

**MINUTES OF THE GRANTS PANEL MEETING HELD ON
10th MARCH 2016 IN THE RESOURCES CONFERENCE ROOM, COUNTY
HALL**

DATE: 11th March 2016

PRESENT: Helen Pugh, Audit & Risk Manager
Helen Morgan, Interim Economic Development Manager
Delyth Thomas, Grants Compliance Officer (GCO)
Simon Davies, Chair of PWG – Education & Children’s Services
Les James – Chair of PWG – Communities
Alan Howells, Chair of PWG – Environment
Jason Garcia - Audit Manager, Wales Audit Office (WAO)
Julie Owens - Financial Audit Team Leader, Wales Audit Office (WAO)

APOLOGIES: Owen Bowen, Interim Head of Financial Services
Stuart Walters, Interim Economic Development Manager

	SUBJECT	ACTION
	<p><u>Welcome</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The new Audit Manager and Financial Audit Team Leader from WAO who are managing the audits in Carmarthenshire County Council were welcomed to the meeting. <p><u>Minutes of the last meeting</u></p> <p>1.0</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The minutes were agreed. <p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <p>2.0</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The final report regarding the lessons learnt exercise on Carmarthenshire Local Service Board (LSB) projects was distributed to members of Grants Panel. Report to be reviewed by Grants Panel members and in conjunction with the Internal Audit Report. Report and recommendations to be agreed in the next Grants Panel meeting.• A review is being undertaken at a corporate level on procurement arrangements across the Authority. Grants Panel agreed that an email be sent to all officers as a reminder/awareness of the procurement processes. It is expected that feedback on the review will be disseminated across the Authority.• It was intended that a working group be set up to review the current third party grants process and to implement improvements. However, the Authority will no longer be administering third party grants via European Funded Projects. These will be managed by Intermediary Bodies that have been approved by WEFO (WG, WCVA, DEST & SHELL)	All

	SUBJECT	ACTION
3.0	<p><u>Wales Audit Office - Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The initial review of the draft report from WAO on the Certification of Grants & Returns 2014/15 has been undertaken and the authority is waiting for the revised draft report to be returned from WAO. This will be circulated to Grants Panel members accordingly. WAO is waiting for confirmation from their Central Support Team as to the grant funded projects that are due to be audited for 2015/16. WAO are currently looking at changing the audit approach from a finance based audit on grant funded projects to an audit based more on outputs. There are a couple of pilot schemes that are going to be undertaken by WAO in other local authorities to see how these performance related audits can be undertaken effectively. 	<p>DT</p> <p>WAO</p>
4.0	<p><u>Internal Audit Office (IA) - Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Internal Audit for quarter 4 for the Education Improvement Grant (EIG) has been completed. The project is due to also have a final audit to be undertaken by IA. Waiting for confirmation from ERW. The audit arrangements for EIG will continue for 2016/2017 but will also include the audit for the Pupil Deprivation Grant. IA work has commenced on a number of selected projects as part of IA grants review. The projects selected are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pooled Budgets Major Repairs Allowance NRW Grants Foundations in Heritage A summary of the review will be presented in the next Grants Panel meeting. 	<p>HP</p> <p>HP</p>
5.0	<p><u>Project Working Groups – Update</u></p> <p>Updates were received from each of the Chairs of the PWG.</p>	

	SUBJECT	ACTION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environment There is a requirement for each of the Departmental Project Working Groups to monitor S106 monies in their department. Officers from Planning attended the PWG meeting held in January 2016. Communities Officers from Planning to be invited to next PWG to discuss the management of S106 monies. <p>Review of PWG attendees to be undertaken to ensure that appropriate representation is in place across the department.</p> <p>Grants monies have been awarded by WG for a capital funded ECO Arbed project. Finance had not been notified that this project had been awarded.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education & Children's Services There are two PWGs, one for Capital and one for Revenue and are chaired by different senior officers. A review has been undertaken to identify attendance at the Revenue PWG to ensure appropriate representation from the department is in place. <p>The PWG is proactive in retaining an ongoing list of grants pertaining to their department. This allows an easy crosschecking exercise to be undertaken with the corporate register and more effective monitoring of grants.</p> <p>Key capital grants include MEP and Flying Start. Audits have been undertaken on both projects. For Flying Start, an issue on internal charges has been qualified while it has not been qualified on MEP. As a result the audit process has been queried on consistency.</p>	<p>LJ</p> <p>SD</p>
6.0	<p><u>Project Closures</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A schedule showing of the current status of the closure/archiving of project files for the Convergence Programme was presented to Grants Panel. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project files relating to 10 projects have been deposited with Central Archiving Project files for 7 projects were ready for archiving but had not been passed to Central 	

	SUBJECT	ACTION
	<p>Archiving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There are still 20 projects, which are at different stages of the closure process. • Any outstanding grant monies from WEFO are expected to be paid by 31st March 2016. Therefore, once all grants monies have been received for a project there is an expectation that the project files will be completed and sent to Central Archiving as soon as possible. • There are concerns on the closure arrangements for a number of projects and these have been referred to the Chairs of the PWGs so that progress can be reviewed by the PWG. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ National Station Improvement Programme ○ Green Seas Beach Improvements – Cefn Sidan ○ Materials Efficiency ○ Romans in Carmarthenshire - Museums 	PWG
7.0	<p><u>New Funding Programmes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under new European Structural Funds Programme, a number of approvals have been received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Communities 4 Work which is led by WG. ○ Workways + which is led by Neath Port Talbot • Grant approvals maybe affected by forthcoming elections where purdah arrangements are in place. These arrangements are due to cover a period of up to 6 weeks. 	
8.0	<p><u>Grant Income Outstanding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An up to date schedule of grant income outstanding to the Authority for Convergence schemes was presented to the meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Convergence projects where the Authority is lead - approximately £9m is still outstanding. WEFO had just paid the Authority the final grant payment of £503k for Y Ffwrnes. ○ Convergence projects where the Authority is a partner – approximately £527k is outstanding. 	

	SUBJECT	ACTION
	There is an expectation that WEFO will be making the final grants payments in the next few weeks.	
9.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date of next meeting – 12th May 2016 2:00pm Resources Conference Room, County Hall 	