

**LOWLANDS AND UPLANDS SCOTLAND 2007- 2013  
PROGRAMME MONITORING COMMITTEE**

**NOTE OF MEETING HELD ON  
THURSDAY 19 MARCH 2008,  
AT THE STIRLING HIGHLAND HOTEL,  
SPITTAL STREET, STIRLING**

**Present:**

Dr John Rigg	Scottish Government (Convener)
Councillor David Berry	East Lothian Council
Riona Bell	Scottish Funding Council
Alan Boyle	West Fife Enterprises Ltd
Liz Connolly	Scottish Enterprise
Professor Campbell Gemmell	SEPA
David Grahame	LINC Scotland
Councillor Alasdair Hutton	Scottish Borders Council
Graeme Hyslop	Langside College
Dharmendra Kanani	Big Lottery Fund
Dame Barbara Kelly	Southern Uplands Partnership
Donna Mackinnon	SCVO
Dr David George McBeth	University of Strathclyde
Charlie McMillan	Scottish Association of Mental Health
Councillor David O'Neill	North Ayrshire Council

**Apologies:**

Councillor Kate Dean	Aberdeen City Council
Grahame Smith	Scottish Trades Union Council

**In attendance:**

Koen Delanghe	European Commission, DG Regio
Marc Vermyle	European Commission, DG Emplo
Vincent Birriell	Scottish Government
Louise Donnelly	Scottish Government
Nigel Lindsay	Scottish Government
Mabel Hildebrand	Scottish Government
David Souter	Scottish Government
Gordon McLaren	ESEP Ltd
Nigel Thomas	ESEP Ltd
Susan Tamburrini (minutes)	ESEP Ltd

## **1. Introduction**

The Convenor welcomed everyone to the meeting. He introduced Koen Delanghe, who had recently taken over as Desk Officer at the European Commission, DG Regio.

Those present were asked to ensure that any material interest was declared with regard to any specific projects they may be involved with during the course of the meeting.

The Convenor thanked ESEP for a prompt and professional distribution of supporting papers for the meeting.

## **2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Kate Dean, Aberdeen City Council, and Grahame Smith, STUC

## **3. Minute of Meeting held on 8 November 2007**

The minutes of the previous meeting on 8 November 2007 were approved.

## **4. Matters Arising**

The following points were noted from the previous minutes:

### **4.1 LUPS/07/1/2 – Lowlands and Uplands Scotland ERDF/ESF Programmes 2007-2013**

3.8 Commission approval for the ESF Programme had been received on 22 November 2007.

### **4.2 LUPS/07/1/4 – Implementation Arrangements**

5.4 The Scottish Government indicated that the guidance note was currently being developed.

5.13 It was noted that a local contact for DWP in Sheffield had now been established.

5.25-28 Discussion on these issues had taken place which now superseded these items.

5.31 Draft Action Plan. This item would be addressed later in the agenda.

### **4.3 LUPS/07/1/6 – ESF Shadow Round**

7.8 The Shadow Round had been launched by the then Deputy Minister for Enterprise and Lifelong Learning (Alan Wilson) in

November 2006. The Shadow Round had since been formally signed off through written procedure by the Committee.

#### 4.4 LUPS/07/1/9 – Technical Assistance

The Scottish Government advised members as follows:

- 10.3.1 Support was already being provided to both ESEP and HIPP as the contracted IABs. ESEP would receive £1.55m over 3 years.
- 10.3.2 The new management information system (EUROSYS) has been funded through some Objective 3 Technical Assistance money and £142,000 of LUPS Technical Assistance.
- 10.3.3 Costs were yet to be established in relation to the implementation of the Evaluation Plan.
- 10.3.4 Costs were yet to be established in relation to the implementation of the Communications Plan.

#### 4.5 Advisory Group members

A full list of Advisory Group members had been posted on the ESEP website. Committee members enquired whether this would also be the case for Standing Advisory Group Members. The Scottish Government indicated that the membership of the respective Standing Advisory Groups would vary from round to round depending upon availability and avoiding any conflicts of interest. This information would not be posted on the ESEP website.

#### 4.6 Communications Plan

The Commission noted that, although the ESF Operational Programme had been approved on 22 November 2007, the Communications Plan was not yet on the SFC system. The Managing Authority indicated that they had been experiencing technical difficulties in uploading the Communications Plan. The Commission proposed that the Managing Authority should send a message to the Commission identifying the technical problems.

### 5. **LUPS 2007-2013 First Round Approvals – Implications for Programme Implementation (LUPS/08/1/5) (*For Information*)**

#### 5.1 Shadow Round

The Scottish Government noted that 49 applications had been approved and are in progress. 30% have since indicated that they will have either an under-spend or will de-commit funds.

## 5.2 First Round Process

The role of the Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC) members was clarified. There would be no intention to re-score or go into the detail of the Advisory Group scores, the Committee Members' primary role being to provide a strategic overview. The Committee would have the responsibility of holding the Scottish Government to account in terms of the delivery of the Programmes.

Committee members raised a number of questions in regard to the Lisbon Agenda, its primacy in terms of policy and the degree to which the Programme and supported projects required to promote and deliver Lisbon objectives. The Scottish Government stated that at least 75% of the Programmes had to be Lisbon related. The Commission observed that the LUPS Programme's Lisbon earmarking was 79%, which was in line with other UK regions.

With reference to paragraph 9.4 of the circulated paper (LUPS/08/1/5), it was noted that the breakdown of Priority 1 ESF should be £95m and not £92.5m. This would then make the overbid percentage change from 122% to 114%.

With reference to paragraph 12.2 of the circulated paper (LUPS/08/1/5), it was hoped that a move could be made away from unreasonably late claims.

Committee members voiced some concern over the potential for duplication between certain LUPS Priorities and other EU funds such as LEADER and the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP). They also sought reassurance that, with reference to para 11, issues around duplication between CPP bids and individual project bids would not give rise to delays in individual project approvals.

The Scottish Government acknowledged that duplication should be avoided and stated that colleagues in the appropriate directorates would be regularly consulted. With reference to individual projects, once decisions had been made by Ministers, these projects could proceed and there should be no undue delays.

## 5.3 Individual ESF and ERDF bids - Recommendations

The Scottish Government described the Advisory Group process.

For ESF, Standing Advisory Groups met for each Priority to consider: the quality threshold above which projects would be recommended to the PMC for funding; the ranking of projects around the quality threshold; and guidance for approving multiannual bids. The last of these considered the development of the project across time and participant need. There was a presumption against funding for repeat activity i.e. a number of intakes in the proposed period of funding.

The ESF Priority 1 (Progressing Into Employment) Virtual Advisory Group comprised representation from Partners/MA/IAB and policy experts from the Scottish Government such as More Choices More Chances, Workforce Plus, Cities Strategies, and Working For Families.

There were in effect two separate competitions: 90 applications from individual projects represented challenge fund bids totalling £53m covering 2/3 years, and

the CPP bids (see below) representing two year strategic plans integrating ESF Priority 1 and ERDF Priority 3 (Urban Regeneration) activities.

Six Advisory Group members independently scored each bid. From a maximum score of 60, the scores ranged from 32.2 to 47.2. The Standing Advisory Group was asked to consider 5 large projects seeking more than £1m grant. 59 projects were judged by the Advisory Group to be of a quality to be recommended for approval, amounting to £21.6m.

For Priority 2 ESF (Progressing through Employment), 46 applications were received representing £24.2m. The same appraisal process for scoring and appraisal was followed as for Priority 1 and the Advisory Group included SG policy input from Skills and Lifelong Learning. The scores ranged from 32.3 to 37.8, Nine projects were around the quality threshold. It was noted that the Standing Advisory Group had reviewed the quality threshold and ranked the projects. There were three large projects seeking grant in excess of £1m. The Advisory Groups recommended awards of £14.6m to 32 projects.

With regard to Priority 3 ESF (Access to Lifelong Learning), 28 applications were received representing £14.2m. Again the same scoring and appraisal process was followed. The highest score achieved was 45, with 24 being the lowest. The Standing Advisory Group considered 10 projects around the quality threshold and two large projects seeking grants in excess of £1m. The Advisory Groups recommended awards of £7m to 17 projects.

For ERDF Priority 1 (Improving Competitiveness), the Advisory Group had recommended the approval of 17 projects totalling £25.2m, while Priority 2 (Enterprise Support), which included the Scottish Co-investment Fund, would commit £43.2m to 22 projects. The bids for Priorities 3 (Urban Regeneration) and 4 (Rural Development) had been for relatively small amounts and it was recommended that £1.2m and £3.1m, respectively, should be awarded.

#### 5.4 Discussion

The Convener expressed thanks to all those involved in the Advisory Groups. Committee members also acknowledged the considerable amount of work undertaken by the Advisory Groups in a relatively short period of time.

Committee members raised a number of questions regarding both the appraisal process and the quality of the project applications received. Notwithstanding the fact that the Committee had approved the appraisal process at its first meeting, Committee members were looking for assurances that the process was robust and had been applied consistently throughout.

Other specific concerns involved: the treatment of multi-annual funding for ESF, the composition of the Standing Advisory Groups and the limitations of the application forms, in particular the 500 word limit on the first stage form. Committee members also sought reassurance that resources would be deployed to support applicants in addressing any weaknesses or deficiencies.

The Scottish Government explained that, with regard to the quality issue, some applicants had not adequately addressed the requirements of the new Programme issues; with changes to eligibility and programme priorities this was

not entirely surprising. Moreover, a new appraisal system was being operated and applied to both ESF and ERDF applications. This was proving to be effective, although it was agreed that feedback to unsuccessful applicants was essential. As regards the re-design of the application forms, considerable effort had gone into this; however, this could be reviewed at a later date. The Scottish Government acknowledged that, in respect of the consideration of multi-annual funding for ESF activities, there was a need to incorporate references to this in the Notes for Guidance in future rounds.

## **6. Strategic Delivery Body (SDB)**

The Scottish Government advised the Committee on a number of issues regarding the Strategic Delivery Body (SDB). The decision to commission Scottish Enterprise as an SDB was set out in the Operational Programme and endorsed by the Programme Monitoring Committee at its meeting on 8 November 2007.

The Managing Authority have taken a cautious approach, in particular as a consequence of the reorganisation of Scottish Enterprise. Two bids were received under ERDF Priority 1 – Research and Innovation:

- Supporting Research and Development Commercialisation
- Supporting Innovation

These bids have been scored by the Managing Authority and policy experts from Scottish Government using the same scoring process as applied to other projects and supplemented by presentations from Scottish Enterprise and partner organisations. Following examination of eligibility, revenue generation and additionality during the appraisal process, the initial funding bid of £27.1m has been reduced to approximately £20m.

Committee members questioned whether Scottish Enterprise would be in a position to deliver the programme of innovative actions. Particular concern was raised over the proposed level of support for the Proof of Concept scheme. The Scottish Government advised that a detailed paper will be circulated to Committee members outlining the activity to be funded as part of the SDB bid.

## **7. Global Grants**

The Scottish Government explained that Global Grants were governed by Article 42 of the General Regulation, which permits the appointment of a public body operating in the Programme area. However, the involvement of Technical Assistance may require a full procurement process to appoint such an intermediate body. Advice had been sought from both the Scottish Government Legal Services and the Commission, and the position was nearing finalisation. The Scottish Government emphasised that there was a need to ensure compliance at this time so as to avoid audit and compliance difficulties at a later date.

Committee members enquired as to the allocation of Priority 4 funds to the Global Grant Body in the south of Scotland. The Scottish Government confirmed that this was limited to £19m.

## **8. Consideration of the CPP Bids (LUPS/08/1/8) and Consideration of the Advisory Group Reports (LUPS/08/1/9) (*For Decision*)**

The Convener advised that agenda items 8 and 9 would be taken together. He again emphasised the strategic role of the Committee rather than the need to revisit the scoring of individual projects.

### **8.1 First Round Process**

The Scottish Government described the appraisal process for the CPPs. All 13 eligible CPPs had applied.

The CPP bids were required to show: the links between the ERDF and ESF components; the additionality to the Regeneration Outcome Agreement (ROA); and the coherence and robustness of planning and partnership. Bids were all scored by the Advisory Group, the membership of which was drawn from the same Scottish Government policy groups as for ESF Priority 1 and also included members from Regeneration Policy Division and Communities Scotland. The Intermediate Advisory Body (IAB) and the two Managing Authorities (ESF and ERDF) also scored the CPP bids.

CPPs made presentations to the Advisory Group panel, followed by a question and answer session which considered potential overlaps, co-ordination of the plans, delivery mechanisms and the role of the Third Sector. The Scottish Government had been impressed by the overall quality of the bids received and acknowledged the amount of work involved from partners in formulating these bids.

The Advisory Group had voiced doubts regarding the eligibility of certain activities and identified possible overlap in some activity where there was the possibility that the match funding identified in the CPP bids also was referenced against an individual project bid.

In summary, the Committee were advised that the process followed was the same as for the ESF Priorities with Virtual Advisory Groups scoring and the Standing Advisory Groups advising on the middle ranking projects. All decisions were unanimous. The Scottish Government had been aware, based on past advice of EU auditors, that there was an inherent risk of conflicts of interest with the Advisory Group process. Although the SG was keen to involve external peer group input where possible, this had proved difficult in the case of the CPPs.

### **8.2 CPP bids - Recommendations**

The Scottish Government noted that the scoring had produced 3 distinct groups: the top 8 CPP bids, some of which had scored extremely highly; the middle 3 ranking bids, which lacked the coherence of the first 8, although there were individual elements of high quality; and the other 2 bids, which had low scores

largely due to the absence of evidence of partnership and the lack of drawing together demand and delivers in the local area.

The Scottish Government reported that Ministers had previously agreed to commit first round funding from ESF Priority 1 (£25m) and ERDF Priority 3 (£15m) to support high quality strategic bids submitted by CPPs. The Committee was invited to agree to support the 8 highest ranked CPP bids, subject to the removal of duplicate and ineligible activity, and to the potential support of discrete elements of the next 3 CPP bids. The activity would be funded within this financial envelope.

### 8.3 Discussion

Committee members commented on the untested nature of the CPP approach and referred to the significant shift from the original proposal for a pilot involving only 3 CPP areas over a 2 year period. In view of the substantial level of commitment being recommended, members were keen to ensure value for money and wanted to be clear about what that investment would generate by way of outcomes. Members expressed concern over the potential for delays in approving projects under ESF Priority 1 and ERDF Priority 3 due to issues of duplication of activity between the CPP bids and individual challenge fund applications. There was also the risk of differential treatment of the CPP bids, compared with those from individual projects.

The Scottish Government confirmed the generally high quality of the CPP bids – and the exceptional quality of some – which had provided a strategic focus and drawn on a considered input from a range of partners. There was no evidence of the funding of any good individual projects being crowded out from ESF Priority 1 or ERDF Priority 3 as a result of the CPP allocation. Moreover, under the stricter claims monitoring regime, there would be greater potential for recycling underspends. With regard to the different treatment of the CPP applications, it had been explained that it had not been possible to involve external stakeholder representation due to conflicts of interest. However, the agreed process had been followed in every other respect.

For the Commission, the CPP approach was a widely used practice, although there was always a need for transparency. Responsibility would lie with the Scottish Government to report regularly on progress to the Programme Monitoring Committee.

Some Committee members felt that they did not have enough information on which to form views on the content and outputs that would follow from the Advisory Group recommendations. It was also agreed, however, that the Committee should not seek to second guess the detailed analysis that had been undertaken by the Advisory Groups. A balance required to be struck between having too much detail and being able to examine a level of management information that would allow an informed assessment of the strategic outcomes.

The Commission observed that at a strategic level it would be helpful to have an indication of the expected impacts of the recommended projects and, perhaps, a sectoral and spatial analysis. This would assist in identifying areas of under performance and inform the promotion of subsequent rounds.



The Scottish Government stated that, in conjunction with ESEP Ltd, it had already planned to review the management of the first round and would reflect on the views expressed by Committee members so as to ensure that they are provided with more strategic and focused information in advance of the next round.

The discussion concluded with agreement that the funding suggestions made by the Advisory Groups for the individual projects and the CPPs should be recommended to Ministers, subject to the concerns about the level of information that had been provided also being recorded.

***Committee Decision: The Committee agreed Recommendations 8 and 9.***

**9 An Action Plan to Strengthen the Commission's Supervisory Role Under Shared Management of Structural Actions (*For Information*)**

The Commission had asked for this item to be placed on the agenda. The paper sets out the Commission's approach to compliance and is in response to severe criticism of the Commission from the European Court of Auditors, which had qualified the Annual Reports due to failures in the monitoring of expenditure and activity.

The Action Plan places great stress on the effective verification of expenditure and activity and audit-related monitoring. Also, there is a requirement for greater co-ordination of the audit activity within the Commission and between the Commission and national audit services. The national audit activity would in future assume greater prominence in giving the Commission assurance of financial verifications for the new Programmes. With regard to closure of the 2000-2006 Programmes, the strictest application of the rules will be applied.

The Convener welcomed the proposals for improved co-ordination. As regards programme closure, it was essential to learn lessons and build these into the implementation and operational arrangements for new Programmes.

Committee members enquired as to the nature of the "Contracts of Confidence" and wondered whether this could be in the form of a contract with Audit Scotland. The Commission responded that the Contracts of Confidence represented a complete set of conditions to be met by the Member State authorities. This might be an option, but not favoured.

**10 Proposed Changes to the ESF (LUPS/08/1/10) and ERDF (LUPS/08/1/11) Operational Programmes (*For Decision*)**

The Convener introduced some proposed adjustments designed to improve the clarity and content of the Programmes.

**10.1 ESF Proposed Changes**

The Scottish Government reported that the proposed changes to the ESF Operational Programme were relatively minor, mainly involving clarification on

the specific target beneficiaries for the ESF Priorities. Also, now that the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) had been finalised, it was clear that vocational training provision in respect of Food Processing and Forestry Products would not, as previously understood, be covered under the SRDP. Accordingly, it was important that these key sectors be included as eligible sectors in the LUPS ESF Programme.

## 10.2 ERDF Proposed Changes

The Scottish Government reported that it may not be necessary to mention specifically major projects despite earlier advice to the contrary. As regards the inclusion of private sector contributions, financial engineering activities would be the key beneficiaries.

With regard to the proposed changes to Priority 4 (Rural Development), these were largely in response to the low level of bids received. Experience in other rural areas has been similarly passive and not resulted in quality proposals. Specific changes involve investing in cultural and natural assets and strengthening traditional sectors as a whole where innovation and competitiveness are underpinning priorities.

Committee members welcomed the inclusion of support for cultural and natural assets and recognised that it was important to encourage and support innovation rather than getting locked into what has been supported in the past. It was also suggested that areas targeted by Priority 4 ERDF tended to be relatively small areas lacking administrative capacity and economic development focus. Moreover, a number of these areas contained coastal communities for which in-shore fishing represented important economic opportunities.

With regard to the Commonwealth Games, the Commission noted the risk that any involvement of ERDF could have a displacement effect. It was suggested that any reference to the Commonwealth Games should not be done at specific priority level. The Scottish Government confirmed that there was no intention to use EU funding for the Commonwealth Games project itself. However, there was an opportunity for businesses within the area of the Games to take advantage of the event and look towards the long term sustainable business development in the area.

The Scottish Government agreed to have informal discussions with the Commission desk officers in order to determine an agreed form of words in making a formal submission to the Commission.

***Committee Decision: The Committee endorsed the proposed changes to the ESF and ERDF Operational Programmes.***

## 11 **Draft N+2 Action Plan (For Decision)**

In introducing the paper, the IAB emphasised the need for up-front compliance. The regular reporting of progress on financial spend was a condition of grant and would provide important management information for the Committee. At the 21 months stage of Programme implementation, we need to declare £37m ERDF

and £26.5m ESF spend. There was a danger that, if we failed to achieve those targets, any shortfall will be deducted from the Programmes.

Committee members noted that there was a need to liaise with applicants to ensure eligibility, an understanding of the audit perspective and the realism of targets and timescales. The Action Plan provides mechanisms to alert the IAB, Scottish Government and Project Sponsor where performance is not satisfactory. It also highlights a range of actions, including the need for robust and realistic applications. For this first round we need to ensure applicants have updated application forms. This should be completed by the end of May 2008.

It was agreed that future grant awards should be linked to current performance, including claims submissions. It was noted that, in the ESF Shadow Round, there is already a significant potential underspend. However, with the experience of the Shadow Round and the first full round, project applicants would be developing their understanding of the reporting and claiming requirements for the new Programmes as well as the National Rules.

The Convener advised that progress on N+2 would be a standing agenda item for all Committee meetings.

***Committee Decision: The Committee approved the N+2 Action Plan.***

## **12. Draft AIR 2007 (For Information)**

The IAB indicated that the 2007 Annual Implementation Reports (AIRs) were required for the ESF and ERDF Programmes and they would need to be agreed by the Committee for sign off in early June 2008 prior to submission to the Commission by the deadline of 30 June 2008. The first AIRs, covering 2007, would be relatively short reports. The principal content would include: the Shadow Round; establishment of implementation structures such as Advisory Groups and Programme Monitoring Committee; the engagement process with project sponsors; and the first round.

The Commission stated that the Implementing Regulation (Annex 18) gives detail of what is required in the AIR and confirmed the requirement for two reports covering ERDF and ESF.

The Convener advised the Committee that, as we move into the summer period, the final draft would be circulated to members by Written Procedure.

## **13 Exceptional Project Procedure for 2007-2013 Programmes (LUPS/08/1/14) (For Decision)**

The Convener gave an outline of the proposed way forward for dealing with time-critical strategic projects. This procedure would be used in exceptional circumstances only, and could not be used as a means to bypass the annual cycle.

The Commission suggested that more detail would be required to define those projects that met the requirements of a time-critical project and those that did not.

It would be important to apply the agreed appraisal and scoring system and that it would be helpful to spell out in more detail what makes a project time-critical.

Committee members reiterated the need for consistency in relation to the scoring of time critical projects, but wondered whether we might expect above average outputs/results from projects coming forward under this process. The Convener confirmed that the agreed appraisal process would be used to score projects and agreed that the outputs/results would be expected to be above average. The Scottish Government would rework the paper.

#### **14 JESSICA (LUPS/08/1/15) *(For Information & Decision)***

The Convener advised the Committee that the Commission had given a high priority to JESSICA, a joint initiative between the European Investment Bank (EIB) and DG Regio.

Committee members were invited to agree to the Scottish Government's engagement with the EIB to fund a feasibility study. There had been a relatively low level of uptake within Priority 3 (Urban Regeneration) and JESSICA offered an opportunity to both promote and support regeneration activity. The Scottish Government was in looking at Cities and/or Urban Regeneration Companies (URCs) as effective delivery vehicles for a JESSICA Fund.

Committee members questioned the narrow definition of city urban areas and pointed to the example of Lanarkshire which, by that definition, would be excluded. They also wondered why a National Holding Fund arrangement such as that being developed in Wales was not under consideration.

The Scottish Government advised that Regeneration Policy colleagues were not inclined to operate a National Holding Fund and preferred the City/URC route.

***Committee Decision: The Committee agreed the proposed feasibility study.***

#### **15 Data Security (LUPS/08/1/16) *(For Information)***

The Convener gave a comprehensive update on all IT systems, in particular the new web enabled management information system (EUROSYS). Successful first round applicants – beginning with the Shadow Round projects - will be invited to upload application details on the system.

As regards data security, the Convener advised that, following recent high-profile cases elsewhere, the Scottish Government was reviewing its data handling and transmission mechanisms. The Scottish Government would prepare a Non-disclosure Statement for all Committee and Advisory Group members to sign. He stated that it was important for members to respect confidential information prior to meetings.

## **16 Draft Timetable for 2008 Approval Round (LUPS/08/1/17) (For Decision)**

The IAB advised that this was not dissimilar to the current round. It had been hoped that the timetable could have been brought forward, but this had not been possible due to the resource requirements of the closure of the 2000-06 Programmes.

The key dates were the call for first stage applications (15 August), the call for the second stage (10 October), the final date for applications (5 December) and the PMC meeting (18 March 2009). Based on the first round experience, there was an extended period between first and second stage applications. As with the first round, it was difficult to estimate the likely volume of business.

Committee members were concerned that, where they had recommended 1 year projects, this would create a funding gap for projects starting in January. They also referred to feedback from some applicants which indicated that the first stage application process was irrelevant. The Scottish Government reported that, under the proposed 2008 timetable, first stage applicants could come in at an earlier point and this would allow time for constructive feedback prior to submission of the second stage application.

The Convener advised that the timetable could be brought forward in subsequent years, but that this would not be possible this year.

***Committee Decision: The Committee agreed the draft timetable.***

## **17 Date of Next Meeting**

Those present agreed to hold a provisional date of Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2008 in diaries. The IAB would confirm this in due course.

## **18 Any Other Business**

### **18.1 Committee Papers**

Committee members requested that it would be helpful if papers could carry the author and contact details.

### **18.2 Committee Representation**

Committee members enquired whether it would be appropriate for Skills Development Scotland to be represented on the Committee. The Convenor said that he would contact the new chief executive of SDS once he/she was in place.

### **18.3 General**

Charlie McMillan stated that, from his perspective of raising awareness of equality and diversity, this had been an informative first meeting. He recognised that most equality proofing would be undertaken by the Advisory Groups. However, he was keen to add value and was interested to know how this can happen.

The Convener advised that this was viewed as important both by Scottish Government and the Commission. The IAB stated that it was imperative that we maintain the legacy of the Horizontal Themes in Scotland. The Committee was scheduled to meet twice a year with the main business of one meeting being the consideration of project recommendations, and the other meeting discussing more strategic issues including Programme performance.

The Convener thanked all present for attending and closed the meeting.

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT/ESEP LTD**  
**JUNE 2008**