

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER DECISIONS MEETING FOR THE LEADER

30TH SEPTEMBER 2020

Executive Board Member:	Portfolio:	
Cllr. Emlyn Dole	Leader	
ARFOR		
Recommendations / key decisions required: To approve the revised eligibility criteria and proposed procedures for delivery of the ARFOR Innovation Fund to include the introduction of Llwyddo'n Lleol targeting young people to venture into business in the area and allocating funds for the development of rural business hubs and/or 'pop-up' shop type activity.		
Reasons: Maximising Job Creation in rural Carmarthenshire		
Directorate Name of Head of Service: Jason Jones Report Author: Rhian Phillips	Designation Head of Regeneration	Tel: 01267 242336 jajones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Declaration of Personal Interest (if any): None

Dispensation Granted to Make Decision (if any):

DECISION MADE:

Signed: _____ **DATE:** _____

LEADER

The following section will be completed by the Democratic Services Officer in attendance at the meeting

Recommendation of Officer adopted	YES / NO
Recommendation of the Officer was adopted subject to the amendment(s) and reason(s) specified:	
Reason(s) why the Officer's recommendation was not adopted:	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER DECISIONS MEETING FOR THE LEADER
30th September 2020

ARFOR

Background

The aim of the ARFOR programme is to ensure economic growth and prosperity, by enabling people to obtain employment opportunities within local communities which will contribute towards securing the prosperity of the Welsh language in rural communities.

Led by Gwynedd County Council, the programme will be delivered in Carmarthenshire, Gwynedd, Ceredigion and Anglesey with the 4 Local Authorities working in collaboration due to their social and cultural similarity.

ARFOR is seeking to promote entrepreneurship, business growth and community resilience with a focus on promoting the use of the Welsh language by providing an opportunity for new and existing businesses.

ARFOR is a third-party grant scheme, which can include both capital and revenue funding. Funding allocation for Carmarthenshire is 456,250.

To date there have been 17 successful applications, resulting in a total investment of in excess of 800k to rural Carmarthenshire including private sector investment.

Proposed Eligibility Criteria

Due to the need to commit funding by end of the financial year and relatively small amount of budget remaining we propose the following changes:

- Due to the level of grant remainin, the maximum grant be reduced to £5,000 with each grant award based on up to 60% of the total eligible costs
- Due to current economic climate, applications must as a minimum demonstrate existing jobs being safeguarded and/or new jobs being created as a result of ARFOR assistance
- Applications will need demonstrate ways in which it will support the sustainability of the Welsh language within their proposed project as well as wider community.

Application Process

The Arfor fund will be administered as follows:

- Interested applicants will request and application form and submit applications in line with the guidance which will be considered by a project panel made up from representatives from the Local Action Group – Grŵp Cefn Gwlad, who also administer LEADER funding for rural Carmarthenshire. This approach will ensure a more co-ordinated and joined up approach in the delivery of both programmes.
- Applications meeting the required scoring criteria and benchmarks will proceed for full approval via Executive Board meeting.
- The decision making panel and Council's Executive Board Member will then assess and consider each application following assessment panels scoring.

Meanwhile Spaces

Aligned with the recommendations of the Rural Taskforce Moving Rural Carmarthenshire forward report as well as initial findings from Economic growth plan development within rural market towns, the need for rural business space has been identified to foster business growth and entrepreneurialism.

9k of ARFOR budget has been identified for the piloting of business hubs across rural Carmarthenshire. Funds identified will be used for costs such as rental costs, purchase of suitable equipment and fit out costs for the re-development of under utilised spaces within rural market towns.

Llwyddo'n Lleol

Allocate 10k of ARFOR budget to target young people to venture into business within rural Carmarthenshire.

The proposed eligibility criteria will be as follows;

- Applicants aged between 18-30
- New business to be located within rural Carmarthenshire
- All sectors will be eligible bar agriculture due to fund restrictions
- Successful applicants will receive a financial support up to a maximum of £1000
- Mentoring support will also be made available to successful applicants

Recommendations:

1. To approve the revised application & prioritisation process as set out above
2. Approve the utilisation of 9k of ARFOR budget to pilot the use of un—used spaces within rural market towns for business hub/pop up shop activities
3. Approve the utilisation of 10k ARFOR budget for Llwyddo'n Lleol bursary programme as set out above

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED ?	No
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IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: Jason Jones Head of Regeneration

Policy and Crime & Disorder	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Organisational Development	Physical Assets
NONE	YES	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

1. Policy

- All applicants will be required to provide a copy of their Welsh Language Policy as part of the application process.
- All signage displayed on or in a building supported under the fund will need to be displayed bi-lingually.

2. Legal

- The terms and conditions of grant that will be issued to applicants are being considered by CCC legal
- As a condition of grant Legal charges will need to be registered with the land registry on all buildings that are supported under the programme

4. Finance

- The £456,250 capital and revenue funding for third party grant applicants has been confirmed by Welsh Government in their grant offer letter of July 2019.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Jason Jones Head of Regeneration

1. Scrutiny Committee N/A

2. Local Member(s) N/A

3. Community / Town Council N/A

4. Relevant Partners N/A

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations N/A

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

ARFOR Grant offer letter