

**South West Rural Development Programme Implementation Group:**  
**Terms of reference** – *version 4 reviewed and agreed 24 July 2008*

**Purpose**

The purpose of the Implementation Group is to provide collective oversight of the implementation and delivery of the Regional Development Programme for England within the South West region. The Group will be responsible for:

1. Ensuring the Regional Implementation Plan (RIP) guides delivery of the Programme and the priorities and principles are acted upon.
2. Reviewing progress towards achieving programme objectives and monitoring progress against spend – considering the impact on the region, on local areas and across the range of sectors.
3. Ensuring effective external scrutiny of programme implementation and operational delivery from regional stakeholders.
4. Ensuring all aspects of the programme, including implementation and future development, are successfully communicated to beneficiaries (including land and business owners and managers), statutory and non-governmental partners and delivery organisations.
5. Ensuring alignment with Structural Fund programmes, other funding instruments and strategies.
6. Identifying opportunities for cross-cutting, mutually supportive activities, which help meet the region's priorities.
7. Horizon scanning – reviewing and updating the RIP in response to national and regional priorities and to confirm or adjust the programme complement.
8. Propose to the national Programme Monitoring Committee, through the managing authority, any adjustment to the programme.

**Accountabilities**

9. Delivery of Axis 1, 3 & 4 funding will be the responsibility of the RDA. Natural England and the Forestry Commission will continue to be responsible for Axis 2 funding. Each delivery body is directly accountable to a national Programme Monitoring Committee through the accountable body (Defra).
10. Throughout the implementation and delivery stages, the three delivery bodies and the RIG will engage with partners and stakeholders to ensure the programme is meeting the intended priorities and objectives set out in the Regional Implementation Plan (RIP), and that the RIP itself continues to address the needs and opportunities for the region. The RIG will have a responsibility for ensuring effective ongoing external scrutiny of the programme by stakeholders.
11. It is not envisaged that the Implementation Group will have a role in the RDPE appeals process.

## **Membership**

12. Chair: Government Office for the South West (GOSW).
13. Representation from the three main RDPE delivery partners in the region: SWRDA, Natural England and the Forestry Commission.
14. Representation from the Environment Agency to inform and support implementation of the programme.
15. Representation from the RDA in relation to the Convergence and Competitiveness Programme management.
16. A representative from Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly to reflect the sub-region's ring fenced budget for Axis 1 and 3 for socio-economic activity.
17. A representative from regional networks/groups/organisations may be co-opted by the Implementation Group or may be invited to attend on occasion as appropriate.
18. Membership of the group will be reviewed throughout the lifetime of the programme.

## **Secretariat**

19. The secretariat for this group will be provided by South West RDA.
20. The secretariat will be responsible for:
  - arranging meetings;
  - agreeing the agenda with the chair;
  - circulating papers; and
  - providing a note of the meeting.
21. GOSW will provide additional policy support to set agendas and help focus meetings to address key strategic issues.

## **Working Practice**

22. It is proposed that the group will meet four times a year *at a minimum*. This may rise if there is a need.
23. Agendas will be agreed between the Chair and Secretariat and circulated prior to meetings.
24. All papers will be circulated in advance of meetings and made publicly available through the most appropriate website.
25. It is the responsibility of each delivery partner to table papers and provide contributions within deadlines given by the secretariat.
26. The Implementation Group may commission sub-groups to take forward detailed work. Membership and progress will be reviewed on a regular basis.
27. Where ever possible duplication of reporting should be avoided.

28. The terms of reference will be reviewed every 6 months to ensure they are still fit for purpose.
29. Regional budgets and progress against spend should be reviewed at every meeting.
30. As far as possible, existing mechanisms for stakeholder engagement will be used.