

10 October 2024

Dear

ATISN 21935

Information requested

Thank you for your request which I received on 16 September. You asked for:

Information relating to flood and coastal erosion projects that were turned down for funding under the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Programme 2024/25.

Our response

You requested the information in spreadsheet format including as many details as possible within cost limits, such as the Risk Management Authority (RMAs), the amount of funding sought and the number of homes benefiting. You also requested information relating to the number of projects in total that applied for funding and how many were turned down for funding in the Flood and Coastal Risk Management Programme 2024/25. The request is answered below:

2024/25 Capital FCERM EOIs

Flood alleviation schemes in the Welsh Government's FCERM Capital Programme follow a "gateway" process whereby each phase of the scheme, from appraisal to design to construction, is subject to an application for funding. RMAs submit expressions of interest for each stage to the Welsh Government FCERM Programme for consideration. The applications are appraised by Welsh Government FCERM Branch officials for their eligibility before being presented to our FCERM Programme Board for comment.

RMAs are familiar with the FCERM programmes criteria and the majority of applications are eligible for funding in principle. However, funding limitations mean that it is not always possible fund every application each year.

A total of 71 expression of interest applications were submitted for review for the 2024/25 FCERM programme. Of those, 69 schemes were eligible for funding in line with the FCERM Grant Memorandum and Business Case Guidance. To maximise the delivery of works using the funding available, the FCERM Branch recommended prioritising funding for construction schemes only. The only exception to this was 5 new development schemes for Flintshire County Council who did not have any schemes within the programme and had been adversely affected by Storm Babet. Prioritisation of the 17 construction applications is intended to benefit over 530 properties. In addition, 10 development applications that were previously agreed and awaiting a review at the time of the 2023/24 programme closure were honoured for the 2024/25 programme. This approach was agreed by the FCERM Programme Board.

2024/25 Small Scale Works Grant (SSWG) EOIs

In addition to the FCERM Capital applications for 2024/25, I have included all EOI applications for the SSWG. The SSWG is an annual funding programme for smaller capital works. It is well subscribed and RMAs are familiar with our requirements. As such, the majority of applications for funding were successful.

Of the 79 applications submitted, 74 were eligible for funding whilst 5 were rejected due to ineligibility. The schemes in question were all from a single local authority, who had provided insufficient evidence in support of their application. Following further discussions with the local authority in question, it transpired that they had applied for more schemes than they could deliver in a single year. The local authority took the decision to withdraw 5 applications and prioritise applications for the highest risk locations.

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ

or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely