**Oxford City Council European Funding**

Oxford City Council has received relatively little in respect of European funding. There have been two successful bids for funding which are outlined below. The Council is hoping to access some European Funding which has been awarded to the Local Enterprise Partnership which is detailed in Appendix 1.

**European Social Fund**

Customer Services have successfully applied for a grant of £296,000 which has been awarded from the European Social Fund. This must be match funded from staffing costs giving a total cost attributable to the project of £592,000. The grant is intended to be used to deliver work related support to private sector tenants. The Council is currently half way through a 12 month project and has worked with 200 customers with 40 employment outcomes.

**Intelligent Energy Europe: Mobilising Local Energy Infrastructure**

Environmental Development have been awarded £900,000 from Intelligent Energy Europe: Mobilising Local Energy Infrastructure. There is another £300,000 to be spent on the scheme giving a total of £1.2 million. The grant is intended to be used to develop energy efficiency and renewable energy projects across the county and to lever in capital investment. So far there has been £2m investment in Solar PV and microhydro installations financed by community share offers. The delivery of the Low Carbon Hub business plan is intended to secure investment and legacy for programme.

**Appendix 1**

**European Funding through the LEP**

In March 2013 the UK government announced that the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund (ESF) and part of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) will be combined into the European Structural & Investment Funds (EUSIF) Growth Programme for England for 2014-2020. The new European Growth Programme will be a source of investment to encourage enterprise, innovation and skills to boost local economies and long-term growth, and to promote social inclusion and combat poverty. Oxfordshire will receive nearly £20m funding between 2014 and 2020. Each LEP area is required to produce a Structural and Investment Fund Strategy. The development of the Strategy was heavily support by the City’s economic development team with support from the benefits reform team (specifically on the social inclusion elements).

Although the EUSIF Strategy has been developed by the LEP and responds to local economic conditions, the use of EU funds is constrained by European Regulations. These regulations set out the EU's 11 overarching ‘thematic objectives’ that the funds should contribute to. These are underpinned by specific ‘investment priorities’ or ‘measures’ which describe the broad activities that can be supported by each Fund. Only 10 of the thematic objectives are relevant to Oxfordshire (the 11th focused on intuitional capacity is only applicable in less developed areas). Government then encouraged each LEP to focus its activity on a limited number of the EU's priorities and Oxfordshire therefore has no activities planned for TOs 5 and 7 (which are “Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management” and “Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures” respectively).

EU regulations also dictate the distribution of funding across the thematic objectives: in particular specifying the proportion that should be spent on low carbon and social inclusion activities.

In Oxfordshire the proposed distribution of funds across the thematic objectives has been specified in the LEP EUSIF Strategy:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Thematic Objective / Priority by fund** | | | | | |
| I  EU Thematic Objectives | | Oxfordshire Priorities submitted in the ESIF Strategy | Fund | Proposed  Allocation | Annual 7 years (mean) |
| **TO1 Innovation** | Collaborative networking between institutions | | ERDF | £1,000,000 | £142,857 |
|  | Commercialisation support | | ERDF | £1,000,000 | £142,857 |
| **TO1/TO3 Financial instrument** | Access to finance fund (*Fund total £3,020,000)* | | ERDF TO1 | £1,150,000.00 | £164,286 |
| ERDF TO3 | £1,150,000.00 | £164,286 |
| ERDF TO4 | £720,000.00 | £102,857 |
| **TO2 ICT** | Roll out of high speed communication | | EAFRD | £1,493,060 | £213,294 |
| **TO3 SME Competitiveness** | Building growth capacity | | ERDF | £1,000,000 | £142,857 |
| Fostering entrepreneurial culture | | ERDF | £1,000,000 | £142,857 |
| **TO4 Low Carbon** | Building low carbon market | | ERDF | £500,000 | £71,429 |
| Non domestic LC technologies | | ERDF | £500,000 | £71,429 |
|  | Support for small scale renewable schemes | | EAFRD | £373,320 | £53,331 |
| **TO6 Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency** | Support for development and promotion of tourism, recreation and leisure | | EAFRD | £231,000 | £33,000 |
| **TO8 Employment / Labour mobility: Access to employment** | Retraining older workers *Supports TO1/3* | | ESF | £610,000 | £87,143 |
| Literacy and numeracy for young people | | ESF | £640,000 | £91,429 |
| Gender in-balance in technology sectors *Supports TO1/3* | | ESF | £610,000 | £87,143 |
|  | Enhancing pathways for long term unemployed | | ESF | £1,200,000 | £171,429 |
| Support for job creation through promotion of tourism, recreation and leisure *Supports TO6* | | EAFRD | £516,000 | £73,714 |
| Support for job creation in small scale renewables projects | | EAFRD | £373,200 | £53,314 |
| **TO9 Social inclusion: active inclusion** | Programme to prevent young people becoming NEET, including family based interventions, and to develop opportunities for existing NEET to access employment | | ESF | £920,000 | £131,429 |
| Community Grants scheme | | ESF | £432,330 | £61,761 |
| Community led local development | | ESF TO9 | £800,000 | £114,286 |
| ERDF TO3 | £242,330 | £34,619 |
| **TO10 Education, skills & lifelong learning** | Development of SME capacity for higher skills placements and collaborative placement projects *Supports TO1/3* | | ESF | £1,250,000 | £178,571 |
| Programme to develop skills and deliver qualifications and apprenticeships at lower levels in employment growth sectors, targeted on un- and under employed and marginalised groups | | ESF | £500,000 | £71,429 |
| Accessible apprenticeships and traineeships in priority sectors *Supports TO1/3* | | ESF | £1,300,000 | £185,714 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

The Strategy for the Oxfordshire LEP was approved in February 2014 and resulted in an allocation for the area of £19.5m. Calls for projects won’t open until March 2015 and it is unlikely that any activity will start until September 2015.