

251029 (203) FOI Grant Funding

From: [Freedom of Information](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Freedom of Information](#)
Subject: Freedom of Information Request
Date: 29 October 2025 14:25:13
Attachments: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request of 6 October 2025. We are responding to you under the Freedom of Information(Scotland) Act 2002 [FOISA].

FOI REQUEST (6 October 2025)

In summary I would like clarification on several points from a SE and SOSE:

1. Was the approval by SE for RAS funding for the new facility influenced by the mortgage / bank loan provided by Bank of Scotland and created on 30th November 2021?
2. Was the approval by SOSE for the 2024 and 2025 NSET Investment Theme - Productive Businesses and Regions influenced by the mortgage / bank loan provided by Bank of Scotland created on 30th November 2021?
3. Did an employee of SE, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] collude with [REDACTED] William Clark & Son (Parkgate) Limited to facilitate RSA funding by agreeing that a mortgage / bank loan would improve the financial case for funding approval.
4. I ask that SE and SOSE justifies the public interest for awarding **£729,626 of public funds** between 2022 and 2025 to William Clark & Son (Parkgate) Limited / Parkgate Holdings Limited that have a combined NAV at YE 2024 - **£7,712,044** and made cumulative net profits between 2020 and 2022 of **£1,342,354**.

RESPONSE

Please note we will only respond to points in your questions 2 and 4 in relation to South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE).

Question 2

As mentioned in our previous FOI responses to you, SOSE's grant appraisal process involves information relating to the business and the project being gathered and analysed against standard appraisal criteria which includes:

- The strategic case;
- The economic case – including impact on place, inclusive growth, fair work, net zero, natural capital and community wealth building;
- Financial case – including consideration of value for money, additionality and displacement;
- Management case; and
- Commercial case

The information gathered as part of the financial appraisal depends on the value of the funding request and may include bank statements, cash flow, annual accounts, profit and loss, balance sheet.

SOSE would not disclose a client's financial information to the public, including what type of information was provided as part of the grant award process as this would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of that client. We therefore apply Section 33(1)(b) of FOISA where disclosure would (or would be likely to) prejudice substantially the commercial interests of any person. "Person" includes a public authority, company and partnership.

The use of this exemption requires SOSE to consider the public interest in both disclosing and not disclosing the information.

SOSE acknowledges that there is a public interest in the allocating of public funding, whether through loans or grant funding. However, the public interest relates to the way in which SOSE carries out its functions in that grant award process and that it ensures best value for money and not in providing the public with access to financial information companies provide in relation to the grant award appraisal process. SOSE would not want to prejudice substantially a company by disclosing information about their financial appraisal and what information was provided as part of that appraisal process. Disclosing this information would also impact on SOSE's relationships with its clients as it would deter other companies or communities from approaching SOSE for funding or advice and SOSE would not be able to deliver its functions as a public body.

Having considered the public interest test it has been decided the public interest is in withholding the information and Section 33(1)(b) applies.

Question 4

SOSE is an economic and community development agency whose purpose it is to engage, promote and support companies and communities to prosper and grow economic development within the South of Scotland region.

SOSE provides support to companies and communities based in Dumfries & Galloway and Scottish Borders, whatever their scale or stage of their journey. This includes support to startup businesses as well as well-established businesses.

The SOSE funding awarded to Wm Clark and Sons Ltd was assessed and awarded in line with our standard appraisal process including ensuring eligibility criteria were met and by applying relevant grant conditions.

You have the right to request a review of the way in which this request has been processed. Should you wish to exercise this right, you will need to contact us within 40 working days of receipt of this email.

If you remain dissatisfied on completion of the review, you have the right to appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner and thereafter to the Court of Session on a point of law only:

Scottish Information Commissioner
Kinburn Castle
Doubledykes Road
St Andrews
Fife
KY16 9DS
Telephone: 01334 464610

www.foi.scot

or for online appeals:

www.foi.scot/appeal

Regards,
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