation (EC) n° 1828/2006 Article 5 stipulates the obligation to:

“ensure that the operational programme is disseminated widely with details of the financial contributions from the Funds concerned, and that it is made available to all interested parties”.

The following information and publicity measures will be undertaken in order to comply with this Article:

- Publish the complete text of the Yorkshire and The Humber ERDF Programme 2007-2013. This will be available as a printed document, a CD-Rom and to download from the programme's website (www.yorkshire-forward.com/erdf)
- This document will be distributed to potential beneficiaries and other targeted audiences and sent to those who request it.

- Publish brochures, pamphlets, leaflets, posters and similar materials about the Yorkshire and the Humber ERDF Programme 2007-2013 or aspects of it and distribution to potential beneficiaries and other organisations.
- In accordance with **Regulation (EC) 1828/2006 Article 5.2** material will be published in print, CD-Rom and on the website providing detailed information on:
 - The conditions of eligibility to be met in order to qualify for financing under the Yorkshire and The Humber ERDF Programme 2007-2013;
 - A description of the procedures for examining applications for funding and of the time periods involved;
 - The criteria for selecting the operations to be financed;
 - The contacts at national, regional and local level that can provide information on the Yorkshire and The Humber Competitiveness and Employment Objective Programme 2007-2013.
- Establish an advisory helpdesk to provide information, advice and guidance to potential beneficiaries via telephones and email.
- Publish and distribute specific guidance for potential beneficiaries on making an application including guidance on eligibility, selection criteria, application processes and producing an appropriate business plan.
- Publicity aimed at raising awareness amongst potential beneficiaries about the application of the cross-cutting themes of environment and social inclusion that may include events such as seminars and workshops as well as printed material and website based information.
- Promote each Call for Proposals or Commissioning Framework that is released to elicit project proposals to its target audience and the media.
- Promote opportunities through events including road-shows, conferences, seminars, workshops and stakeholder meetings aimed at the timely raising of awareness in audiences as appropriate.
- Dissemination of the content of the Programme by the programme's managers to potential and final beneficiaries through their individual communication channels.

4.2 Activities to inform and raise awareness amongst project organisers and programme managers of the responsibilities they have and the regulations with which they must comply (with particular emphasis on information and publicity actions), provide guidance and advice to help ensure compliance:

- Provide each project with project manager's handbook, (see Appendix 3) containing relevant advice and guidance to include guidance on:
 - Publicity
 - Record keeping and document retention
 - Claims procedure
 - Eligibility of expenditure
 - Tendering and procurement
 - Audit
 - Monitoring
 - Output and impact recording
- Provide the same material on the website
- Provide an information and publicity helpdesk to provide advice and guidance to project promoters and programme managers
- Publication of separate information and publicity guidance. The same material that appears in the project manager's handbook will be made available separately as responsibility for communications/publicity often is discharged by a different person or organisation. This guidance will be available in print and CD-Rom, and to download from the website. It will include graphic files in various formats and resolutions of all relevant logos
- Provide training workshops for programme managers to ensure that they understand the requirements of the regulations concerning information and publicity measures and develop induction material for programme staff
- Monitor project performance on publicity matters and raise any compliance issues directly with the project

- Maintain a log of advice provided to projects and issues raised to provide evidence for assessments in accordance with **Regulation (EC) 1828/2006 Article 4.2**
- Provide training for those project promoters, particularly from smaller voluntary and community sector promoters, with little publicity expertise, to encourage them to use the media as channels for communication and to help them understand their responsibilities for publicity
- Encourage and support project promoters to maintain a steady stream of news stories and publicity so that the general public has continuing information on activity co-financed by Structural Funds
- Facilitate a “publicity community” in the region to share best practice amongst project promoters and increase awareness of activity co-financed by Structural Funds
- Facilitate and/or participate in any publicity network of English ERDF programmes.
- The publicity experts within the programme management are to be consulted and will provide feedback on the suitability and compliance of project publicity plans as part of the business plan evaluation process to ensure that project promoters are aware of their responsibilities from the outset and have committed appropriate resources to discharge their responsibilities. (See Appendix 5)
- This Communications Plan is available on the programme’s website. The annual communication action plan is a live document and will be updated regularly and be available to download from the website.

4.3 Activities to inform and raise awareness amongst citizens of the Yorkshire and The Humber region of the role that European Structural Funds play in European Regional Policy and how the European Regional Development Fund is managed in Yorkshire and The Humber;

- Include material to inform and raise awareness amongst Yorkshire and The Humber citizens of the role that the European Regional Development Fund plays in European Regional Policy in any pamphlets or brochures produced by the programme and provide similar material on the website. Ensure that other opportunities to explain the policy context in other publicity activities are realised.
- Organise or participate in events targeted at citizens, including those to celebrate Europe Day, in order to place the programme in its policy context.
- Publish leaflets/pamphlets to explain how the European Regional Development Fund is managed in Yorkshire and The Humber and provide similar material on the website.
- Membership of the monitoring committee is made public on the website as is its calendar of meetings and the minutes of these meetings. Membership of any other group established by the programme, its meetings and minutes will, similarly, be made public.

4.4 Activities to inform the programme's partners and stakeholders about the programme's management, progress being achieved and raise awareness of issues that may impact on its management and delivery:

- a) Communication with elected representatives, the European Commission and UK Government Departments responsible for the**

management of the European Regional Development Fund in Yorkshire and The Humber

- Prompt, timely and appropriate communication between the Programme management and the European Commission about any questions or issues relating to the management of the Yorkshire and The Humber ERDF Programme 2007-2013.
- Prompt, timely and appropriate communication between the programme managers and the Department for Communities and Local Government (as managing authority for English ERDF programmes), the Government Office for Yorkshire and The Humber and any other UK Government department about any questions or issues relating to the management of the Yorkshire and the Humber ERDF Programme 2007-2013.
- Prompt, timely and appropriate communication between the programme managers and Members of Parliament, Members of the European Parliament and Local Authority Councillors about any questions or issues relating to the management of the Yorkshire and the Humber ERDF Programme 2007-2013.
- Provide regular briefings to update the region's MPs and MEPs on programme progress and any issues. These briefings will be in the way that the MPs/MEPs find most appropriate whether it is face to face, individually or in groups, or in written briefs.
- Provide regular briefing for councillors and members of local strategic partnerships as appropriate on a borough by borough basis in writing or in person.
- Attend local authority scrutiny panels if requested or respond to issues raised as appropriate.

b) Communications with programme partners and project managers

- Provide briefings as necessary and appropriately for the Regional Assembly, sub-regional and local strategic partnerships, the voluntary and community sector, business audiences and other partners and audiences as circumstances dictate.

- Attend meetings with partners and projects to discuss issues as appropriate.
- Publication of specific guidance for funded projects including guidance on claims processes and systems, document retention, in-kind contributions, tendering and procurement, information and publicity, monitoring and audit, and output and impact recording.
- Facilitate opportunities to analyse and present best practices to inspire and raise standards.

c) Information activities relating to the management, monitoring and evaluation of Structural Funds Programmes

The programme managers will:

- Organise or participate in meetings related to aspects of European Funds management.
- Inform those working on the programme about any modification and updates of the European Fund Regulations and guidance issued by the European Commission.
- Publish and disseminate the findings of any intermediate evaluations and reviews of the Yorkshire and the Humber ERDF Programme 2007-2013
- Participate in seminars and courses provided for future candidate countries relating to Structural Funds management.
- Participate in seminars and courses provided for managers of the different aspects of Structural Funds by the Member State or European Commission.
- Participate in seminars about the future perspectives for European Structural Funds management including any intermediate evaluation process.

4.5 Activities to publicise the achievements of the Yorkshire and The Humber ERDF Programme for 2007-2013 to inform and raise citizens' awareness of the projects carried out with European aid from the Programme in Yorkshire and The Humber and the impact that those projects make.

The aim is to make the public aware of the role that the European Union plays through the programme and also to disseminate the results achieved with the aid of the European Regional Development Fund.

a) Direct Information to Citizens

To ensure that Yorkshire and The Humber's citizens and others have access to appropriate information about projects executed within the region with the aid of the European Regional Development Fund, the programme managers will:

- In accordance with **Regulation (EC) 1828/2006 Article 7.2 (d)** maintain an updated list of all beneficiaries on its website that includes the name of the project, the organisation promoting it, the amount of ERDF and other public contribution and a brief description of the project, its aims, planned outputs and activities.
- **Regulation (EC) 1083/2006 Article 67** establishes the responsibility to produce an Annual Implementation Report each year. These reports will be published on the website with printed copies distributed to reference libraries in Yorkshire and The Humber, including those at the universities and colleges. These reports will contain a section which will analyse the development and fulfilment of information and publicity activities each year.
- Publication on the website of regular reports analysing progress against spend and output targets and analysis of the emerging impact of activity.

- Provide advance notice of programme management meetings and agendas on the website and minutes, decisions and action points arising.
- Provide clear, signposting on the website for further information requests.
- Provide links from its website to those of the Commission and other partners so that the relationship is endorsed and promoted and citizens can seek further information.
- By adhering to best practice and accessibility standards for websites ensure that all citizens have access to web-based information.
- Provide appropriate printed and electronic newsletters containing information about the programme and projects undertaken with European Regional Development Fund support. Printed material to be distributed widely and programme managers will provide clearly signposted access routes for citizens to request copies to be sent to them. All newsletters will also be available to download from the website.
- Organise public meetings at least once a year or more often as appropriate that allow citizens to attend and question programme managers about issues related to the Programme and its activities.
- Seek opportunities to provide speakers for appropriate conferences, seminars and public meetings organised by others.
- Answer any questions raised by citizens in correspondence or by telephone. Comply fully with the requirements of the Freedom of Information legislation in accordance with Yorkshire Forward's established procedures.

b) Information via the mass media

The programme managers will use the mass media as a major communications channel between the Yorkshire and Humber ERDF Programme 2007-2013, the citizens of Yorkshire and The Humber and the general public. The programme managers will:

- Issue a press release for every project co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund when the contract is agreed and offer letter issued. The press release will include the name of the organisation that is

receiving the funds, the name of the operation, the amount of European and other public money committed and a description of the project, how it fits with the programme and contributes to its goals and targets.

- Issue a press release to announce each **Call for Proposals** or **Commissioning Framework** that is issued to elicit project proposals.
- Issue press release to announce progress against spend and output targets at
 - Each year end
 - Significant milestones
 - Other appropriate opportunities (eg Annual Report).
- Issue press releases to announce any programme amendments, modifications and clarifications.
- Issue press releases to announce significant changes of personnel.
- Issue press releases for significant achievements.
- Provide quotes or other material on request for use by partners or projects in their own press releases as appropriate.

In addition to issuing press releases, the programme managers will:

- Provide a proactive and reactive service for the media so that their questions are answered quickly and accurately and to ensure that they have access to timely and appropriate information about programme activity.
- Provide briefings for the media targeted at their needs and interests.
- Develop close working relationship with the media channels and journalists in the region, nationally and internationally to raise the programme's profile, ensure that journalists know where to come for information, and that the programme managers can help to influence their coverage and the news agenda.
- Seek opportunities in the media for interviews and editorial coverage so that programme activity is regularly reported.
- Provide training for senior programme managers so that they understand the media's needs and they feel confident to handle interviews in all circumstances.

- Organise events and photo opportunities on appropriate occasions in order to gain media coverage for the programme and its activities.
- Work with funded projects to help them publicise their activities and maximise positive coverage of the programme.
- Any other subject considered necessary.

4.6 Activities will be scheduled according to the needs to the audiences in three separate phases.

A) Initial phase including launch

Activities to announce the programme to its separate audiences, including the initial press work around the announcement of the programme, the launch event and subsequent activities to raise awareness of the opportunities available will be undertaken at the start of the programme. This will be focused in the first year of programme activity. Provision of initial literature, guidance and establishment of the identity and website are core tasks.

B) Implementation Phase

The bulk of communications activity outlined in the strategy will occur throughout the programme period and will focus on reporting activity undertaken and raising awareness of the impact that funded activity is having in the region. It will ensure that the projects comply with their responsibilities and that citizens have an up to date repository for programme related information, and are signposted to additional information provided by others.

C) Closure Phase

A separate closure communications plan will be developed so that the achievements of the programme can be suitably publicised. This will be developed during 2013 and will cover the period from late 2013 through to programme closure.

5. Management Arrangements

There is a dedicated resource with the relevant skills to manage this plan and to deliver communications activity. Contact details are contained in Section 1 of this report.

5.1 Communications Process

The communications function within the Programme's management will co-ordinate communications and help to ensure that all communications produced by the Programme comply with the European Commission's regulations and meet guidelines set out the Programme's Monitoring Committee, Yorkshire Forward's Head of European Operations or other senior managers. In addition, the function will support and liaise with Yorkshire Forward's media relations team who act as first response to media enquiries.

Yorkshire Forward's Head of European Operations and his senior management team provide general communications guidelines and core messages for the communications function, set goals and objectives, and liaises between the Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC), other programme committees and groups and the communications function.

In order to be effective, the communications function needs to be kept fully informed. The programme's senior management will keep the communications function fully informed about funding contracts, programme performance, impending issues and changes.

The communications function will:

- Refine communications strategy on an on-going basis
- Provide core communications about the programme

- Co-ordinate internal communications for programme staff and facilitate the European team's contribution to the wider internal communication in Yorkshire Forward;
- Provide guidance for programme staff, partners and project promoters about publicity matters including compliance with publicity requirements
- Liaise and advise and consult with Yorkshire Forward's media relations team on all media enquiries about the programme
- Issue press releases, in consultation with senior managers, as appropriate
- Act as spokesperson for the Yorkshire and The Humber ERDF Programme 2007-2013 or determine when senior management should have involvement in media issues as spokespeople
- Manage issues and crises as they arise
- Manage the programme's identity
- Devise and manage specific communications campaigns to meet emerging needs
- Advise Yorkshire Forward's Head of European Operations and his senior management team about impending issues and concerns that may impinge on the programme's activity and/or reputation
- Monitor media coverage and respond as necessary. Collate the media coverage of the programme and share with the programme's managers and staff as appropriate
- Manage the communications budget and any external communications suppliers
- Provide feedback on the suitability and compliance of project publicity plans as part of the business plan evaluation process to ensure that project promoters are aware of their responsibilities from the outset

5.2 Core Communications

a) Programme Identity

The Yorkshire and The Humber ERDF Programme 2007-2013 is adopting a common identity for material to assist visibility and coherence of the publicity activity being undertaken through the programme.

This identity will be used on all documents, websites and other material dealing with the programme and its activity.

Publicity guidance for programme managers and its communications practitioners will be produced showing how the identity should be applied, where it should be used and how it should be integrated with the EU and UK logos.

Different versions will be produced for colour and monochrome situations and templates for stationery, presentations and other common uses will be included.

This identity will be only used to identify the programme and will not be available to funded projects.

Funded projects will only use the ERDF identity in order to acknowledge their funding. This should help to avoid confusion and projects wrongly acknowledging their funding.

Common materials will be developed that use the programme identity including:

- Stationery
- Business Cards
- Presentation templates and core slides
- Standard editorial paragraphs
- Customer service standards
- Style and tone guidance
- Common email signatures
- Glossary of terms and acronyms

- Portable displays for information and background for speakers.

b) Website

The programme does not have its own specific website but a separate section of Yorkshire Forward's website has been developed (www.yorkshire-forward.com/erdf). The content of this section is controlled by the communication team listed in Section 1 of this plan. The website has been registered with all major search engines and the web-address will be included on all programme documents and stationery. (See Appendix 6 for proposed architecture of this website section). The programme website is regularly updated as one of the principal communication channels of the programme. It serves these main purposes:

- A library of information for potential beneficiaries that includes all programme documents, guidance and advice to help make the funding opportunities equally available to all who may wish to apply
- A catalogue of news about programme activity, including news stories, case studies and best practice examples
- A route into the programme for organisations and individuals to ask questions, seek advice and search for further information
- A full list of projects and beneficiaries, including the amount of public funding allocated as required by **(EC) Regulation 1828/2006 Article 7(d)**
- Ensuring that the management of the programme and its decision-making is transparent

c) Programme Documents

The Yorkshire and The Humber ERDF Programme 2007-2013 can be downloaded from the programme's website, it can also be requested as a

hard copy or as a CD-Rom. Any other documents produced will be similarly available.

d) Programme Literature

A brochure containing concise basic information about the programme's aims and vision, a summary of main programme priorities along with sign posts to further information will be produced. Specific literature may also be produced that targets specific priorities or audiences as appropriate.

e) Guidance

Guidance for the pre-contract/application stage will be produced as well as guidance for the project managers of funded projects – The Project Manager's Handbook. All guidance will be available to download from the website.

Guidance for the pre-contract/application stage

Appropriate guides to the administrative systems in use are provided to help potential beneficiaries including:

- Application overview – provides an overview of the application processes, timescales, decision points and the appeals process.
 - Detailed guidance on submitting an application to include the process, guidance on eligible activity/expenditure, criteria used to evaluate applications, business planning guidance, guidance on addressing the cross-cutting themes and publicity actions.
- Guidance on who makes the decisions and likely timescales.

Guidance for contracted project managers – The Project Manager's Handbook

The Handbook will be provided to each project along with the offer letter. The separate component documents will also be available to download from the website.

- Publicity Guidance – outlines responsibilities under **Commission Regulation (EC) n° 1828/2006** offering guidance on the application of EU and programme identity, access to logos, and practical examples of publicity actions.
- Claims guidance – advice on the claims system for funded projects
- Monitoring guidance – advice and guidance on the monitoring arrangements
- Audit guidance
- Documentation Retention guidance
- Tendering and Procurement guidance
- Output and impact recording guidance

f) Contacts Database

The communications function will maintain a database of individuals and organisations that are potential and actual beneficiaries, as well as organisations and individuals that have an interest in or relationship with the programme. This database will drive the distribution process for programme information. The website and all printed material will contain clear signposts to allow organisations and individuals to request their details being added to the database. This database will be regularly revisited during the lifetime of the programme to ensure that it remains compliant with Data protection legislation.

g) Newsletters

Regular communications with partners and the public are necessary to maintain interest in programme activity. A quarterly printed newsletter containing stories about programme progress and achievements and distributed by post and via the website will be produced. A monthly e-bulletin, distributed by email, will also be produced to ensure regular messages about progress and achievement are disseminated from the programme.

h) Annual communications activity plan

All communications activity must be reviewed regularly as part of an annual activity planning cycle. Given potential changes in specific programmes, external issues, and development of new communications channels, detailed activity plans should be developed on an annual basis. The Communications function will, each autumn, in liaison with senior programme managers, produce an activity plan for communications in the forth-coming year. An indicative Communications Activity Plan is outlined in Appendix 4.

Annual Activity Plan Time frame

Aug/Sep: Desk review and evaluation of current activity plan's effectiveness

Oct/Nov: Development of the annual activity plan, with budget recommendations in liaison with Programme Managers

Nov/Dec: Agreement/ Approval of activity plan for (calendar) year ahead

i) Programme launch event and annual progress event

The launch event will take place as soon as practicable and the annual event, targeted at local citizens in Yorkshire and The Humber will take place around 9 May (Europe Day), starting in 2008, which will help to raise awareness of the Community's role in supporting the region

5.3 Communications' Reporting Cycle

The communications function will report as follows:

Daily:	Director and senior managers – impending issues and matters arising
Weekly:	Director and senior managers – media coverage report
Quarterly:	Director and senior managers, PMC communications activity reports
Annual:	Director and senior managers, PMC annual implementation report:
2010 & Final Report:	In addition to the annual communications report, these reports will contain a chapter assessing the results of the information and publicity measures in terms of the visibility and awareness of the Yorkshire and The Humber ERDF Programme 2007-13 and of the role played by the Community in accordance with Regulation (EC) 1828/2006 Article 4.2

6. Indicative Budget

Regulation (EC) n° 1828/2006 Article 2.2 (c) states that the Communications Plan should include an indicative budget for the plan's implementation.

Regulation (EC) n° 1083/2006 Article 45 (e) provides that the resources for this budget can be drawn from Technical Assistance.

The indicative budget for implementing the Yorkshire and The Humber ERDF Programme 2007-2013 is attached as Appendix 1.

7. Performance Management

Evaluation for communications activity undertaken should focus on measurement of successful development of **awareness** and **understanding** of the programme amongst key audiences. It should assess the quality of the actions undertaken, the effectiveness of the dissemination strategy and their effectiveness in delivering the Programme's stated aims.

Recommended evaluation techniques should include:

- **Opinion research (annual)**

Year 1 studies to be used to set benchmarks and, based on those benchmarks, performance targets set for forthcoming years. This research can be undertaken as part of an annual customer service survey specific to the programme or by specific questions included in existing surveys. This can include research into understanding and awareness of EU regional development policy in Yorkshire and The Humber, as well as the actions aims etc of this specific programme.

- **Media activity and coverage evaluation**

ERDF Communications team will track performance of media relations inputs (media contact made; announcements made; calls handled) and outputs (coverage analysis: number, reach, message delivery)

- **Website use evaluation**

Statistics indicating website use, including number of visits, page visits and downloads collated

- **Other Communications Indicators**

Information will be collated about the number of meetings and events held, audiences attending, partners engaged, presentations and speeches made, public enquiries answered etc

- **Feedback**

All events and communications channels will include feedback loops to provide data for analysis, benchmarking and comparison

- **Best practice**

The communications function will play an active role in regional, national and international communications best practice exchanges to continually update and refresh its offering.

- **Review**

An analysis of the effectiveness of the implementation of the Information and publicity plan will form part of the Communications report included in the Annual Implementation Report.

- The annual implementation report for 2010 and the final implementation report will both contain a chapter assessing the results of the information and publicity measures in terms of the visibility and awareness of the 2007-13 Yorkshire and The Humber ERDF Operational Programme. Experience gained during implementation will be used to refine the plan and address any shortcomings that become apparent to ensure that it remains fit for purpose. The 2010 evaluation will contribute evidence to revisit the Communications plan, in order to amend and adapt it to any new challenges and emerging needs for the second half of the programming period. (See Appendix 2 for details of this assessment).

Peer review of activity by other English RDAs will be used to provide qualitative evaluation of the communications activity. A communications' experts network will be facilitated amongst English RDAs to undertake this function mutually.

ENDS



**Yorkshire and The Humber ERDF
Programme 2007-2013**
(includes South Yorkshire as a phasing-in region)

**Communications Plan
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APPENDIX 1

Indicative Budget

Year 1

2007/8 (November 2007 – Dec 2008)

Activity	Total £
Staff	35,000
Indirect costs (25%)	8,750
Staff Expenses	2,000
Newsletter 4 issues	16,000
E-bulletin 12 issues	2,000
Photography	5,000
Graphic Design	10,000
Website	2,000
Print	25,000
Display material/stands	5,000
Events	30,000
Recruitment advertising	5,000
Advertising/Advertorial	15,000
Best	2,000
Practice/Networking	
Surveys, Evaluation & Review	5,000
TOTAL Year 1 (2007/8)	162,750

Year 2 (assume constant prices each year)

2009

Activity	
Staff	35,000
Indirect costs (25%)	8,750
Staff Expenses	2,000
Newsletter 4 issues	16,000
E-bulletin 12 issues	2,000
Photography	5,000
Graphic Design	3,000
Website	2,000
Print	7,000
Display material/stands	1,000
Events	20,000
Advertising/Advertorial	9,000
Best	2,000
practice/Networking	
Surveys, evaluation & review	5,000
Total (2009)	117,750

**Year 3
2010**

Activity

Staff	35,000
Indirect costs (25%)	8,750
Staff Expenses	2,000
Newsletter 4 issues	16,000
E-bulletin 12 issues	2,000
Photography	5,000
Graphic Design	3,000
Website	2,000
Print	7,000
Display material/stands	5,000
Events budget	20,000
Advertising/Advertorial	9,000
Best practice/Networking	2,000
Surveys & 2010 Assessment/Evaluation	15,000
Total (2010)	131,750

**Year 4
2011**

Activity

Staffing	35,000
Indirect costs (25%)	8,750
Staff Expenses	2,000
Newsletter 4 issues	16,000
E-bulletin 12 issues	2,000
Photography	5,000
Graphic Design	3,000
Website	2,000
Print	7,000
Events budget	20,000
Display/Exhibition	1,000
Advertising/Advertorial	9,000
Best practice/Networking	2,000
Surveys etc	5,000
Total	117,750

**Year 5
2012**

Activity

Staffing	35,000
Indirect costs (25%)	8,750
Staff Expenses	2,000
Newsletter 4 issues	16,000
E-bulletin 12 issues	2,000
Photography	5,000
Graphic Design	2,000
Website	2,000
Print	5,000
Events budget	20,000
Display/Exhibition	1,000
Advertising/Advertorial	9,000
Best practice/Networking	2,000
Surveys etc	5,000
Total	114,750

**Year 6
2013**

Activity

Staffing	35,000
Indirect costs (25%)	8,750
Staff Expenses	2,000
Newsletter 4 issues	16,000
E-bulletin 12 issues	2,000
Photography	5,000
Graphic Design	2,000
Website	2,000
Print	5,000
Events budget	20,000
Display.Exhibition	2,000
Advertising/Advertorial	9,000
Best practice/Networking	2,000
Surveys etc	5,000
Total	115,750

**Year 7
2014**

Activity

Staffing:	35,000
Indirect costs (25%)	8,750
Staff Expenses	2,000
Newsletter 4 issues	16,000
E-bulletin 12 issues	2,000
Photography	2,500
Graphic Design	2,000
Website	4,000
Print	5,000
Events budget	20,000
Display/Exhibition	5,000
Advertising/Advertorial	9,000
Best practice/Networking	2,000
Surveys & evaluations	5,000
Including final	
Total	116,250

**Year 8
2015**

Activity

Staffing:	35,000
Indirect costs (25%)	8,750
Staff Expenses	2,000
Newsletter 3 issues	12,000
E-bulletin 24 issues	2,000
Photography	2,500
Graphic Design	2,000
Website	2,000
Print	10,000
Events budget	20,000
Display/Exhibition	1,000
Advertising/Advertorial	9,000
Best practice/Networking	2,000
Surveys & evaluations	15,000
Including final	
Total	123,250

Programme Summary

Year 1 2007/8	162,750
Year 2 2009	117,750
Year 3 2010	131,750
Year 4 2011	117,750
Year 5 2012	114,750
Year 6 2013	115,750
Year 7 2014	116,250
Year 8 2015	123,250
Programme TOTAL	1,000,000

Ends

Appendix 2

Intermediate Assessment and Final Assessment of the effectiveness of the implementation of the Communications Plan for the Yorkshire and The Humber ERDF Programme 2007-2013

Objectives

Programme Actions (ie actions instigated by the Managing Authority):

1. To verify that the actions contained in the Communications Plan for the Yorkshire and The Humber ERDF Programme 2007-2013 have been accomplished.
2. To assess the quality of the information activities and the effectiveness of the dissemination strategies
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of those actions in informing and raising awareness amongst the Programme's various audiences.
4. Evaluate the knowledge and understanding of the publicity regulations by programme managers and in managers in intermediary bodies.
5. Assess the fulfilment of the Communications Plan
6. Identify best practices in information and publicity

Project Actions (ie actions instigated by beneficiaries):

1. Evaluate the degree to which projects are aware of and are complying with the publicity regulations in (EC) 1828/2006.
2. Assess the quality of the information activities
3. To verify if the activities that are part-financed by ERDF are known to be so by project beneficiaries and the general public.
4. Identify best practices in information and publicity

How achievement of the Objectives will be measured and evaluated

Programme Actions (ie actions instigated by the managing Authority):

1. **To verify that the actions contained in the Communications Plan for the Yorkshire and The Humber Competitiveness Objective Programme 2007-13 have been accomplished.**
Evidence based records:
Outputs: press releases, published documents, web pages, presentations etc
Results: distribution records, audience records, media coverage, web hits etc

Impacts: awareness levels, positive opinions held as measured in annual survey

2. **To assess the quality of the information activities and the effectiveness of the dissemination strategies**
Evaluation by peer review (through English ERDF programme's communications network) or by independent experts
3. **Evaluate the effectiveness of those actions in informing and raising awareness amongst the Programme's various audiences.**
Evidence based – opinion survey data collected annually either through existing or commissioned surveys. Data will allow improving performance in informing and raising awareness to be measured.
4. **Evaluate the knowledge and understanding of the publicity regulations by programme managers and in managers in intermediary bodies.**
Evidence based – records of induction and training. Also undertake interviews with a sample of managers to test knowledge.
5. **Assess the fulfilment of the Communications Plan**
Evaluation by peer review (through English ERDF programme's communications network) or by independent experts
6. **Identify best practices in information and publicity**
Nomination by programme managers/partners
Evaluation by peer review (through English ERDF programme's communications network) based on following criteria: clarity of message, delivery method including innovative approaches, scope of target population, complementarity of actions, involvement of beneficiaries, sustainability and impact, compliance with regulations.

Project Actions (ie actions instigated by beneficiaries):

1. **Evaluate the degree to which projects are aware of and are complying with the publicity regulations in (EC) 1828/2006.**
Evidence collated from Article 13 and Article 16 monitoring visits and the log of requests for publicity advice/guidance. Publicity actions undertaken by projects are identified in claims and evidence retained by projects for audit. Individual evaluations of a sample of projects will be undertaken. This can be expanded or extended if systemic failures are identified.
2. **Assess the quality of the information activities**
Material evaluated by Communications experts in the Programme on the following criteria: clarity of message, delivery method including innovative approaches, scope of target population, complementarity of actions, involvement of beneficiaries, sustainability and impact, compliance with regulations

3. **To verify if the activities that are part-financed by ERDF are known to be so by project beneficiaries and the general public.**
Evidence collected by projects and some follow-up testing.
4. **Identify best practices in information and publicity**
Nomination by programme managers/partners
Evaluation based on following criteria: clarity of message, delivery method including innovative approaches, scope of target population, complementarity of actions, involvement of beneficiaries, sustainability and impact, compliance with regulations.

Appendix 3

Project Manager's Handbook

Guidance for projects part-financed by the European Regional Development Fund through the Yorkshire and The Humber Competitiveness Objective Programme 2007-13.

Foreword:	Explanation of the purpose of the handbook
Contacts:	Where to go for further information including Claims Processing and Payment, Procurement/Tendering, Publicity, Monitoring, Audit, Output and Impact recording Useful weblinks
Your offer letter:	A copy of the contract that details the project's eligible expenditure, and the percentage that is available to claim from European Funds. This contract also specifies the outputs that the project is contractually committed to deliver and other contractual obligations.
Guidance:	Provided to help you fulfil your obligations and help to minimise the risk of you making claims for ineligible expenditure or facing difficulties through monitoring or audit that could lead to repayment of all or part of your grant.
Claims:	Timescales and process Payments - when & how? Making a claim: using the claim system, preparing the transaction list, copy invoices, publicity actions and outputs
Procurement	The EU has specific rules covering the procurement of goods and services and the tendering procedures that should be adopted by operations part-financed by ERDF. Expenditure on goods and services which does not follow these guidelines can be regarded as ineligible and could lead to loss of all or part of your grant.
Record keeping	Covers the records you need to maintain in order to satisfy audit and monitoring requirements and to make your claims. Also covers the retention period
Audit	Like any business, co-financed operations need to appoint an auditor to examine their records and deliver an opinion on them. Projects drawing less than £250,000 ERDF in total require a single audit cumulative at the end of the operation while projects drawing more than £250,000 require annual audits and a cumulative audit at the end of operations.
Monitoring	Yorkshire Forward, as the managing authority for the Yorkshire and The Humber ERDF Programme 2007-13 is responsible for monitoring that projects operate within the regulations and keep to the agreed delivery timescales. In

order to do this it regularly monitors project performance in the following ways:

- **Scrutiny of claims** – all claims are scrutinised and will only be authorised for payment when they are satisfied that the evidence is robust and that the expenditure is eligible.
- **Proof of Existence** – Each project is visited soon after the contract is issued to verify the existence of the contracting party and operation. This handbook will be left with the project manager at that visit.
- **Monitoring Visit** – Each project may be subject to visits at a pre-arranged date by programme managers to examine records, discuss progress and performance. Recommendations to improve performance and increase compliance may be made.
- **Government Audit** – A certain number of projects will be selected by the Government's independent auditors for control audits.
- **Programme Closure Audit** – is undertaken before programme closure, a number of projects will be selected for examination.
- **ECA Audit** – Projects can also be audited by the European Court of Auditors, who are independent auditors appointed by the European Commission.

Publicity

Each project has a responsibility to publicise its operations and to acknowledge the contribution that ERDF has made. This guidance covers how projects can best fulfil their obligation via a range of publicity actions including press releases, print, websites, presentations, posters etc. There is specific guidance for capital projects concerning billboards and commemorative plaques. The guidance also covers how projects should maintain a portfolio of publicity activity to provide evidence for claims, monitoring visits and audit.

Good Practice

Guidance on how to submit/participate good practice in the region, UK and across Europe. Information is provided about existing and potential networks and opportunities for projects to feature in programme publicity actions.

Appendix 4

Indicative Communications Action Plan for 2008

December 2007

- Initial press work to announce Commission approval of the programme, timeline for further activity leading to launch
- Identity developed
- Initial website development
- Communications plan draft completed and approved by PMC
- Press work around PMC and Transitional prospectuses
- Newsletter (e-bulletin)

January 2008

- Press work allied to UK parliament passing necessary legislation to establish the RDA as programme managers
- Initial briefing of partners on the “road map”
- Project Manager’s Handbook drafted
- Pre-launch website available
- Newsletter (e-bulletin)

February 2007

- Programme (OPD) produced in print & CD-Rom
- Newsletter (e-bulletin)
- Publicity Guidelines leaflet drafted
- Project Manager’s Handbook drafted
- 15 Feb Programme Launch event in Sheffield
- e-bulletin
- PMC Report
- MPs/MEPS briefing

March 2008

- PMC Report
- Communications Plan sent to Commission
- e-bulletin
- Sub-regional Events: North Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, East Yorkshire & Humber, South Yorkshire

April 2008

- PMC Report
- e-bulletin
- Communications Annual Report (2007) drafting starts

May 2008

- PMC Report
- e-bulletin
- Europe Day events

- Newsletter

June 2008

- PMC Report
- e-bulletin
- Annual Report (2007) sent to Commission

July 2008

- PMC Report
- e-bulletin
- Attitude/Awareness Survey developed

August 2008

- PMC Report
- Newsletter
- e-bulletin
- Attitude/Awareness Survey undertaken

September 2008

- PMC Report
- e-bulletin
- Newsletter

October 2008

- RDA Report
- e-bulletin
- Attitude/Awareness Report

November 2008

- PMC Report
- e-bulletin

December 2008

- PMC Report
- e-bulletin
- Newsletter
- Calendar
- Year end N+2 story

Appendix 5

Guidance on Publicity Actions in Business Plans

Applications for ERDF co-financing need to develop a Business Plan. The actions that the project is planning to undertake in order to publicise its activities and to acknowledge the contribution of ERDF will be appraised as part of the process to ascertain whether the project receives funding or not.

Appraisers will be seeking to see from the business plan that the applicant has seen and understood the **European Commission's Regulation (EC) 1828/2006** and has plans to address their responsibilities. In order to achieve a positive evaluation for this element of the application the following issues should be directly addressed in the Business Plan:

1. **Publicity Actions are addressed in the Plan.** A separate section on proposed publicity actions should be included in all Business Plans.
2. **Sufficient and appropriate levels of resource are allocated to discharge the responsibilities.** The level of budget should be appropriate to the scale of the project and take account of the project's characteristics and target end users. Publicity plays an important role in ensuring that ERDF funded opportunities are widely offered and opportunities are open to all eligible users.
3. **What are the management arrangements for delivering publicity actions:** whether by agency, in-house publicity or project managers? What are the arrangements for ensuring that those delivering activities understand the EC publicity requirements?
4. **Does project delivery depend on sub-contractors or partner activities?** What are the arrangements for ensuring that they also understand the EC publicity requirements? What quality control mechanisms are in place to aid the Project organiser to ensure compliance?
5. **An indication of the activities envisaged and a schedule of expected activity** on an annual or quarterly (claim periodicity) basis to permit publicity progress to be checked and any performance issues to be raised and addressed.

Guidelines for Assessing Publicity Actions in Business Plans

The programme's Communications team will be consulted by application appraisers on whether proposed publicity actions contained in business plans are appropriate and suitably robust.

Checklist

- 1 Does the Business Plan contain a separate section detailing publicity & information actions?
- 2 Does the Business Plan have an information and publicity budget?
- 3 Is the budget appropriate to the size of project?
- 4 Are information and publicity actions to be delivered by:
 - a) an external agency
 - b) in-house by communications specialist
 - c) in-house by non-communications specialist
- 5 Does the Business Plan specify publicity outputs?
- 6 Are outputs identified on a quarterly or annual basis?
- 7 What outputs will publicise activity to end users?
- 8 Is this a capital project that requires a billboard and plaque?
- 9 Is this project delivered by partners or sub-contractors?
- 10 Are the arrangements sufficiently robust to ensure that partners and sub-contractors also comply? Are quality control mechanisms specified?

APPENDIX 6

Website Architecture

Level 1

Home Page

Welcome
ERDF team Contact
Link to EU Inforegio
Sign Up for more info

ERDF Programme

Programme description
Content of Programme
Eligibility
Scope

Applying for Funding

Process explanation

Running a Project

Responsibilities
Contact Helpdesk

News

News Releases
Publications
Newsletters
Events

Programme Progress

List of all projects/investments (in accordance with Regulation (EC) 1828/2006 Article 7.2 (d))

Areas of Intervention
Annual Reports
Progress against targets
Evaluations
Research Reports

Programme Management

PMC what and who
PMB (Y&H)
PMB (SY)
Other
ERDF team who's who

Level 2

Who else can help?
Links to DCLG, Info Relays
Euro Direct, EC in UK etc

Priority Description
Operational Programme
Detailed Criteria
Geographic information

Guidance &
links to calls

Guidance

Releases
Individual publications
Individual publications
Individual Events

Case Studies
Reports
Reports
Reports
Reports

Meetings
Meetings
Meetings
Meetings
Roles/Org Chart/contacts

Level 3

Calls & Commissioning
Frameworks

Individual guidance

Links to projects

Papers/Minutes
Papers/Minutes
Papers/minutes
Papers/Minutes

Partners

Links to other websites

Contact Us

Contacts, Register/Subscribe, Send a question