

# Merseyside Network for Europe



## Newsletter

January 2011

### Welcome!

Welcome to the January edition of Merseyside Network for Europe's newsletter, reporting on European issues relating to the Voluntary Sector from the first month of 2011.

### European Transition



The European Transition Project Board met on 5th January. Most of the time was spent discussing a paper on ERDF due to go to the Regional Leaders Board. This was in part a response to the paper sent out by the government a couple of days before Christmas. The preference for the North West is "Option Three" - maximising local involvement. The government's proposals are for some or all of the EPE ERDF Secretariat to become employed by the CLG nationally, but to remain based in Warrington (perhaps at the HCA). The CLG would hold Managing Agent responsibilities, for example ensuring proper delivery of claims to Europe, while the local partners would fill the gap left by the North West Development Agency and would develop strategic partnership working, much as was done in the old Objective One Programme. This will become increasingly important as we move into the next phase of the programme, ensuring the remaining money is allocated strategically and effectively, and that we deliver the outputs, results and impacts. The development of strategic working will become increasingly important as we begin planning the next Programme for the North West for 2014-2020. The wider European Agenda was also briefly discussed. The next meeting will be on 2nd February.

### ERDF Priority 4

#### Action Area 4.1

Social Enterprise NW (supported by MNE and NWN) held a meeting attended by about seventy people in November, and this led to proposals for a NW business support project, which are now being worked up in detail. On 6th January, SENW (supported by MNE) met with the EPE ERDF Secretariat to explain the proposals, and they are now working closely with the Secretariat to fully develop the activities. A procurement process is about to start - contact SENW at [www.senw.org.uk](http://www.senw.org.uk) for further details.



#### Action Area 4.2

Following the short bidding round before Christmas, nine bids were received. One of them, using St Helens LEGI money as match is likely to be approved very soon. The rest of the bids, several of which are from the third sector, will be looked at in more detail from the beginning of February. Meanwhile, the next open bidding round is expected to be announced by the end of January, with an initial meeting for interested organisations on 2nd February. Look on the ERDF website at [www.erdfnw.co.uk](http://www.erdfnw.co.uk) for more details, or contact Paul Avis at MNE.

Supported by:



## North West Regional European Partnership (NWREP)

The NW Regional European Partnership held an additional meeting on 19th January to agree a report to the Regional Leaders Board. By working in Partnership across the region, linking with the Brussels Offices and involving the Committee of the Regions Reps, this group has enhanced the visibility of our Region in Europe, and helped bring in substantial sums of money. If funding is not found to continue NWREP, then the benefits of partnership working will be lost. The next meeting will be on 7th March.

## Technical Assistance

Merseyside Network for Europe and North West Network recently met to consider the future. While European ESF and ERDF Technical Assistance is available for them for the rest of the programme, match funding is very difficult, and the abolition of the Regional ESF Committees, the Regional Government Offices and the North West Development Agency makes it difficult to find who can make decisions in the short term. Both Merseyside Network for Europe and North West Network have confirmed funds until the end of March 2011.

## ERDF PMSC



The Performance Monitoring Subcommittee met on 26th January and endorsed two projects, the 4.2 bid from St Helens Chamber (£380k ERDF matched with LEGI), and a £3.8m ERDF bid to move a football museum to Manchester. The mid term evaluation had said that there did not need to be further tourism projects, but it was agreed there would not be a problem in approving this one. It was agreed that there could be some movement of projects between Priorities, and movement of funds within Priorities, in order for the Programme to be more effective, and deliver more. There was a report on the impact of cuts to match funding (from the NWDA and elsewhere), and an update on outputs and results of the programme. The Venture Capital Funds are now all in place, with an official launch at ACC Liverpool on 11th February. Jessica is not yet up and running.

## ESF and LEIs (Local Employment Initiatives)

As part of the preparations for the next programme, DG Employ (responsible for ESF in the European Commission) has asked for work to be done to identify how ESF has been used to develop Local Employment Initiatives, and what changes should be made to enable this to take place more effectively in the future. The workshop in November brought together the results from 14 countries, and showed the range and effectiveness of local partnership working to create social capital, and to regenerate the worst off areas. It has been fascinating to compare the actions in Merseyside's Objective One, with what is now being achieved across Europe. The final workshop is taking place in February, and MNE is helping with the facilitation, as eighty-five people from across Europe come together to identify what needs to be done in future ESF programmes to develop local employment. If you are interested in further information, please contact Andy Churchill at MNE.

## Steps to Success



Further transnational visits are planned to look at Social Enterprises and develop links as part of the ESF project. There will be a visit in February organised by Centrum Pisop at Poznań in Poland. Then in March there will be a follow up trip to Barcelona to build on the successful visit last September, which saw a dozen people involved with Merseyside Social Enterprises make an initial journey to Spain to develop links between Arts Enterprises.

## Reference Group

MNE's Reference Group will be meeting monthly to provide an opportunity for organisations to discuss European Issues. Please contact Paul at MNE if you want further details about the group or would like to join.

[paul.avis@merseynetwork.com](mailto:paul.avis@merseynetwork.com)

## Good Practice & Partnership Working



On Thursday, 20th January MNE held a seminar to look at how the Voluntary Sector delivers ESF and ERDF, at partnership working and good practice, and to consider what we can do better in the future, with a view towards the next European Programmes which will run from 2014 to 2020.

Attendees were presented with some of the results and examples from other countries, from the research work which is now underway, as well as information from our ERDF mid term review and from the ESF evaluations. This was an opportunity to see what others are doing and to use current experience to influence the next programme. It was also an opportunity to take stock of the impact of the recession, and our new government and to consider how we can deliver effective and efficient regeneration at a local level.

Following the meeting several organisations are investigating the possibility of working together in new partnerships.

For copies of the paperwork distributed at the event, please visit:

[www.vcsmerseyside.eu/x/5928](http://www.vcsmerseyside.eu/x/5928)

## ERDF Tech Group

The ERDF Technical Group met on 25th January. Information about the REECH housing project was circulated to members. The bid was approved by the NWDA Board on 16th December. The offer letter and contractual arrangements are presently being negotiated. Project partners are

keen for the project to start as soon as possible, so it is anticipated that as soon as the contract is signed, work will begin.

The project is a partnership between several housing associations, including LHT, Plus Dane, Riverside, Helena and others and will work towards introducing green technologies into social housing - technologies such as: solid wall insulation, solar water heating, gas savers, air source heat pumps, mechanical heating recovery ventilation, passive vents, led lighting schemes, internal wall insulation and triple glazing.

The group also discussed the approval process for projects currently in the system under Priority 2. Action Area 4.2 was also looked at - there is to be a workshop for applicants who have submitted bids in response to the call at the end of 2010 and a new call for bids is expected to be issued any day now.

The next meeting is arranged for 22nd February.

## North Liverpool CAB European Project



North Liverpool Citizens Advice Bureaux is one of six European organisations taking part in a community education project funded by the European Union's Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP), which had its opening meeting in Galway, Eire on 14th December 2010. The project falls under the LLP's Grundtvig stream and is entitled 'Experiences and Methodologies in the Training of

Trainers to Work with Marginalised Individuals, Groups and Communities' or EMTTT for short.

Partners from Eire, Germany, Czech Republic, Italy and Portugal work with disadvantaged and marginalised communities in a variety of settings including work in areas of economic deprivation with young adults, the unemployed and other economically excluded individuals and work with drug users.

The project is scheduled to last until September 2012 and will compare how each organisation recruits, trains and supports trainers. Staff and learners (adults being trained as tutors) at each organisation will visit colleagues in partner organisations. The project aims to produce a 'best practice manual', which will be relevant to organisations across Europe.

'The staff and volunteers at each partner organisation do much positive and important work locally, which often goes unrecognised. This project will highlight similarities and differences in our working practices, help us to learn new ways of working and share best practice,' said Joe Lavelle, Financial Skills Development Worker at North Liverpool CAB and Coordinator of the project.

In 2011, volunteers and paid staff from North Liverpool CAB will visit Portugal, Italy and Germany and host a visit from the other partners in May or June. The remaining visits, Czech Republic and Eire, and a project closing seminar in Portugal will take place in 2012.

Further information about the project and the partners is available through the project website: [www.emttt.eu](http://www.emttt.eu)

## The Work Programme: Update



The list of the Providers who have made it on the DWP Framework for Employment Related Services (the Work Programme) was released just before Christmas. The Providers will now compete for contracts to deliver the Work Programme.

In the North West the Providers who have made it onto the approved list are:

- A4e
- Atos Origin
- BBWR
- BTCV
- Fourstar
- G4S
- Ingeus Deloitte

- JHP Group
- Maximus
- Newcastle College Group
- Pertemps
- Reed in Partnership
- Seetec
- Serco
- Twin Training

The full list can be accessed at the following link:

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/erss-preferred-suppliers.pdf>

This past week has seen an announcement that Sarina Russo Job Access will not be participating in the competition for Work Programme contracts, despite being accepted onto the Framework for Employment Related Support Services for a number of regions across three UK regions: West Midlands, London and the South East.

The company is still pursuing opportunities under the Work Programme as a subcontractor, a move which they claim more

adequately reflects their existing delivery infrastructure. When the Work Programme was introduced concern was raised by a number of organizations from within the Third Sector, that the model was not accessible for small and specialist providers; it would now appear that some of the Prime Providers also have doubts.

In a similar move, The Association of Learning Providers (ALP), the industry body, has warned that the Work Programme is built on a “high risk financial model” with “unrealistic targets”. ALP has called on the Government to revise these, but in reality there is very little time available with the first contracts to be awarded in Spring 2011.

MNE will keep the Sector updated with any further information as it is released. In the meantime if you'd like more information please contact: Julie Gibson on 0151 237 3972 or email:

[julie.gibson@merseynetwork.com](mailto:julie.gibson@merseynetwork.com)

---

## Coming up...

**ESF Local Employment Initiatives meetings** (1st and 2nd February)... **ERDF 4.2 meetings** (2nd and 3rd February)... **Reference Group meeting** (10th February)... **Social Enterprise Procurement for ERDF 4.1** (imminent)... **Merseyside Phasing-In Sub Committee** (15th February)...

---

## Contact Us

Contact MNE if you want copies, or links to websites for any documents mentioned in this Newsletter, including the North West Operational Programme, Evaluation, Investment Frameworks, and the European Commission's publications, including the Fifth Cohesion Report.

For further information, please contact Paul Avis on 237 3972 or email [paul.avis@merseynetwork.com](mailto:paul.avis@merseynetwork.com)



Post: 151 Dale Street  
Liverpool  
L2 2AH

Telephone: 0151 237 3972

Fax: 0151 237 3973

e-mail: [all@merseynetwork.com](mailto:all@merseynetwork.com)

web: [www.merseynetwork.com](http://www.merseynetwork.com)  
[www.vcsmerseyside.eu](http://www.vcsmerseyside.eu)