



Special EU Programmes Body
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**NORTHERN IRELAND, THE BORDER REGION OF IRELAND AND WESTERN
SCOTLAND
INTERREG VA PROGRAMME
(2014 - 2020)
CCI No: 2014TC16RFCB047**

DRAFT MINUTES MONITORING COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday 29th July 2015, Malone Lodge Hotel, Belfast

1. Welcome and Introduction by Chairperson

The Chair introduced herself as the incoming CEO of the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), chairing today's meeting on behalf of Pat Colgan, the current and outgoing CEO.

The Chair thanked all for attending the inaugural meeting of the INTERREG VA Programme Monitoring Committee 2014 – 2020, and explained the composition of the Monitoring Committee, which represented the three jurisdictions of the Programme; Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and Western Scotland.

The Chair provided some background on the INTERREG Programme and explained the significance of today's meeting as INTERREG funding celebrates its 25th year. Celebratory events have been planned, including an event in Luxembourg in September, which will be attended by the SEUPB's Managing Authority (MA). The SEUPB will also facilitate a high-profile visit from Deputy Director General Nicholas Martin in October 2015.

The Chair conveyed apologies from **Councillor Alex Baird of NILGA and Fermanagh District Council**, and **Nichola Swann of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI)** and acknowledged that some Members around the table are currently temporary nominations from their organisations, awaiting formal ratification.

The Chair facilitated round- table introductions of Members and Advisors and encouraged those Members without previous experience in EU funding or the INTERREG Programme(s) to request explanation or clarification at any time.

Following this introduction, **The Chair** requested that the completed Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest forms, circulated prior to the meeting, be returned to the SEUPB Secretariat, and that Conflicts of Interest be declared verbally in the interim; none were declared.

The Chair also discussed the closure activity of the previous INTERREG IVA Programme, and outlined this new Committee's responsibility in overseeing this closure process.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Members received copies of papers prior to today's meeting, and **the Chair** welcomed any comments.

The DFP representative asked that going forward, the Programme be referred to in papers as the "INTERREG VA Programme". **The Chair** agreed with this point.

The Monitoring Committee **agreed** the agenda.

Action Point 1: Agenda & papers of future meetings to reflect the "INTERREG VA Programme"

3. Overview of the Roles and Responsibilities of the Monitoring Committee

The Chair emphasised the importance of the Monitoring Committee's role in evaluating the effectiveness and quality of the Programme and directed them towards the requirement to adhere to Rules of Procedure which had been circulated prior to today's meeting. **The MA Director** provided an overview of the Rules of Procedure:

- The composition of Programme Monitoring Committee has been established with the Code of Conduct for Partnership which governs all EU Programmes, and consists of;
 - Member States

- Social Partners
 - Economic Partners
 - Trade Unions
 - The Voluntary sector
 - Rural, farming and agriculture sector
 - Regional interests (locally elected Councillors)
 - Equality and Sustainable Development sectors (two cross-cutting Programme Themes)
- The Monitoring Committee aim to undertake decision-making via consensus, under the guidance and direction of **the Chair**. Where a consensus cannot be reached it will be referred to Member States for consideration and opinion before being returned to the Monitoring Committee.
 - **The MA Director** stated that it was the intention of SEUPB to provide training for all Committee members in autumn 2015.
 - The Monitoring Committee will examine any issues which affect the implementation or performance of the INTERREG VA Programme, with particular focus on ensuring achievement of Programme outputs and impacts as stated in the Cooperation Programme.
 - A key role of the Monitoring Committee involves monitoring the strict annual profiles of expenditure (referred to in the INTERREG VA Programme as N+3 targets). The consequences of failure to meet targets was outlined.
 - The Committee will be asked to approve the Programme Evaluation Plan, which will be utilised in monitoring Programme efficiency in respect of compliance to the CP and impact from the Programme.
 - The Committee will be asked to approve the Communications Strategy for use in monitoring awareness of the Programme and its impacts.
 - While the paper states the Monitoring Committee has a role in managing major projects over the value of €50m, **the MA Director** stated his belief that projects of this nature are not anticipated within this Programme.

- The Committee has a collective role in examining actions to promote equality – input from the present Equality bodies was welcomed. The efforts taken by the nominating bodies in ensuring an equal gender balance within the composition of the Committee was also welcomed.
- The Committee has a collective role in examining actions to promote and maintain sustainable development, meaning that input from Members representing the Environmental organisations would be important.
- The Managing Authority of the SEUPB will present an annual report on Programme Implementation for Committee approval prior to its submission to the EU Commission.
- The Committee will be asked to approve amendments to the Cooperation Programme (CP). A small number of amendments are required to the CP and will be discussed in a later agenda item.
- **The MA Director** reiterated the Chair's earlier request regarding completion and submission of the Register of Interest and Code of Conduct forms.

The Chair thanked **the MA Director**, and invited comments from the Committee.

The EU Commission representative made two comments;

- Section 9.2 of the Overview document refers to the process of Monitoring Committee agreement when a consensus determination cannot be reached. She asked that **the MA Director's** earlier clarification be included in the Rules of Procedure i.e. referral to the Member State for consideration and opinion before being returned to the Monitoring Committee.
- With regards to conducting Monitoring Committee business via written procedure, she requested that the document be amended to specify when written procedure can or will be used. The document also should state that Written Procedure must not be utilised in discussing significant implementation issues – these require a physical meeting and discussion.

The Chair thanked **the EU Commission representative** for her comments.

The Chair elaborated on upcoming training opportunities for Members, including an INTERACT session in Brussels on 4th September 2015 with four available spaces. She encouraged Members to partake of as much training as possible, and submit their expression of interest to the Secretariat. When all interest has been registered, the MA will make a decision on the most appropriate attendees, ensuring appropriate jurisdictional, sectoral and gender representation.

The DFP representative made a point on maintaining the discipline of submitting Committee papers ten days before a meeting, which was noted by **the Chair**.

Action Point 2: The Monitoring Committee Rules of Procedure should be amended to reflect the full process utilised when the Monitoring Committee is unable to reach agreement by consensus.

Action Point 3: The Monitoring Committee Rules of Procedure should be amended to reflect when Written Procedure may or may not be used to conduct Monitoring Committee business.

The Monitoring Committee;

- **Agreed** the Rules of Procedure for the Monitoring Committee
- **Agreed** to return signed Register of Interest forms to the Managing Authority
- **Agreed** to return signed Code of Conduct forms to the Managing Authority

4. Steering Committee Membership, nomination of representatives

The Chair provided a high level overview of the Steering Committee Rules of Procedure, consisting of the following main points;

- The Monitoring Committee is responsible for appointing a Steering Committee, which will be representative of the three jurisdictions and the PMC membership.
- The secretariat for the Steering Committee will be the Joint Secretariat (JS) of the SEUPB and will be chaired by **the JS Director**.
- The Steering Committee is responsible for making decisions on funding applications and will consider JS assessment recommendations and Accountable Department recommendations with regards to applications.
- The nomination forms for the Steering Committee have been placed on Members tables and 15 minutes has been set aside before the lunch break for colleagues

from their respective sectors to liaise and appoint the Steering Committee member for that sector.

The Environmental Pillar representative queried the workload involved in Steering Committee membership.

The Chair advised that it was anticipated there would be five Steering Committee meetings per year, plus preparatory days, which would undoubtedly represent a significant commitment. This factor should be considered when discussing nominations with sectoral colleagues.

The MA Director provided a further overview of the Steering Committee Rules of Procedure which consisted of the following points;

- The core role of the Committee is to approve calls for applications before they are made public, and to assess incoming applications before making a decision.
- The Steering Committee has the final say in the decision to fund projects. The assessment and review processes will be discussed later in the agenda
- As the body deciding upon the allocation of funding, the role involves significant paper work, time commitments and a degree of public scrutiny however, it can also be highly rewarding.
- As not all bodies are represented at today's meeting, the SEUPB may undertake a level of follow-up to ensure equitable representation of Membership in terms of sector, jurisdiction and gender.

The Environmental Pillar representative queried whether Alternates to the Steering Committee are also required. **The Chair** agreed Alternates from the same organisation should also be nominated.

The Ulster Farmers Union representative stressed the importance of a regional cohesion within the Steering Committee also, to ensure representation across the eligible area.

The MA Director informed members there will also be a request for nominations to the Review Panel, which will be discussed later in the agenda.

The Scottish Government representative asked whether video conferencing would be considered for Steering Committee meetings to facilitate colleagues unable to travel.

The Chair provided assurance that video conferencing will be considered at every opportunity.

The Monitoring Committee;

- **Agreed** the Rules of Procedure for the Steering Committee.
- **Agreed** the proposed Membership of the Steering Committee.

5. Overview presentation of the INTERREG VA 2014 – 2020 Cooperation Programme

The Managing Authority (MA) Manager provided an overview presentation on the structure and content of the INTERREG VA Programme. He thanked Member States and Accountable Departments for their assistance in defining the Programme, and **the EU Commission Desk Officer** for her advice and guidance throughout the consultation process.

The presentation provided information to Members on the following key points;

- This Programme differs from previous INTERREG Programmes in its results-orientated focus, concentrating on clear, measurable outputs, milestones and targets. Failure to achieve these targets may result in financial penalties.
- Of the 11 possible Themes cited in the Regulations, 4 Themes for investment were selected; Research & Innovation, the Environment, Sustainable Transport and Health.
- The Programme's Specific Objectives, the associated Result and Output monitoring indicators, the ongoing monitoring process and the two major review points of the Programme (in 2018 and 2020) were clearly outlined.
- Details of the annual monitoring process, including the Annual Implementation Report (AIR) requirements, the Evaluation Plan and Performance Framework for the Programme was provided.
- Simplification measures to reduce the administrative burden on Lead Partners, Partners, beneficiaries and the Managing Authority will include:
 - E-cohesion via the EU Commission's SFC2014 database and DFP's DB2014 database.

- A refined application process, reducing the time between the application stage and issuing a Letter of Offer via a new Two- Stage process.
 - Development of unit costs, which are established at the beginning of a call and paid upon achievement of outputs, reducing the need for repeated verification.
 - Flat rate overheads option of up to and including 15% which will not require verification.
 - Lump-sum payments for unique events.
- These options are being examined in preparation for the calls for each theme, and information will be provided to applicants in advance.
 - Details of the Programme's eligible area, advising that up to 20% of the Programme budget can be spent outside the eligible area, on the basis that this expenditure benefits the eligible area. The Programme budget is broken down as follows:
 - Research and Innovation €60.9 million
 - Environment €72 million
 - Sustainable Transport €40 million
 - Health €53 million
 - Technical Assistance of up 6% of the Programme budget

The Chair thanked **the MA Manager** for his presentation, and opened the floor to comments.

The Ulster Farmers Union representative asked when the Citizens Summary had been made available and the reach of its distribution.

The Communications Manager advised that the document has been promoted on the SEUPB website and over social media over the previous months, and requested that Members assist in its wider distribution.

The Director, MA, stated that the publication would also be more widely promoted by SEUPB prior to the first call for applications.

The Environmental Pillar representative queried the level of research which had contributed to the targets set within the CP.

The MA Director advised of the in-depth discussions with Policy Departments which had taken place in establishing targets. He referred Members to Annex 5 of the Cooperation Programme as it examines financial allocation against output targets, and provided assurance that considerable effort, in conjunction with EU Commission Guidance, had been made to achieve a realistic and yet challenging balance in the targets set.

The Environmental Pillar representative also queried standardisation of the Unit Costs against similar activities in other EU Programmes such as Horizon 2020.

The MA Manager confirmed MA will work, on a call by call basis, to arrive at clear and accurate unit costs, and will draw from the experience gained from engaging with similar Programmes and operations.

The Scotland Europa representative welcomed the commitment in the use of simplified cost options. She advised of her experience in piloting the use of unit costs through mainstream funds in Scotland and recognised there had been significant benefits. However, she provided the following points of advice;

- Unit costs are not effective in all cases, flexibility is essential.
- Significant resources should be committed to the development of unit cost models in the initial stages, as the process can be underestimated and can prove highly labour intensive.
- Precise clarification should be provided on the evidence required to prove targets have been met.

The Scotland Europa representative also queried what measures were being put in place to ensure all technical requirements are addressed to facilitate the various sectoral and regional inputs in a transparent manner.

The MA Director concurred with the representative's observations on the benefits of Unit Cost, which SEUPB had experienced when piloting a Unit Cost approach in two projects introduced towards the end of the INTERREG IVA Programme.

He also agreed that the design of this process had been difficult, and considerable resources will be allocated to undertaking the calculation on a call- by call basis, utilising historical data where possible and allowing for flexibility in the application of Unit Cost where most appropriate. He advised it was SEUPB's belief that the benefits of Unite Cost justify the initial effort, as they orientate the grant applicant towards a focus on outputs over process.

The IBEC representative expressed his concern in the investment in Health and Life Sciences, which he believed to be unreflective of SMEs and their current activity in the eligible region. He also felt this investment favours larger organisations instead of motivating smaller organisations in the early stages.

The MA Manager assured the Member that many sectors had been considered for investment, and Health and Life Sciences offered the greatest potential for growth, with appropriate research facilities and collaborative partners throughout the eligible region to undertake the desired activity. He recognised the risk involved and expressed his confidence in the quality of the research and the investment.

The IBEC representative also questioned the confinement of investment to the Border Region of Ireland, excluding work in Health and Life Sciences in other parts of the country. He queried where institutions such as NUI Galway may still contribute, given the 20% investment allowance outside the eligible area.

The MA Manager clarified that Irish institutions might join the Programme and avail of the 20% of funding by joining with a collaborative partnership. However, he stressed that this could only occur where the SEUPB is unable to identify the same capability within the eligible region, and there must be clear evidence of benefit to the eligible region.

The Environmental Pillar representative concurred with **the IBEC representative** in the low density of SMEs engaged in Health and Life Sciences in the Border Region. He believes the requirement for cross-border partnerships represents a challenge to publicise the Programme and spend the funding.

The EU Commission representative commented that the changes to a results-focus in ERDF investment means that the SEUPB must be active in engaging SMEs in the

Programme, and supporting those unfamiliar with EU funding. She advised that to achieve targets, the SEUPB must ensure research outputs are being used to achieve sustainable results on the ground once funding ends, and identify how universities and research facilities intend to utilise their research once outputs have been achieved.

The Chair thanked all representatives for their comments, stating that the Call for Applications will be examined later in the agenda.

The Monitoring Committee;

- **Noted** the structure and content of the Programme.

6. Modifications to the INTERREG VA 2014 – 2020 Programme

The Chair referenced the Cooperation Programme (CP) and Modifications paper which was provided to Members in advance of the meeting.

The MA Director provided an overview on the background to the approval of the Programme, advising that it had been designed following extensive public consultation and approval by Government Departments across the three jurisdictions.

EU Commission approval was received on 13 February 2015 with the understanding that result indicators for the programme had yet to be established. These indicators and their baselines have subsequently been agreed and are outlined within the Modifications Paper for approval by the Monitoring Committee and formal inclusion in the CP.

Managing Authority are also taking this opportunity to make amendments to output indicator definitions in the Environment and Health themes, and to address any minor typographical errors.

The Scottish Government representative stated the Scottish Government have raised a query on some output indicator due to the use of the term “elderly”. She asked members to note this will be discussed further with Accountable Departments in a meeting scheduled for the following day.

The MA Director confirmed the SEUPB are aware of the meeting and the issue around defining “elderly” within a Health context. He welcomed the opportunity to discuss this with the Department of Health and confirmed this minor definitional change, while

beneficial in improving the Programme's operational efficiency, would not directly affect the scope of the output indicator.

Subject to clarification on the term "elderly", **the Monitoring Committee;**

- **Approved** the modifications to the result indicators, baselines and targets.
- **Approved** the modifications to the output indicators.
- **Approved** the typographical modifications to the CP.

7. Programme Rules

The Chair introduced the draft Programme Rules document which was provided to Members in advance of the meeting and explained that these rules are in draft format until formalised with the relevant authorities. Members were advised that while the Programme Rules are common to both the INTERREG V and PEACE IV Programmes, the Monitoring Committee are only asked to note the Rules in respect of the INTERREG V Programme. The rules have been streamlined in the interest of reducing administrative burden and providing applicants with clear guidance from the outset of the Programme.

The EU Commission representative made two observations on the document;

- She welcomed the common set of rules for both Programmes but reiterated that PEACE Programme rules can only be approved by the PEACE Monitoring Committee in due course.
- She drew attention to page 40, section 4.68, and the statement that the ERDF intervention rate shall not exceed 85% at project level. She felt this paragraph did not reflect the flexibility available to fund projects in excess of the 85% where the SEUPB deemed necessary (in the event of State Aid being a factor), and advised that the overall rate of intervention at an Operation level be reflected at the final Programme level at the end of the Programming period.

The MA Director agreed to amend the Programme Rules to include the option of utilising the higher intervention rate in specific circumstances.

The NWRA representative queried rule 3.7, regarding activity outside the eligible area. He felt the Rules should reflect SEUPB's earlier comments that the 20% ERDF spend

outside the eligible area is conditional to support not being available within the eligible area originally.

The MA Director advised of the intention to spend all, or the majority, of the funds within the eligible area, with the flexibility to reach beyond that area only in certain cases with proven benefit to the eligible area. He agreed this point will be made clear throughout the calls for applications.

The IBEC representative commented on **the NWRA representative's** point, referring to the number of SMEs in Health and Life Sciences in the Republic of Ireland, who could assist and advise SMEs within the Programme area.

The NWRA representative advised the SEUPB to prioritise the organisations' best interests when establishing collaborative partners, rather than the geographical location defined by the Programme.

Action Point 4: Page 40, section 4.6a of the Programme Rules document will be amended to reflect the option/ flexibility to fund identified projects above the maximum 85% ERDF rate, when deemed necessary.

The Chair thanked Members for their comments, and **the Monitoring Committee;**

- **Noted** the Programme rules remain in draft form until formally accepted by the relevant parties.
- **Noted** a common set of rules have been developed and are available to applicants.
- **Noted** the rules are common with the PEACE Programme.

At this natural break point in the meeting, per Agenda Item 4, the Chair facilitated a 15 minute window to allow Members to discuss and agree Steering Committee nominations with their respective sectoral colleagues, prior to lunch.

The Scottish Government representative advised the Chair that Scotland had already submitted a list of Steering Committee nominations to the Managing Authority for consideration.

8. Designated Management and Control Systems

The Chair introduced the short paper, summarising the Designation Procedure, which was provided to Members in advance of the meeting.

The procedure ensures Managing Authority and Certifying Authority have appropriate Management and Control systems in place to ensure all assigned responsibilities can be fulfilled, and contains many similarities to the arrangements of the previous Programme.

The Chair described the role of an internal SEUPB working group, which will ensure a timely submission of the description of systems and controls document to Audit Authority by September 2015. This designation process must be completed before the submission of the first claim for expenditure, which is anticipated to be the second quarter of 2016.

The Monitoring Committee;

- **Noted** the requirements for the formal designation of the Managing Authority and Certifying Authority and related systems and procedures.
- **Noted** the process of designation will be reviewed by the Audit Authority.
- **Noted** the process must be completed before the submission of the first interim claim for expenditure.

9. Evaluation Plan Update

The Chair introduced the summary paper on the INTERREG VA Evaluation plan which was provided to Members in advance of the meeting and advised that in accordance with Article 56 of the Common Provisions Regulation, Managing Authority have devised a high level Evaluation Plan which aims to improve the quality of evaluations undertaken and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Programme.

Managing Authority plan to present the final Evaluation Plan to this Monitoring Committee for approval at the next meeting, in advance of the regulatory deadline of 13th February 2016. It is anticipated the next meeting of the Monitoring Committee will take place in late November 2015.

The Monitoring Committee;

- **Noted** the requirement for an Evaluation plan
- **Noted** the Managing Authority's intention to finalise the current draft plan for presentation to the PMC before the deadline of 13th February 2016.

10. E-Cohesion

The Chair introduced the paper, which was provided to Members in advance of today's meeting, and advised of the requirements of E-Cohesion, which is an electronic exchange of information between relevant bodies and beneficiaries involved in the implementation of INTERREG VA Programme activity.

In order to facilitate this, a new Management Information System has been specified and development work began in June 2015, with DFP acting as Project Managers on behalf of all Managing Authorities in Northern Ireland. The phased delivery of this system proposes to ensure a fully functioning database by the regulatory deadline in December 2015.

The DFP representative the Senior Reporting Officer for the MIS system, advised Members that the contract was awarded in May 2015, and described progress to date, including slippage due to staffing issues within the sub-contracted organisation; as a result, the contractor has brought developmental work in-house, using a trusted database platform. This process is being overseen by a Programme Board.

Implementation of the application stage is anticipated to be completed in August 2015, and an update will be provided at the next meeting of this Monitoring Committee.

The Environmental Pillar representative queried if any contingency plans were in place if the main contractor fails to meet deadlines. **The DFP representative** advised the Member that the existing database platform remains available for use in the event a contingency is required and that manual acceptance of application information may also be an option.

The Monitoring Committee;

- Noted the progress of the implementation of E-Cohesion
- Noted the risk in meeting the regulatory deadline.

11. Communication and Information Strategy approval

The Chair introduced the Communication and Information Strategy, as provided to Members in advance, and invited **the Communications Manager** to provide a presentation. The key points of the presentation included;

- The Communication and Information Strategy represents a common strategy for the delivery and co-ordination of all communication activities for both the INTERREG VA and PEACE IV Programmes, and has been developed following extensive stakeholder consultation and evaluation of previous Programmes. The committee are asked to approve the strategy in respect of the INTERREG VA Programme.
- A Review plan was undertaken which identified “what worked well” and where improvement was needed in the previous INTERREG IV Programme.
- An area of weakness which was identified was the limited media coverage in Western Scotland; the Strategy aims to provide additional support, potentially employing a PR company to address this issue.
- Work is ongoing to redevelop the SEUPB website.
- The main aims of the Communications strategy are raising awareness of the Programmes, influencing attitudes, changing behaviour and creating ambassadors of the Programme.
- The purpose of the Communications Strategy is to communicate the Programme’s core messages, including the new focus on results and outputs.
- An overview was provided on the target audience of the Programme and the communication tools used in promoting the Programme, including media relations, social media, advertising and project specific communications.
- There are a number of core challenges facing Programme promotion, including competing brands.

The Highlands and Islands Enterprise representative welcomed specific provision and budget to address the lack of Programme awareness in Western Scotland and asked for greater detail on the budget allocation. He offered SEUPB support and assistance in developing a Communications plan to address the identified shortfalls in Western Scotland.

The Communications Manager thanked the Member for his comments and welcomed the offer of support.

The Scottish Environment Protection agency representative enquired if Members would receive a standard presentation to utilise in promoting the Programme within their own organisations. **The Chair** agreed to distribute a presentation following today's meeting.

The Scottish Government International Innovation representative also offered assistance in sharing this information using Scotland's EU Funding Portal, which has proved an invaluable promotional tool in their experience.

The EU Commission representative thanked **the Communications Manager** for his presentation and made the following comments;

- References to the PEACE Programme within the Strategy can only be approved by the PEACE IV PMC in due course.
- Expenditure across all EU programmes on Communications activities in the 2007 – 2013 period was an average of 0.03% of the Programme budget, and suggested this figure could be used as a reference in the Strategy.
- Real emphasis on the importance of the impact of Communications activities and achievement of objectives.
- Members are individual Programme ambassadors, and should undertake to promote its values at every opportunity.

The Chair thanked Members for their comments and informed them their contact details will be added to the SEUPB Communications database.

Action Point 5: SEUPB Communications team to provide further detail on the allocation of the Communications budget.

Action Point 6: SEUPB Communications team to circulate a standardised presentation to Committee members, to enable promotion of the programme within their individual organisations

The Monitoring Committee;

- **Noted** the implementation of the Communication and Information Strategy
- **Approved** the Strategy for use within the INTERREG VA Programme
- **Noted** the Communications Plan will be approved on an annual basis going forward

12. Implementation Plans: Selection Criteria

The Chair introduced the paper, which was provided to Members prior to the meeting.

The MA Director provided an overview of the criteria which consisted of the following key points:

- During the Public Consultation exercise, the topic of selection criteria generated the most comment;
- The CP states a maximum 36 week application processing time; details of how this will be achieved remain subject to discussion between **DFP**, **DPER** and **the SEUPB**;
- In the exceptional event of failing to meet the 36 week deadline, SEUPB will inform this Monitoring Committee and publish an explanation on the website;
- The assessment process is the result of intensive discussions with relevant Government Departments across all three jurisdictions;
- A Project Assessment Model flowchart detailing the assessment process was circulated at today's meeting. A final version, including the underpinning narrative, will be circulated to Members as a supplement to their papers;
- The funding application form will be succinct and focus on the five criteria outlined in Stage One of the Two- Stage assessment process
 - Contribution to the defined results & outputs of the Programme
 - Quality of Project Design
 - Quality of cross-border co-operation with demonstrable added value
 - Quality of the project team and implementation arrangements
 - Value for money

The MA Director explained the process between submission of the application and submission to the Steering Committee:

- Only projects with an "acceptable" ranking or above will proceed to Stage two.
- Business plans are required and will be shared with Accountable Departments and Policy Departments, allowing a four week return on comments
- Stage Two of the assessment process must be technically robust, and so may require external technical advice.

- Projects proceeding to Stage Two of the process will be weighted against seven further criterion;
- Assessment reports will be shared with Accountable Departments and Policy Departments six weeks before the Steering Committee meeting; Steering Committee members should receive papers two weeks prior to the meeting in week 36.

The CNCC representative expressed concern regarding the one week timeframe between the Steering Committee meeting and the provision of notification to the applicant and queried the potential for reapplication, asking how many rounds would be facilitated?

The MA Director advised that he recognised the restrictive nature of the deadlines, and detailed the intention to hold developmental workshops prior to submission at Stage One and again at Stage Two, to encourage high quality applications. He stated there will not be any opportunity for further development of applications post- submission.

The MA Director continued, stating that the number of calls is dependent on the number of Themes within the Programme, and the capacity of each call to absorb the available investment.

The Scottish Government International Innovation representative queried the purpose of the proposed period of four weeks preparation which has been allocated between the Business Plan refinement process and the issue of reports to the Steering Committee.

The MA Director stated that reapplications could not occur until further calls within the Theme reopened, and that this was not necessarily guaranteed to happen. In respect of the proposed four week preparation period, he suggested that the Accountable Departments and Policy Departments may use this period to notify the SEUPB of any issues, before they are expressed at the Steering Committee meeting.

The Scotland Europa representative requested that references to Accountable Departments within the Assessment model be modified to read “Accountable Departments and Policy Departments” to reflect the Scottish Government structure and to avoid confusion among Scottish applicants. **The Scottish Government representative** and **the MA Director** confirmed this will be addressed.

The Scottish Natural Heritage representative expressed his concern of the six weeks allocated for applicants to compose a Business Plan and asked that details of future calls be made available as soon as possible.

The MA Director advised Members of a range of pre-application workshops held in spring 2015, which focused on the key outputs of the Programme and the expectations of the application process. These workshops underpin his belief that a large number of potential applicants, in preparation for the release of calls, are already actively engaged in drafting their application and composing their Business Plan prior to Stage Two application. He advised the anticipated timetable of calls will be discussed later in the agenda.

The NWRA representative asked that the model be amended to include the option for review at the end of Stage Two, to mirror the process in place at the end of Stage One. **The Chair** agreed with this request.

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission representative welcomed the 5% “Contribution to Equality” criterion/ qualifying threshold in Stage Two of the assessment process. He offered his assistance in defining that contribution further, and in assisting with further Equality training workshops.

The Chair thanked the Member and welcomed his offer of assistance.

The SCVO representative queried if the assessment process would allow for the creation of a reserve list of projects which met requirements yet had been excluded from the Programme due to the timing of their application submission.

The MA Director advised that a ‘reserve list’ process had been put in place during the current INTERREG IVA Programme however, the success of applicants placed on this list was dependent on the calls and the stage of the Programme. This issue could be discussed at a Steering Committee meeting when considering applications on a call by call basis.

The CNCC representative emphasised the importance of providing guidance to applicants in relation to sustainable development. She also asked the SEUPB to consider issuing papers to the Steering Committee at the same time as the Departments, to expedite the process.

The Scottish Environment Protection agency representative offered her support in sustainable development training and in developing the appropriate criterion. She

asked if consideration would be given to Western Scotland as a location for further applicant training and received assurance from **the MA Director** that training would be evenly distributed throughout the three jurisdictions.

The MA Director took the opportunity to introduce **the Scottish National Contact Point**. The Scottish Contact point is funded by the Programme to encourage and facilitate Scottish applications and training.

The EU Commission representative welcomed the paper and the commitment to a 36 week assessment process, as the lengthy assessment process of the current Programme had been a cause for concern.

The Environmental Pillar representative queried the six week period allocated to assessing the original application form. **The Chair** explained that this time was considered sufficient to provide a robust assessment, as the application form, while relatively short, was composed of complex questions which may require external technical expertise.

The MA Director added that the timescale was based on SEUPB's experience of administering previous Programmes, and was designed to sufficiently accommodate an as yet unknown number of applications.

The DFP representative requested that Member States be provided with advance notification of all future workshops, especially in the context of Northern Ireland's upcoming elections.

The IBEC representative posed two questions:

- Are there plans to facilitate a cross-border collaborative workshop?
- Is there break-down of the pre-application workshop attendees into sectoral backgrounds and their alignment to Programme theme?

The MA Director assured the Member that all SEUPB events encourage cross-border collaboration in line with the nature of the Programme, and the requirement to form partnerships with like-minded organisations.

With regards to analysis of the pre-application workshop attendees, information was not available to suggest alignment to Programme themes however, staff in attendance reported a broad cross representation against all themes.

In respect of the Review Process, **the DTTAS representative** and **the Environmental Pillar representative** sought clarification on how a project with a successful Stage One

review would have sufficient time to produce a Business plan, given the length of the review process.

The MA Director assured the representative that any project applicant who was successful in the review process in Stage One would not be disadvantaged by the time taken to undertake the review but accepted that this may present challenges which SEUPB will manage.

The Monitoring Committee;

- **Approved** the selection criteria to be utilised during project assessment

Action Point 7: Completed Project Assessment model, including narrative on the agreed process, to be circulated to Members.

Action Point 8: Where applicable, all references to Accountable Departments, where applicable, should include reference to Scottish Policy Departments.

Action Point 9: Reference to review at the end of Stage Two should be included in the Project Assessment model/ flowchart.

Action Point 10: Member States to be provided with advance notification of all future pre-application workshops

12. Implementation Plans: Review of Unsuccessful Applications

The Chair introduced the Review Procedure paper, which was circulated to Members in advance of the meeting.

The Scottish Government representative queried why the composition of the Review Panel only included two PMC members instead of three, which would ensure representation across all three jurisdictions.

The Chair agreed the change and advised that the composition of the Review Panel would therefore consist of *three* PMC members (who are not Steering Committee members), one independent member (non-remunerated) and herself as Chair.

The MA Director provided an overview of the Review Procedure which consisted of the following key points:

- Detailing the timings; Stage One review will be an entirely written process where applicants submit their review on two grounds:
 1. The outcome was a decision that no reasonable person would have made on the basis of the information provided to the Steering Committee.
 2. That there was a failure in adherence to procedures or systems that materially affected or could have been materially affected the decision.
- At the Stage Two there is an opportunity for applicants to make an oral presentation, and for JS to give an oral account of the basis for their decision

The Chair stressed that Stage one and two reviews would only be considered under the two grounds listed.

The Chair asked Members to provide Review Panel nominations to the Secretariat by the end of today's meeting or shortly afterwards, via e-mail.

The NWRA representative queried whether nominations should come from individuals or their organisations.

The MA Director stressed the independence of the review panel, and the requirement that, where possible, organisations who are represented on the Steering Committee should not be represented on the Review Panel, in the interest of public confidence and transparency.

The Monitoring Committee;

Approved the review procedure to be utilised in the event that an applicant appeals a Steering Committee decision.

Action Point 11

Composition to be amended to allow for three Monitoring Committee Members on the Review Panel, ensuring cross-jurisdictional representation.

12. Implementation Plans – Timetable for Calls

The Chair introduced the paper, which is an indicative timetable for calls for applications to the INTERREG VA Programme, and invited **the JS Director** to provide a presentation.

The JS Director's presentation consisted of the following key points;

- The Joint Secretariat will provide training for Steering Committee members prior to the first meeting
- Factors affecting the timetable for calls include:
 - The potential volume of applications.
 - Relations with the client base in terms of potential applicants.
 - The nature of the applications coming forward.
 - Stakeholder activities and their knowledge.
 - The lead-in time for projects of a capital nature, which may not incur expenditure until later in the Programme cycle
 - Expenditure targets and their time constraints
 - Rolling out the Programme in conjunction with the PEACE IV Programme
- The timetable presented details of the initial three elements and may change, particularly the Environment Theme and the Sectoral workshops, subject to ongoing discussions with Government Departments and stakeholders.
- Research and Innovation (SMEs) (€15.9 million ERDF)
Due to the solid level of engagement with this sector previously, the SEUPB are using this Specific Objective as a pilot for later calls, and ensuring activity in the SME sector early in the Programming period, given the current economic environment.
- Environment - Water Quality & Transitional Waters (€30 million ERDF)
This objective deals with water quality infrastructure, is therefore capital in nature and represents significant investment with a lengthy lead-in time.
- Multi modal Transport Hub (€40 million ERDF)
This objective represents a large capital investment, which the SEUPB are keen to commence early.
- Health (€53m ERDF)
JS are meeting with Departments the day following this meeting and **the JS Director** welcomed progress made to date. The SEUPB are working with Policy Departments to divide the broad Health area into specific elements for Steering

Committee agreement. Therefore, the Health theme will likely consist of a number of smaller calls.

- Environment

Policy Departments have asked that this theme be condensed and offered to the public in a holistic package in the autumn of 2015. Work to develop sectoral workshops on a three- jurisdictional basis is underway.

- Sustainable Transport (€40m)

This theme is being delivered in two elements; greenways and off-road cycle networks, and the development and promotion of electric vehicle infrastructure. Both are new areas to the Programme and JS are working with stakeholders to build capacity.

- Research and Innovation – Health and Life Sciences

The SEUPB aim to have increased awareness of activity in the SME sector by the release of this call; it represents a new specific area within third level education, and JS are working to establish unit costs in preparation for this call.

- **The JS Director** acknowledged deadlines are challenging, particularly considering Stage Two applications could be returning as new Stage One projects are entering the process, and assured Members of the efforts taken in the design process

The Chair informed Members the timetabling issues being discussed normally fall under the remit of the Steering Committee, and have been brought to the Monitoring Committee on this occasion, in the absence of an established Steering Committee

The JS Director also advised Members that the closing date for the Transitional Water Quality call is being considered for an extension to 30th October 2015. Discussions with Accountable Departments and Policy Departments had raised concerns that the original deadline of 30th September 2015 may not have allowed for the timely completion of baseline information.

The Scottish Government International Innovation representative asked if one sectoral workshop per call would be scheduled, and if the workshops would be recorded and uploaded to the SEUPB website?

The JS Director advised of the difficulties in holding too many large scale events when aiming to forge networks. She agreed JS are committed to the consistent, even

distribution of information across the three jurisdictions and are working with the Communications team in examining methods of recording or streaming events on the website.

The Chair stated that offers of assistance given at today's meeting would be revisited with regards to the sectoral workshops.

The Scottish Natural Heritage representative expressed concern over the timings of calls opening around Christmas 2015, and the time restrictions this may cause applicants.

In response, **the JS Director** discussed the difficulty in designing a timetable around public holidays in the three jurisdictions. She assured Members that applicant guides, assessment information and Business Plan development guidance will be made widely available to potential applicants well in advance of the date the call is released, giving applicants the opportunity to engage with JS and develop their preparatory work before the six week window for submission of the application opens.

The Scottish Environment Protection agency representative asked firstly if the sectoral workshops would facilitate a one-to-one interactive element. Secondly, she explained how the geographical nature of the Water Quality theme restricts funding to Northern Ireland and Ireland, and asked if there is scope in the call to encourage potential Scottish partners in the interests of sharing best practice, expertise and potential demonstration sites.

The JS Director confirmed that JS staff, Accountable Departments and Policy Departments would be present at the workshops to accommodate interaction with applicants and Q&A sessions.

In respect of the second query **the JS Director** acknowledged the difficulty in engaging Scotland under the Water/Sewage theme but referred to the positive outcomes of the IBIS project under a similar partnership, and the ample opportunity for similar endeavours.

The EU Commission representative encouraged SEUPB to maintain consideration of which actions would have the greatest impact on the quality of transitional waters in the Programme area. She indicated that Scottish partners could participate in transitional

water projects however, investment in an infrastructure in Scotland would not represent improvement in water quality within cross-border transitional waters.

The Monitoring Committee;

- **Noted** the timetable for calls for applications.

12. Implementation Plans – First three calls for applications

The Chair introduced the paper, detailing the first three calls for the INTERREG VA Programme, which was provided to Members in advance of the meeting. Members were asked to note that presentational changes may occur when the document is uploaded to the website, however the information will remain the same.

The NWRA representative made a number of observations:

- The member advised the Committee he had received a call from a representative of the Local Enterprise Offices (LEO) in the Border Region, who were concerned over the distribution of funding under the five proposed Strands in the first call (Research and Innovation -SMEs). The LEO felt the Theme allocation was unbalanced and should be inverted, focusing instead on a greater number of smaller companies, to more accurately reflect the SME sectoral composition of the region. They suggested redistribution of 50% of Strand 5 amongst Strands 1 to 3.
- He expressed concern regarding the onus on the Lead Partner to provide State Aid verification. He felt this was unrealistic in the timescale, given the percentage over the de minimus threshold would require formal notification.
- He queried the additionality of this scale of investment over and above the National Programme to support Research and Innovation.
- He advised the SEUPB to align the Sustainable Transport theme (Call 2) to similar work supported by the Regional Operation Programme in Ireland, mainly operating in Sligo, Letterkenny and Dundalk.

The Intertrade Ireland representative also expressed a number of concerns;

- He felt funding to Strand 5 is aimed at larger companies with the capacity to provide their own investment.
- In respect of Unit Cost calculations, he also commented upon the limited funding allocation to the first three strands.
- He perceived an imbalance between the sectoral focus being promoted and the sectoral composition of the companies in the target region.

The Highlands and Islands Enterprise representative stated that Scottish colleagues had similar concerns.

The JS Director firstly provided answers to Members queries, working on the assumption of Committee approval of the order of calls and the call timetable as previously discussed:

- The call is open to all SMEs working in manufacturing and tradable services, and while linkage to broader R&I themes and University research is desired, it is neither mandatory nor exclusive.
- Within this call, the SEUPB are actively seeking strategic partnerships to come forward who can deliver at least 50% of the results being sought within the Theme, with demonstrable results and economic impact.
- A Unit Cost has been presented in the draft call, as is required by the regulations this is based on historical data from similar activities from current and previous Programmes, including verified expenditure which has been reviewed by the Audit Authority. The SEUPB is examining ways of implementing a unit cost model but welcome comments based on experience and practicalities of working with Unit Costs, to ensure maximum benefit in the thematic area.

The JS Director informed Members that there is an option for applicants to propose their own Unit Costs with a justification, which must then be assured by Audit Bodies. The draft call does not currently make allowance for this option however, the SEUPB can make the necessary amendments.

- In discussing the query on State Aid, **the JS Director** explained, that as SEUPB are not directly funding beneficiaries, it falls upon Lead Partners and Partners to administer State Aid, and the SEUPB will ensure the proposals are applicable via:
 - (a) Utilising de minimus levels previously identified as being appropriate;

(b) Utilising a general block exemption regulation;

- Applicants should advise the SEUPB which option they wish to avail of, and all necessary notifications will be provided to the Commission. This approach allows for flexibility during the assessment process and **the JS Director** acknowledged the complexities.

The Chair suggested extending the opening of the R&I SME call from 5th August 2015 to 5th September 2015, to allow time to address those concerns highlighted by Members.

The Intertrade Ireland representative expressed concern over the overheads flat rate of 25% being exceeded in early strands and undervalued in later strands, representing a cash flow issue.

The Chair agreed to examine the Member's comment further.

The NWRA representative requested clarification on the sentence "applicants who cannot deliver more than 50% of the output indicator targets need not apply" within the Call documentation

The JS Director explained the need for a large, holistic project in the early stages of the Programming period which can deliver across three jurisdictions; she believes a reduction in the 50% threshold would not achieve the desired impact.

The NWRA representative requested an amendment to this wording, and expressed his view that this requirement excludes contribution by a selection of smaller bodies.

The MA Director emphasised the need to agree the concept of one (or a small number of) large strategic partners with the reach to achieve economic impact across three jurisdictions. SEUPB feel such impact cannot be achieved by a number of small localised projects but by projects of a certain scale. The wording has been devised to guide applicants towards a larger project approach however, it is open to amendment.

The IBEC representative discussed return on investment for SMEs and welcomed the delay in releasing the first call, to allow greater consultation with IBEC colleagues.

The DJEI representative expressed his concern that the substantial investment in Strand 4 would be more advantageous if redistributed across Strands one and two.

The EU Commission representative informed the Committee that the EU regulation relating to State Aid was amended in 2014 to include an Article concerning SMEs in cross-border cooperations. This Article established a €2 million threshold before notifying the EU Commission of use of the general block exemption rule, opening opportunities for SMEs to participate in cross-border cooperation. To this end, she suggested the inclusion of this option in the Calls where the de-minimus option has been mentioned.

The IBEC representative advised the SEUPB to issue guidelines on the administration of State Aid for applicants, prior to the opening of the Calls.

The Chair thanked Members for their feedback, which will be taken into consideration.

The JS Director continued with her presentation, reminding Members of the proposal to extend the Transitional Water Quality call date until end of September 2015, if Members approve the timetable to allow progress on the large capital elements of the Programme.

The DTTAS representative sought clarification on the opening date for the first call following today's discussion. The Chair confirmed she had suggested delaying the first call (R&I, SMEs) by one month, all other calls remain the same with the exception of a one month extension to the Transitional Water Quality call, to 30th October 2015.

The Monitoring Committee;

- **Approved** the first three calls for applications in lieu of a Steering Committee having been established.

Action Point 12

Wording to be amended to make it explicitly clear that successful applicants must be able to deliver 50% of outputs.

13. A.O.B

The IBEC representative provided some suggestions on innovative methods of holding a Steering Committee, including allowing the applicant to personally present to the Panel in the first instance.

The JS Director explained this option had been considered and rejected in the interests of objectivity and the effect on timing.

The Intertrade Ireland representative made a suggestion based on applications to the Competitive Start fund in Ireland, whereby projects include a six- minute video in their application, allowing for personal representation without the strain on resources.

The Chair agreed to examine this method with JS further.

There being no other business, **the Chair** concluded the meeting and agreed to circulate the following:

- An updated Assessment model flowchart, once finalised.
- The names of those Members attending INTERACT training in Brussels in September 2015.
- Names of the appointed Steering Committee Members.
- Names of the appointed Review Panel Members.
- The Communications presentation for the promotion of the Programme.

The Chair thanked delegates for attending and providing the SEUPB with their experience and comments. The SEUPB will reflect on views expressed at today's meeting and open the initial Calls for applications as agreed.

The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations representative queried the date of the next Monitoring Committee. **The Chair** replied that the next meeting is anticipated in late November 2015, and that Members will receive advance notice.

ANNEX I

**ACTION POINTS/ISSUES OF CLARIFICATION
ARISING FROM MONITORING COMMITTEE**

Wednesday 29th July 2015, Malone Lodge Hotel, Belfast

ACTION POINTS

ACTION	TIMING	RESPONSIBILITY
<p><u>Action Point 1a</u> DFP Comments: Agendas of current and future meetings to reflect the wording "INTERREG <u>VA</u> Programme"</p>	As soon as possible/ going forward	Managing Authority
<p><u>Action Point 2</u> IMC/01/01 - Rules of Procedure for IVA Programme Monitoring Committee. EU Desk Officer comments: Section 9.2 of document – the reference to agreement by consensus; when agreement via consensus can not be made by the Monitoring Committee, the issue is referred to Member States. The stage following this, where the views of the Member States are returned to the Monitoring Committee for review, is omitted from the document. The document should be amended to reflect this.</p>	As soon as possible	Managing Authority
<p><u>Action Point 3</u> IMC/01/01 - Rules of Procedure for IVA Programme Monitoring Committee. EU Desk Officer comments: Section 9 again; Written procedure. The document should include reference to when decision via written procedure can be implemented. It should be noted in the document that written procedure must not be used in managing substantial implementation issues; it is important that these are discussed in physical meetings.</p>	As soon as possible	Managing Authority

ACTION	TIMING	RESPONSIBILITY
<p><u>Action Point 4</u> IMC/01/04 - Programme Rules.</p> <p>EU Desk Officer comments: Page 40, section 4.6a. The option/ flexibility to fund identified projects above the maximum 85% ERDF rate – when deemed necessary- should be noted in the Programme Rules document.</p>	<p>As soon as possible</p> <p>Complete- JT, w/c 03 August 2015</p>	<p>Managing Authority</p>
<p><u>Action Point 5</u> IMC/01/08 - Communications & Information Strategy Approval.</p> <p>Highlands & Islands representative comments: Communications team to provide further detail on the allocation of the Communications resources to cover Western Scotland.</p>	<p>As soon as possible</p>	<p>Communications Team</p>
<p><u>Action Point 6</u> IMC/01/08 - Communications and Information Strategy Approval.</p> <p>SEPA representative comments: Circulate an “off-the-shelf” presentation on the Programme to Members, allowing them to promote the Programme to their own organisations.</p>	<p>As soon as possible</p>	<p>Communications Team</p>
<p><u>Action Point 7</u> IMC/01/09 - Implementation Plans: Selection Criteria.</p> <p>Completed Project Assessment model, including narrative on the agreed process, to be circulated to Members.</p>	<p>As soon as possible</p>	<p>Managing Authority</p>
<p><u>Action Point 8</u> IMC/01/09 - Implementation Plans: Selection Criteria.</p> <p>Scotland Europa representative comments: In Stage Two, references to “Scottish Government Policy Departments” should be included wherever there is reference to “Accountable Departments”, to avoid confusion among Scottish applicants.</p>	<p>As soon as possible</p>	<p>Managing Authority</p>

ACTION	TIMING	RESPONSIBILITY
<p><u>Action Point 9</u> IMC/01/09 - Implementation Plans: Selection Criteria.</p> <p>NWRA Representative comments. Reference is made to review at the end of Stage One (page 2 of paper) but no reference is made to review at the end of Stage Two (page 4 of the paper). This should be inserted to make applicants aware of the option.</p>	<p>As soon as possible</p>	<p>Managing Authority</p>
<p><u>Action Point 10</u> Implementation Plans: Selection Criteria</p> <p>Member States be provided with advance notification of all future pre-application workshops</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Managing Authority</p>
<p><u>Action Point 11</u> IMC/01/01/10 - Implementation Plans: Review of unsuccessful applications.</p> <p>Scottish Government representative's comments: Amend review panel document to read "Three" nominations to the Review Panel, to cover all three jurisdictions.</p>	<p>As soon as possible</p>	<p>Managing Authority</p>
<p><u>Action Point 12</u> IMC/01/12 - Implementation plans: First three calls for applications.</p> <p>NWRA representative comments: Regarding applicants who cannot deliver more than 50% of the output targets; the wording is to be amended to make it explicitly clear that successful projects must be able to deliver 50% of the target.</p> <p>H&I Enterprise Representative comment: Action point 11 should include reference to amendment of the call detail to allow the consideration of alternative cost models</p>	<p>As soon as possible</p>	<p>Managing Authority</p>

ANNEX II

Attendance – INTERREG IVA Programme Monitoring Committee – 29th July 2015, Malone Lodge Hotel, Belfast

Chair

Gina McIntyre (SEUPB)

Members

Wesley Aston	Ulster Farmers Union
Anne Buchanan	Scottish Government International Innovation
Avril Hall Callaghan	Irish Congress of Trade Unions (NI)
Prof Sue Christie	Council for Nature Conservation & the Countryside
Robin Clarke	Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Martin Cronin	Intertrade Ireland
Sean Cronin	Environmental Pillar
Michael D’Arcy	IBEC
Kevin DeBarra	Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission
Frank Duffy	Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP)
Jenny Faichney	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Dr Maura Farrell	Irish Rural Link
Barbara Love	Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations
Kieran Moylan	Northern Western Regional Assembly (NWRA)
Jennifer McCarthy Flynn	The Wheel
Dominic McCullough	Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP)
Geraldine McGahey	The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
Cllr Dermott Nicholl	NILGA/ Sinn Fein
Siobhan O’Higgins	Department of Public Expenditure & Reform (DPER)
Cllr Sean Smith	Northern Western Regional Assembly (NWRA)
Linda Stewart	Scotland Europa
Andrea Thornbury	NICVA
Jason Watts	Scottish Natural Heritage
Celeste Wilson	Scottish Government

Advisors

Emer Connolly	Dept. of Environment, Community & Local Government (DECLG)
John Farrell	Dept of Health, Social Services & Public Safety (DHSSPS)
Brendan Forde	Department of the Environment (DoE)
Edel Hendry	NISRA
Shaun Henry	MA, SEUPB
Maria Jose Doval Tedin	EU Commission
Louise Kenny	Department of Health
Alison Moore	North South Ministerial Council (NSMC)
Marian Mulholland	SEUPB
John McCandless	Communications, SEUPB
Lorraine McCourt	Joint Secretariat, SEUPB
Derek O'Neill	Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport (DTTAS)
Mark Stranaghan	Department of Regional Development (DRD)
Jim Sutherland	Department of Regional Development (DRD)
John Thompson	MA, SEUPB
Gerry Wrynn	Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation (DJEI)

Observers

Ken Bishop	NILGA
Gerry Bradley	Department of Finance & Personnel (DFP)
Caroline Coleman	Scottish Contact Point
Ben Drakeford	Plymouth University/ Atlantic Action Plan UK
Dave Loyal	Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment (DETI)
Alberta Pauley	Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment (DETI)
Ann Marie O'Brien	Mairead McGuinness, Ireland MEP

Secretariat (SEUPB)

Ian Boden	Managing Authority
Tara McCormick	Managing Authority (minutes)

Apologies

Cllr Alex Baird
Nichola Swann

NILGA/ UUP
Confederation of British Industry (CB)

ANNEX III

Glossary of acronyms used in the minutes:

CNCC	Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DECLG	Department of Environment, Community and Local Government
DETI (NI)	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment
DFP	Department of Finance and Personnel (Northern Ireland)
DHSSPS	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
DJEI	Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation
DOE (NI)	Department of the Environment
DoH	Department of Health
DPER	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
DRD	Department of Regional Development
ICTU	Irish Congress of Trade Unions
NICVA	Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action

NILGA	Northern Ireland Local Government Association
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
NSMC	North South Ministerial Council
NWRA	Northern Western Regional Assembly
SCVO	Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations
SEUPB	Special European Union Programmes Body
JS	Joint Secretariat
MA	Managing Authority