

24 June 2019

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BBC



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

Dear ██████████

FOI - THE EASTERN AGRI-TECH GROWTH INITIATIVE

I write with reference to your Freedom of Information request received on 28 May reference CA62 regarding grant payments made under the Eastern Agri-Tech Growth Initiative.

Question 1:

I wish to request the following documents: A copy of the framework used by the Authority to provide assurance that grant monies are spent in accordance with the grant award stipulations. In other words, documents setting out the process by which the Authority certifies grant money is spent on its intended purpose.

Response 1:

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's (CPCA) claim and monitoring form (blank copy attached) requires each claimant to confirm the progress made in a particular claim period. The information provided enables the CPCA to consider what remedial action may be necessary if the project is behind/outcomes are not being delivered.

All grant payments are paid in arrears against defrayed expenditure incurred and paid for by each successful applicant. This means that the CPCA does not make any grant payments until each supplier/contractor has been paid by each successful applicant before claiming a grant from the Agri-Tech scheme. As well as completing the claim form, the successful applicant must also provide supporting documents to the CPCA that confirm that the project costs have been defrayed. This will usually include invoices, time sheets and confirmation that payment has made to suppliers/contractor (eg bank statements/remittance advice notices).

The successful applicant will show the total amount of eligible project costs incurred in that particular claim period and seek reimbursement of the appropriate level of grant e.g. for Growth projects it is 25% of total project costs incurred and for R&D projects it is 50%.

The CPCA's Grant Offer Letter, issued to each successful applicant, will confirm the total amount of grant awarded for the duration of the approved project and will also confirm the project milestones and items to be bought/funded during the project.

The CPCA's Grant Offer Letter (blank copy attached) allows for the recovery of grant funding if:

Incubator 2,
Alconbury Weald Enterprise Campus,
Huntingdon, PE28 4XA

- a) in the CPCA's opinion, the funding recipient is failing or has failed to make satisfactory progress in implementing the project including progress towards the agreed milestones;
- b) in the CPCA's opinion, whether through delay, poor project management or otherwise, the costs of the project are escalating or seem likely to escalate to an extent that, they are unacceptable;
- c) in the CPCA's opinion, the future of the project is in jeopardy;
- d) in the CPCA's opinion, the funding recipient ceases to work on the Project or fails to make any progress against agreed milestones for a period of more than 3 months;
- e) in the CPCA's opinion, the funding recipient persistently fails to submit monitoring information on time;
- f) in the CPCA's opinion, any information the grant recipient has given in relation to the Project changes substantially during implementation or is shown to be incorrect or misleading or any claim for grant is based on misleading information;
- g) the grant recipient fails to comply with any conditions of the Grant Offer Letter.

Question 2:

I wish to request the following documents: Documentation for each grant award to date certifying the recipient has spent the money on the specified project. In other words, the proof the money was spent on what it was intended for.

Response 2:

All claims are verified by the CPCA finance team to prove that the recipients have spent the money on the specified projects. All claimants provide documentary proof that the grant funding has been spent in accordance with the claimant's Grant Offer Letter. We are satisfied that all grant funding awarded has been spent in accordance with the Grant Offer Letter.

The attached excel spreadsheet shows the names of the successful applications; the amounts of grant funding received by the successful applicants; the dates the applications were approved; descriptions of the approved projects and the local authority areas in which the projects are located. This information covers the period from April 2017 (following establishment of the CPCA) to 30 April 2019 when the most recent applications were approved.

Question 3:

I wish to request the following documents: Minutes for each meeting where Eastern Agri-Tech Growth Initiative grant funding was approved/allocated.

Response 3:

We can provide you with the names of the successful applications; the amounts of grant funding received by the successful applicants; the dates the applications were approved; descriptions of the approved projects and the local authority areas in which the projects are located. This information covers the period from April 2017 (following establishment of the CPCA) to 30 April 2019 when the most recent applications were approved. This information is set out in the attached excel spreadsheet.

There have been some important changes to governance and transparency. These new requirements took effect from 1 April 2019 following the Government's approval of the Assurance Framework for the CPCA in March 2019.

These new arrangements are set out in documents for the CPCA (<https://www.cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/business-board/eastern-agri-tech-growth-initiative/>) but the key changes included:

- The agenda and any non-confidential documents for meetings of the Agri-Tech Programme Board will be made public and published on the CPCA's web site (starting with the meeting held on 30 April) 5 working days before each Programme Board meeting. The names of the Agri-Tech grant applicants are not divulged until the outcome of the applications is known (see bullet point below);
- The note of the decisions taken by the Agri-Tech Programme Board will be published on the CPCA's website within 5 working days of the Programme Board meeting (starting with the meeting held on 30 April), taking into account the withholding of confidential/sensitive information such as applicants names and amounts of grant awarded, until the respective funding agreements from the CPCA have been issued and the terms and conditions accepted by the successful applicants;

I hope this information is helpful but if you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review, you should write to us via our contact us email address – contactus@cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk or write a letter to Complaints, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, Incubator 2, Alconbury Weald Enterprise Campus, Huntingdon, PE28 4XA within 40 days of the date of this e-mail.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF, or via their website: <https://ico.org.uk/>

Generally, the ICO will not undertake a review or make a decision on a request until the internal review process has been completed.

Yours sincerely



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The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority can be contacted via The Incubator 2, First Floor, Alconbury Weald Enterprise Campus, Alconbury Weald, Huntingdon, PE28 4WX. This email and any attachments are intended solely for the use of the addressee only, and is considered confidential. Any views or opinions expressed are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority or The Business Board. If you are not the intended recipient of this email, you must neither take any action based upon its contents, nor copy or show it to anyone with prior permission from the creator. Please contact the sender if you believe you have received this email in error.

Attached – spreadsheet, Grant Offer Letter Templates, Claim and Monitoring Form

