

Kent County Council – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Miss Susan Carey, Cabinet Member for the Environment

DECISION NO:

21/00037

For publication

Key decision: YES

- *Decision requires expenditure in excess of £1million*

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

Low Carbon across the South and East (LoCASE)

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for the Environment, I agree to:

Give approval for Kent County Council to deliver the Low Carbon Across the South and East (LoCASE) programme by accepting to act as the accountable body for the European Structural Investment Funding (ESIF) administered by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). Specifically, I

- Accept £14,748,886 European Structural Investment Funding administered by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- Give approval that KCC act as the Lead Partner (Accountable Body) for the partnership delivering across multiple Local Enterprise Partnership areas.
- Delegate authority to Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport to take relevant actions, including but not limited to, entering into contracts and other legal agreements, as necessary to implement decisions to spend the grant.

Reason(s) for decision:

The decision is being sought to approve the continued delivery of Low Carbon Across the South and East (LoCASE), which is an integrated programme of financial assistance and business support to increase demand for low carbon technology, increase efficiency and grow business in the low carbon environmental goods and services sector.

This decision supports the continuation and expansion of the successfully established LoCASE project which ran from 29/2/2016 to 31/12/2020, and supported 1,278 small and medium sized enterprises, through £5,014,939 of grant funding, totalling investments of £12,537,348. The programme has a budget that totals (£30,937,771) is part funded by the

European Structural Investment Fund (£14,748,886), Private Sector (£13,950,000), Kent County Council (£107,827) and public sector contribution from 16 programme partners (£2,131,058).

Encouraged by MHCLG after the demonstrated success of the LoCASE project, the additional funding is to continue and grow LoCASE to deliver a multi-LEP business support programme through a partnership made up of 16 public and private sector organisations across four Local Enterprise Partnerships (South East, Coast2Capital, Enterprise M3, and the Solent).

The programme activities will be undertaken by partners, and outputs delivered through a range of Partnership Agreements and contracts administered by Kent County Council in its role as Accountable Body.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Option (a): Do nothing – no ESIF investment, business support for energy efficiency and low carbon sector development ends, and no mechanism to achieve green recovery outcomes. This would limit the region’s capacity for growth and competitiveness.

Option (b): Reduce the business support programme by limiting it to Steps to Environmental Management (STEM) only – no ESIF investment, limited support for business improvements in environmental management, development of the energy efficiency and low carbon sectors and achieving green recovery outcomes

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

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signed

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date