



EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – INFORMATION ITEM

SUBJECT: EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING GRANTS 2020/21

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with details of grant funding available to the Education & Lifelong Learning Directorate in 2020-21. To update with regards to grant funding that will span financial years, particularly with regards to capital funding.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report provides brief details of the grant funding currently available, although Members need to be aware that further grants can be made available in year subject to new funding sources or the successful outcome of bids.
- 2.2 The report provides a brief description of the intended purpose of the grant funding. More detailed information on individual grants can be made available to Members, if requested.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members are requested to note the contents of this report.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure that Members are informed with regards to confirmed and indicative grant funding in 2020/21, both capital and revenue funding.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The attached Appendix 1 provides summary details of grants currently available to the Directorate in 2020/2021. It includes a list of the grants, the grant funding bodies, the value of the grant, a brief description of the purpose of the funding, together with details of the responsible officer.

- 5.2 Members will note that there is a significant level of grant funding available to the Directorate in 2020/21, with the revenue figure currently estimated at £32m. The funding linked to capital, which spans a number of years is potentially estimated at £68m. Members will note that funding is made available from a number of different sources.
- 5.3 Each grant offer made to the Authority is dependent on adherence to a pre-defined set of terms and conditions, as stipulated by the awarding body. The purpose of the terms and conditions is for the grant body to be able to satisfy itself that the grant has been spent within the scope and purpose of the funding.
- 5.4 In addition the terms and conditions will outline the period of the grant, how the grant will be paid, the timescale for submission of grant claims and reports and also whether the grant is subject to an annual audit review. The requirement for an audit review will stipulate whether this needs to be undertaken by either the Authority's Internal or External Auditors. The purpose of the audit review is to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the grant through a process of sample testing. During the review any queries raised are investigated and any further information required by Audit is provided prior to an Audit Report being produced. The details of the outcome of the audit are then made available to the awarding body as specified.
- 5.5 To be aware, even where a grant does not require a specific audit the Grant Body reserve the right to have access to documents and information relating to grant monies and may exercise this right, at all reasonable times, if deemed necessary.
- 5.6 Within the Directorate, the Finance Division maintains a record of all grants that have been awarded to the Directorate for the year. This provides key information for financial planning and also ensures that grant income and the associated expenditure are incorporated into the budget monitoring reports that are produced for the Directorate.
- 5.7 It is important to advise that the Education Achievement Service has a key role in the co-ordination of a number of regional grants, as identified in Appendix 1.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 Any assumptions are detailed within the report and appendix.

7. LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES

- 7.1 The effective utilisation of grant funding will support the Authority in delivering its stated aims and objectives.

7.2 Corporate Plan 2018-2023.

Effective financial planning and financial controls contribute towards or impacts the Corporate Well-being Objectives, which are:

Objective 1 - Improve education opportunities for all

Objective 2 - Enabling employment

Objective 5 - Creating a county borough that supports a healthy lifestyle in accordance with the sustainable Development Principle within the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Objective 6 - Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being

8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

8.1 Effective financial management is a key element in ensuring that the Well-being Goals within the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 are met:-

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language
- A globally responsible Wales

8.2 Effective financial management is also consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act

- Long Term – The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability of future generations to meet their long-term needs
- Prevention - How acting to prevent problems occurring, or getting worse, may help public bodies meet their objectives
- Integration – Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies
- Collaboration – Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives
- Involvement – The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no potential equalities implications of this report and its recommendations on groups or individuals who fall under the categories identified in Section 6 of the Council's Strategic Equality Plan. There is no requirement for an Equalities Impact Assessment Questionnaire to be completed for this report.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 In 2020/21 there is currently an estimated £32m due into the Education & Lifelong Learning Directorate in the way of revenue grant funding. The issue with regards to grant funding is the degree of uncertainty for future planning purposes, since in most

instances the grants are awarded on an annual basis which poses issues for medium and long term planning. Estimated capital funding totals £68m but this would cover a number of financial years.

- 10.2 As mentioned previously, all grants are subject to specific terms and conditions and this could include a requirement that the grant is subject to External Audit. If this is the case the Authority's External Auditors will scrutinise financial and non-financial data relating to the grant, as per the Audit Instructions, to ensure that all expenditure complies with the terms and conditions. If External Audit identify that there has been a failure to comply then potentially the grant funding body could claw back the grant funding previously awarded and paid, impacting directly on the Authority's budget in that year.

11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 In circumstances where grant funding is reduced or withdrawn, employees placed at risk will be supported via the appropriate Council policies relating to redeployment and ultimately redundancy if necessary.
- 11.2 It is most likely that these redundancy costs would need to be met by the Authority.

12. CONSULTATIONS

- 12.1 Consultation discussions and responses have been reflected in this report.

13. STATUTORY POWER

- 13.1 Local Government Act 1972 and 2000.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 Grants available to the Directorate in 2020-21