

**MINUTES OF THE GRANTS PANEL MEETING HELD ON  
14<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2020 IN CORPORATE SERVICES MEETING ROOM,  
COUNTY HALL.**

**PRESENT:** Randal Hemingway, Head of Financial Services  
Helen Pugh, Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance  
Caroline Powell, Principal Auditor, Internal Audit (IA)  
Alan Howells, Chair of PWG, Environment  
Les James, Chair of PWG, Communities  
Nia Thomas, Chair of PWG, Education & Children (Revenue)  
Delyth Thomas, Grants Compliance Officer

**APOLOGIES:** Rhian Phillips, Economic Development Area Manager  
Simon Davies, Chair of PWG, Education & Children (Capital)  
Stuart Walters, Economic Development Manager  
Helen Morgan, Economic Development Manager

	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
1.0	<p><b><u>Minutes of the last meeting</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The minutes were agreed.</li> </ul>	
2.0	<p><b><u>Matters Arising</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussions have taken place within the PWG meetings regarding grants which are managed on a regional basis and the secure transfer of sensitive information between organisations. Project Managers should be fully aware of their responsibilities.</li> <li>An exercise to be undertaken by CCC to monitor projects subject to Article 55 in accordance with WEFO requirements for the European Structural Funds Programme 2007-13.</li> <li>From 2019/20 onwards, local authority grant schemes will no longer be audited by WAO, however, for grants awarded over £100,000 an Annual Statement of Expenditure will need to be completed and submitted to WG. If the funding is under £100,000, an Annual Statement of Expenditure will not be required. Clarification has been received that these thresholds only apply to WG grants that were previously audited by WAO.</li> <li>For projects funded under RDP, a risk assessment needs to be undertaken to record the impact where match funding included on claims submitted by the Authority is being amended by the funding body to bring it in line with the committed percentage of</li> </ul>	RP

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	<p>match funding. Details to be presented in the next the Grants Panel meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussions to be undertaken at the Modernising Education &amp; Communities Programme Board on the possible appointment of an officer to undertake an ongoing review of the evidence to support the community benefits that have been provided by an appointed contractor, as part of the procurement requirements. For some grants it's a condition under the Terms &amp; Conditions to provide such evidence.</li> <li>• Confirmation to be received from the Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Services regarding the role Grants Panel will now have in relation to the City Deal.</li> </ul>	<p>RP</p> <p>RH</p> <p>RH</p>
3.0	<p><b><u>Wales Audit Office - Update</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An update was provided on the audits undertaken for 2018/19: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Total of 10 grants and returns were submitted for auditing</li> <li>○ 1 return (Pool Budgets) was submitted late albeit the figures were ready and available as part of the closure of accounts process</li> <li>○ 1 return was amended (Housing Benefits) but there was no overall impact on the grant funding</li> <li>○ 2 returns were qualified – there were a couple of instances where there was insufficient evidence to support 3 quotes as part of the procurement process and there was also one instance where the funding agreement had not been updated with the agreed budget figures.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The audit of the Homelessness Prevention Grant has been completed with the report being finalised; some issues were identified which will be presented to the Audit Committee.</li> <li>For the 2019-20 Children and Communities Grant there is a requirement that the Annual Statement of Grant Expenditure is completed by the organisation's Internal Auditor or Chief Finance Officer. It was agreed that Internal Audit will undertake an audit before it is signed by the Head of Financial Services.</li> </ul>	
5.0	<p><b><u>Corporate Risk Register – Effectiveness of Grant Management</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An assessment of the current risks involved in grants management was undertaken. A report is to be presented for consideration and approval at the next CMT meeting.</li> <li>It has been agreed that an assessment will be undertaken by Grants Panel on a 6-monthly basis.</li> </ul>	<p>RH/HP</p> <p>ALL</p>
6.0	<p><b><u>Project Working Groups</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minutes of PWG meetings were circulated to Grants Panel members for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education &amp; Children (Revenue): 12/7/19 &amp; 13/9/19</li> <li>Education &amp; Children (Capital): 24/9/19</li> <li>Communities: 20/1/20</li> <li>Environment: 25/9/19, 27/11/19, 22/1/20</li> </ul> </li> <li>Due to issues raised by WAO a request has been made for procurement training to be provided for officers in the Education &amp; Children Department and officers within the Housing Division of Communities.</li> </ul>	<p>HP</p>

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7.0	<p><b><u>European Grants Update</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A schedule of all current European funded projects was presented to Grants Panel. The total estimated project costs approved and in development is £38.9m with a grant of £26m.</li> <li>• It was reported to Grants Panel that the total grant claimed to date for all European funded projects was approximately £11m. However a total of £2.4m grant income is yet to be received by the Authority. Head of Financial Services to raise with the Economic Development Manager.</li> <li>• A phase 2 of the regional Celtic Routes project led by Carmarthenshire under the Ireland/Wales programme is under consideration. An Expression of Interest is due to be submitted to WEFO and if successful a full application will be requested.</li> <li>• There is a possibility of a no cost extension to the BUCANIER regional project which Carmarthenshire is a partner under the Ireland/Wales programme.</li> <li>• New applications have been invited under the following programmes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ RDP Supply Chain &amp; Co-operation with an application deadline of 9/3/2020</li> <li>○ RDP ENRaW with an application deadline of 13/3/2020</li> <li>○ Visit Wales – Tourism Basic</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	RH
8.0	<p><b><u>New &amp; Proposed Projects</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Welsh Government grant of £453k has been awarded for capital support for the implementation and expansion of separate household waste collections of absorbent hygiene product (AHP) waste. As this grant is awarded to all local authorities and relates to 2019/20 concerns have been raised on the timescales to procure and order vehicles to meet the grant deadlines as stated in the Terms and Conditions.</li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two grants have been award by Welsh Government totalling £67k from the Circular Economy Fund. This fund is open to local authorities to help Wales’ shift towards a circular economy driving further increases in recycling and decarbonisation. Where waste is avoided and the things we use are kept in use for as long as possible.</li> <li>• A brief summary was presented to the meeting on the most significant changes for grants in the provisional settlement for 2020/21 for all of Wales. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Professional Learning moved into Consortia grant</li> <li>○ Pupil Development increased by approx. £10m</li> <li>○ PDG Access increased by £3m</li> <li>○ New grants - Additional Learning Needs £7m &amp; Elective Home Education £1.5m</li> <li>○ Childcare Offer – Childcare Costs increased by £10m</li> <li>○ Social Care Workforce and Sustainability Pressures Grant increased by £10m</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Due to the number of grants awarded to the Education and Children Department concerns have been raised on the amount of work involved and the costs of administrating all the different grants.</li> </ul>	
9.0	<p><b><u>Grants Register</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The latest grants register for 2019/20 was circulated. Any further updates to be provided to the Grants Compliance Officer.</li> </ul>	Chairs of PWG
10.0	<p><b><u>AOB</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WEFO are currently undertaking Article 57 reviews which relate to the capital element of grant funded projects. The following projects under the 2007-13 European Structural Funds Programme are included in the review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Property Development Fund</li> <li>○ Collaborative Communities</li> <li>○ Local Investment Fund</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
	<p>The objective of the review is to test that the equipment/buildings are still in place and being used for the purpose for which the grant was awarded. Details of the locations have been returned to WEFO. A sample will be taken from the list and a visit arranged by WEFO accordingly. The outcome of the visits to be reported in the next Grants Panel meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requests have been received to provide Grants Management training to officers across departments. It is anticipated that training will be rolled out in March 2020.</li> <li>• Due to a number of factors the Authority is unable to utilise all the grant money for the Community Cohesion project for 2019/2020. However Welsh Government have confirmed that while the grant funding cannot be rolled forward into 2020/2021 it could be used towards committed project spend for April to June 2020. Further clarification to be sought on how this will be managed.</li> </ul>	<p>RP</p> <p>DT/RP</p> <p>⌋</p>
11.0	Date of next meeting – 12 <sup>th</sup> May 2020 at 2:00pm Corporate Services Meeting Room County Hall	