

Mclsaac C (Cathy)

From: Susan.kerr@midlothian.Gov.uk
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To: Structural Funds Consultation Mailbox
Subject: Consultation Response

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Future European Structural Funds Programmes in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland 2007-2013**RESPONDENT INFORMATION DETAILS**

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Questions and Answers

Question 1: Are there any additional socio-economic factors to be considered – and which Structural Funds can address – in assessing the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities of Lowlands & Uplands Scotland?

Question 2: Do the proposed priorities for the 2007-2013 ERDF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland address the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities of the region?

Question 3: Do the proposed priorities for the 2007-2013 ERDF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland show appropriate coherence and

concentration?

Question 4: Do the proposed priorities for the 2007-2013 ESF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland address the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities of the region?

Question 5: Do the proposed priorities for the 2007-2013 ESF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland show appropriate coherence and concentration?

Question 6: What are your views on the proposed balance of funding between priorities for the future ERDF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland?

Question 7: What are your views on the proposed balance of funding between priorities for the future ESF programme in Lowlands & Uplands Scotland?

Question 8: Do the proposed priorities outlined in the draft Operational Programmes focus sufficiently on the right priorities in Scottish domestic policy?

Question 9: What are your views on how the principle of environmental sustainability has been integrated into the Operational Programmes?

Question 10: What are your views on how the principle of equal opportunities has been integrated into the Operational Programmes

Question 11: What are your views on how the Operational Programmes will ensure complementarity between Structural Funds and other EU funding streams?

Question 12: How can the challenge-fund approach be improved to make it more effective in delivering outcomes and more efficient in operation?

Question 13: What would be the most effective approach to using Community Planning Partnerships and other local partnerships for the delivery of elements of the programmes?

Issues drawn from the focus group concentrated on these key themes Implementation How is this mechanism going to operate? Would the CPP have to provide match funding? Using the CPP structure would mean more Community Council involvement, this will have both positive and negative connotations. Issues of concern CPP in Midlothian strategically placed but is the processes plausible for people/partners accessing funding? Issues around the implementation of local partnerships, who is included in the partnership, membership should be varied, flexible. CPP is dominated by the Council, where does this leave Voluntary Sector organisations? Inflexibility within the CPP structures would be an issue. Definitions Local partnerships need defined i.e. does this mean consortiums? Recommendations Leader+ model has worked well in the past, recommending replicating this model. Should be objectively administered, need to work out a way/system of doing this objectively. CPP or local partnerships should be asked to develop a

	common purpose. Should there be a minimum bid for ERDF money when allocating funding?
<p>Question 14: What are your views on spatial targeting for community regeneration under ERDF Priority 2 and ESF Priority 1?</p>	<p>Comments from the focus group concentrated on concerns with the use of data zones. Midlothian is a dispersed community, which raises concern regarding the use of data zones to target areas for funding. The focus group was not sure as to how the data zones were going to work. Midlothian has only five data zones within the top 15% and none of these areas are clustered together combined with the fact that they cover only small geographical areas. The boundaries created do not seem to reflect or include the whole community and therefore do not accurately represent the needs of that community Further concern was felt over the feasibility and management of projects targeting small data zones. Issues with data zones fitting into the types of activities within this priority e.g ‘improvement of transport access’ only servicing data zones areas would be wholly unpractical in Midlothian. Comments from the focus group include ‘Can’t fund a project which focuses on a street or two’. ‘Mentions communities but data zones are not communities’. Recommendations The focus group recommends that the new programme opens up the data zones and uses them more flexibly i.e facilities don’t have to be in the data zone area but will service the area</p>
<p>Question 15: What are your views on spatial targeting for rural development under ERDF Priority 3?</p>	<p>The focus group would like a clearer definition of ‘Rural’, this definition will determine Midlothians eligibility. The support to rural communities seems to be all about rural business, this is a concern. There seems to be a lack of emphasis for capacity building activities and in addition separating Community Regeneration from Rural Development will not be cohesive to economic development. The same issues regarding data zones also apply as stated in Q14 Is Leader+ going to support this, require more clarification on Leader+.</p>
	<p>Horizontal theme for concern are the lack in emphasis for capacity building and community development support activities i.e training or careers guidance. Community engagement should also be a horizontal theme. The focus group highlighted the issues below when commenting on ERDF Community Regeneration priority 2 activities -Refurbishment of facilities for use by SME- Need to clarify what is being defined as an SME? Needs to include social enterprise What about State Aid Rules? Issues & concerns Difficult to establish the cost of refurbishment. Making refurbishment accessible for disabilities. Doesn’t fit with Midlothians access & transport issues as existing sites are often difficult to access Job brokerage schemes to match ESF project clients with employment opportunities Not helpful being fitted into ESF project participants as this will be too restrictive, especially when considering data zones within</p>

Midlothian. Should be looking at needs of clients. ----

--- -Community Investment funds, including support for credit unions and social firms- Clearer definition of social firm required this should include social enterprise. Not just credit unions broader definition required including financial advice and money management -----

----- -Childcare, dependant care, initiatives to enable ESF project clients to access economic opportunities.- How will dependant care be defined ?, greater clarification on meaning is required, definition of dependant care should be broad so as to include adult dependant care. Too restrictive, can't just work with ESF clients. Joining up with ESF projects is depends on there being locally based ESF projects. Could potentially exclude Midlothian. Concern over the project management of this Recent policy objectives regarding childcare could compliment this activity. -----

----- -Refurbishment of training and Learning Centres- Greater clarity of meaning required, definition of refurbishment ? What counts as a 'Training and Learning Centre'? Not wide enough -----

Question 16: Do you have any additional comments on the draft Structural Funds Operational Programmes for Lowlands & Uplands Scotland?

----- -Improvement of transport access and security to improve access to education and employment.- What is meant by education & employment ? Will this fund wider transport requirements ? Would only data zones be serviced, this would be wholly unpractical in Midlothian? Clearer definition on what is meant by security, some examples necessary Would improvement to security aspect include awareness raising activities? Will this include support to private sector bus companies? Community Safety Partnership sees this as a need within Midlothian as transport is an issue for young people and community safety. Envisage a difficulty with measuring this? -----

----- - Entrepreneurship, by providing advice and support and access to finance through grant and loan schemes.- Does entrepreneurship include social enterprise? Issues with data zones fitting in with this activity -----

----- Increased access to ICT facilities to improve the skills of local people seeking to re-enter the labour market and increased access to web based public services.- Take out the words 'public services' to include just 'local services'. Should word 'facilities & support' EU Funding to recognise IT as life skills. Access for all should be encouraged. More clarity on what is meant by web based public services and definition of ICT Would promotion of on line learning be included? How is re-entering the labour market going to be defined?, will this exclude young peoples projects? How is this going to be translated into measurable

outcomes against this target? -----
----- - Small scale
conversion /adaptation of industrial sites and business
centre/facilities that offer employment and training
opportunities.- Access issues for people with
disabilities. What is meant by employment/training?
Has to be for long term employment growth.
Businesses should have to provide a business plan to
demonstrate long term commitment to the
area/sustainability. Must have real job increases with
business committed to these goals. -----
----- The focus
group highlighted the issues below when commenting
on ERDF Rural Development priority 3 activities -
Commercial exploitation of renewable energy
technology- Not designed for the geographic area in
Midlothian, (but could be potential for very micro
community level projects). Not enough land in
Midlothian to take advantage of criteria. We have
development pressures Support required to educate
the NIMBY's. Fits with Local Authority strategy for
sustainability/environmental policies -----
----- - Software
development- Too specific therefore seems
limiting ,needs to be expanded, better worded as
'developing new technology in rural areas'. -----

Development of local supply chains.- In support of this
activity -----
----- - Small scale tourism projects.- In
support of this activity -----
----- -Commercial exploitation
of research into rural products e.g. herb and wild plant
products.- Queries around who would actually
benefit, would this be social enterprises or research
institutes? Would be more useful if the word
'research' was removed. Midlothian doesn't need the
'research' element. -----

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