

16th December 2008

Our ref: R00076

Freedom of Information Request – Rural development

Information requested

1. How much will your region receive for economic and social rural development activity under Axes 1 and 3 (including Leader) under the budget for the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013?

The region will receive £64m.

2. How much of this budget has your region allocated to date?

£35m has been allocated of which £29.3m is being delivered by 14 Leader groups.

3. Please provide details of the criteria by which grants under this budget are allocated.

Grants are approved using the standard RDA BERR appraisal criteria as shown in Annex 1 (attached).

4. How many grant applications under the budget for the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 has your region received, broken down by (a) total; (b) up to £5,000, (c) £5,001 to £100,000, (d) £100,001 to £1,000,000 and (e) over £1,000,000, and how many have been accepted (by value and number).

	Applications received	Applications Approved
Up to £5k	0	0
£5k to £100,000	9	8
£100,001 to £1,000,000	14	9

£1,000,001 +	18	15 (3 Leader applications rejected)
Total	41	32

NB: some of the received applications are still going through the appraisal process and therefore have not been formally approved or rejected yet. SEEDA has only formally rejected 5 applications.

5. When considering grant applications, does your region have a presumption in favour of those applications of over £5,000?

Approximately half of the SEEDA budget is being delivered by the Leader groups and these have no minimum project size. The remaining half of the budget being delivered directly by SEEDA does require projects to be larger than £50k for some measures but not for others such as farm diversification, forestry and water management projects.

6. How many enquiries for grants have you received which have not resulted in formal applications?

As of December 8th 2008, SEEDA have received 158 expressions of interest of which 20 have been rejected at this stage. Some have been passed to Leader groups and the remainder have been told to proceed to full applications. The Leader groups are only just getting established but SEEDA has already signed off 11 full applications from one Leader group.

7. What proportion of approved applications have been from a) individual businesses b) consortia?

Of the 41 approved applications 17 have been from consortia: 14 Leader groups, two training projects and one farmer co-operative project.

Enc: Annex A: Appraisal considerations