

## **Plain Action Appraisers' Guidance**

### **Purpose of appraisal**

The appraisal process is an essential and required part of the project application and decision making system within Local Action under the Rural Development Programme England (RDPE). It serves two prime functions:

- Providing an independent and objective examination of projects being put forward to the Local Action Group (LAG)
- Offering a depth of technical expertise and understanding of project management and RDPE funding principles which may not be available within the membership of the LAG.

The overall purpose is to assist the LAG members in reaching an appropriate decision in full knowledge of the merits and otherwise of an application. In broad terms appraisers are required to consider projects in terms of:

- Need
- Fit within the Plain Action Programme
- Other options
- Delivery
- Risks
- Value for money

### **Resources**

You will be provided for reference purposes with a variety of Plain Action and RDPE information including:

- Plain Action Objectives, themes, and indicative activities
- RDPE Measures and Chapter 5 of defra guidance
- Current Plain Action literature, priorities etc.
- The blank appraisal form and guidance notes.
- Relevant RDPE, defra, SWRDA and Wilts Council (Accountable Body) guidance and updates

You will receive combined SWRDA / Plain Action training initially, with periodic updates and group refresher meetings.

### **Modus operandi – grant applications of £10,000 upwards**

- The appraisal process will take place electronically

- You will be asked by the Plain Action staff if you are able to undertake a specific appraisal within the requisite 10 working day turnaround.
- You will then be emailed the application; if there are attachments which cannot be sent electronically these will be posted to you first class on the same day.
- You will email back the completed appraisal form within the 10 working days.
- For grant applications of £40,000 and more there will be two appraisers You will each be informed of the other and are encouraged to discuss the application.
- While undertaking the appraisal you are encouraged to discuss any points of issue and information with the Programme Manager, who may in turn seek clarification from the applicant or, with your agreement, may on occasions invite the applicant to discuss the project direct with you.
- A parallel and proportional modus operandi and terms will operate for grants £1,000 - ,£9,999.

### **Terms of appointment**

- Requirement to attend a maximum of two separate half day or full day briefings during 2009, one within the Salisbury Plain area and one within the SW Region. There will be no payment for this.
- Appraisers will be asked to appraise one individual project/activity at a time.
- The urn-around time for undertaking an appraisal is ten working days.
- Appraisers will be able to decline a request to undertake an individual appraisal.
- Appraisers will need to be entirely independent and have no prior knowledge of the applicant project/organisation being appraised.
- There will be no commitment on the Programme's part to request any or a set number of appraisals.
- All appraisals will be undertaken within the legislative requirements of the RDPE.
- A straight payment of £250 (plus VAT where applicable) will be made per appraisal (it is envisaged that appraisals will take the equivalent of a half to a full day)

End