



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

23 AUG 2012

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From Rt Hon Jim Paice MP
Minister of State for Agriculture and Food

Our ref: PO280156/KW

26 August 2012

Thank you for your letter of 26 July regarding Leader funding.

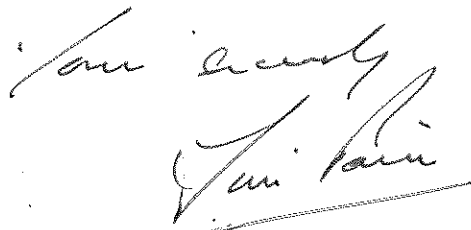
I am very pleased to note the success of your programme and congratulate you and the West Kent Local Action Group (LAG) on these achievements.

I am sure you can appreciate that there will always be variation in performance across a network of 64 unique groups covering a range of geography, responding to varied local challenges. However, as I am certain officials in Defra's RDPE Delivery Team South East will have explained, over the past 18 months measures have been introduced to consistently performance-manage all LAGs to ensure effective and full utilisation of available RDPE Leader funds.

This process formed the basis of the top-up distribution that was implemented earlier this year and I am pleased your group was one of those that benefitted. As a result, while your total allocation of £1.528 million is less than your original expectation of £1.8 million, the shortfall in funding is smaller than for groups that have not performed so well and consequently did not benefit from any top-up.

The next significant stage in the performance-management process is a commitment to review the position of all 64 groups in October of this year. This review will utilise the latest spend and commitment information for the quarter ending September 2012. At that time, we will determine what corrective action is required to ensure full spend across the LAG network, one option being redistribution of funding from groups with financial headroom to groups such as yours that are now fully committed.

As a result, at this stage I cannot confirm what additional funding, if any, will be available for your group, but I have noted your comments about capacity and desire for further resources should they become available. I will ensure the RDPE Delivery Team keeps you fully aware of the performance management process and its outcomes over the next few months. In the meantime, thank you and all the West Kent LAG members for your support and commitment in delivering a very successful programme of activity.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Jim Paice', written in dark ink. The signature is fluid and somewhat stylized, with a horizontal line underneath the name.

RT HON JIM PAICE MP