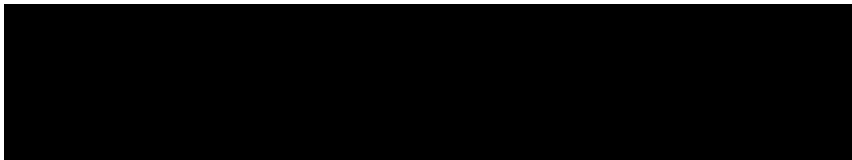




16th September 2020



Dear 

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request CA93

I write with reference to your request received on 17 August and acknowledgement of 19 August reference CA93. Please find the response to your Freedom of Information Request below.

Please note that answers to these questions refer to the funding support to businesses through the Business Board (the LEP) and not the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority.

For the purpose of these questions, a rural area is defined by Government Statistical Service Rural-Urban Definition for Small Area Geographies (RUC) (RUC2011).

Question 1 What support do you provide to businesses located in a rural areas?

The LEP Growth Hub provides support to SME businesses across Cambridgeshire & Peterborough including the regions rural areas (<https://cpcagrowthhub.co.uk/>).

Additionally, Local Growth Funds have been invested to support strategic aims for both rural and urban areas. Further detail can be found in the Growth Prospectus (<https://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/assets/Uploads/CPCA-Growth-Investment-Prospectus-July19.pdf>).

The Eastern Agri-Tech Growth Initiative Scheme specifically supports businesses in rural areas (more information on this scheme can be found in answer to Question 3).

Question 2. Is this different to that provided in urban areas?

As per answer to Question 1.

Question 3. What support do you provide agricultural sector businesses?

The Eastern Agri-Tech Growth Initiative brings together leading agriculture, research, science and technology assets in the East of England to strengthen a nationally significant, vibrant cluster that brings a truly global reach and impetus to the emerging UK Agri-tech sector. This is done through the provision of (discretionary grant) funding. This provides a significant boost to businesses employing less than 250 people in the food, drink and horticulture sector by supporting businesses looking to invest in specialist equipment, new



market and supply chain development, ways to improve productivity and efficiency, and the application and commercialisation of Research and Development.

The Eastern Agri-Tech Growth Initiative operates across the geographical areas covered by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA), Business Board and New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP). The Eastern Agri-Tech Growth Initiative has two main funds:

- An Agri-Tech Growth Fund which provides grants of between £10,000 and £150,000 to enhance business and jobs growth, and support product development. The Fund is aimed at supporting improvements in agricultural productivity through the introduction of new products or processes and encourage improvements to existing product/ processes and energy efficiency. The Growth funds supports the creation of new jobs and the protecting of existing jobs.
- An Agri-Tech R&D and Prototyping Fund which provides financial assistance to attract innovative and novel technologies. Planned research critical to the development of new products or processes within the Agri-Tech sector can be supported with grants of between £10,000 and £60,000 to cover the costs of research and development.

Question 4. What is the cost of support to businesses located in rural areas, broken down into direct funding to businesses and associated costs?

Direct funding to businesses through the LEP Business Board through the Local Growth Fund (LGF) - not including any CPCA investment:

Eastern Agri-Tech Scheme - £1,500,000 grant funding administered for the period 2016/17 - June 2020 (this was part of a wider £3.5m scheme with NALEP). A further £1.5m has been committed by the LEP Business Board up to March 2021.

LGF - £3m has been awarded to NIAB in support of 2 projects around rural R&D and waste management. Additionally, the LGF programme has funded over £56m to projects located outside of core urban areas since 2016/17.

The Business Board are also responsible for the area's Growth Hub which provides support to all businesses who contact them, whether rural or otherwise. This is an advice and brokerage service rather than direct funding to businesses and is funded via a £246,000 p.a. grant from the department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

Question 5. Please also provide this as a percentage of total business support spending from the LEP?

We do not hold this information.

Question 6. Does the LEP plan to maintain, increase or reduce this level of support to businesses in rural areas?

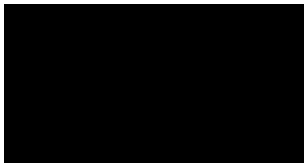
Yes, the Business Board plan to increase the level of business support across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough going forwards. We are also awaiting confirmation from Government on future funding streams and programmes (for example, the Shared Prosperity Fund).

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, The Mayor's Office, 72 Market Street, Ely, Cambs CB7 4LS 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



Sue Hall
Governance Assistant