

**MINUTES OF THE GRANTS PANEL MEETING HELD ON
11th OCTOBER 2021 VIA TEAMS**

PRESENT: Randal Hemingway, Head of Financial Services
 Caroline Powell, Principal Auditor, Internal Audit (IA)
 Rhian Phillips, Economic Development Area Manager
 Nia Thomas, Chair of PWG, Education & Children (Revenue)
 Les James, Chair of PWG, Communities
 Alan Howells, Chair of PWG, Environment
 Delyth Thomas, Grants Compliance Officer
 Anwen Worthy, Audit Lead, Audit Wales

APOLOGIES: Helen Pugh, Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance
 Simon Davies, Chair of PWG, Education & Children (Capital)
 Stuart Walters, Economic Development Manager
 Helen Morgan, Economic Development Manager

	SUBJECT	ACTION
1.0	<p><u>Minutes of the last meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes were agreed. 	
2.0	<p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The service level agreement with Hywel Dda LHB for Wanless (Money Transfers) is still being redrafted. Details to be forwarded to Head of Financial Services who will contact the respective Head of Service. SharePoint is currently being rolled out across all departments. Grants Panel requires an understanding and assurance on the implementation of SharePoint for European funded projects to ensure that we are compliant and have the appropriate accessibility to documents to support audits now and in future years. A specific agenda item to be included in the March Grants Panel meeting. The WG grant conditions do not stipulate on how long the Authority is required to retain all documentation relating to grant funded project. WLGA to be contacted for advice on this matter and to raise the issue with WG. The 2019/20 return for Pooled Budgets has now been submitted to Audit Wales for auditing and supporting documentation has been uploaded onto the Council file plan. Interim arrangements have been established to adopt a manual work flow relating to the grant project proposal form (GPPF) replacing the proposed 	<p>DT/RH</p> <p>DT</p> <p>RH</p>

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	online approval system.	
3.0	<p><u>Audit Wales - Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was confirmed that work will commence on the 2020/21 audit programme at the end of October. Audits will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Housing Benefits ○ NDR ○ Teachers Pension ○ Wanless (Money Transfers) ○ Pooled Budgets (for 2019/20 & 2020/21) • No further updates have been received regarding the audit requirements for the COVID 19 grants managed by the Authority and those administered on behalf of Welsh Government. 	
4.0	<p><u>Internal Audit (IA) - Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A summary was provided on the audit of the 2020/21 Education grants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Education Improvement Grant - completed ○ Pupil Deprivation Grant has started – completion date due 31st December 2021 ○ Local Authority Education Grant has also started – completion date due 31st December 2021 ○ Post 16 Grant is due to commence shortly - completion date due 31st January 2022. • The audits for the following 2020/21 Housing grants have been completed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Housing Support Grant which includes Supporting People, Rent Smart Wales, Homelessness Prevention ○ Enable ○ Supporting People Regional Development Co-ordinator ○ COVID 19 Homelessness & Housing Support Services Phase 2 ○ COVID 19 Homelessness Prevention & Innovation 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The audit on the Children & Communities grant for 2020/21 has been completed. • Work is currently underway to collate a list of all grants awarded for 2021/22 in the Homes & Safer Communities Division. • IA have been notified that the following Housing grants for 2021/22 which potentially will require auditing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tenancy Hardship ○ Homelessness & Housing Related Services Phase 2 Funding – Training Flats Programme Grant ○ Homelessness & Housing Related Services - Empty Properties Grant • A review to be undertaken on which grants are required to be audited by IA and which grants require assurance work for the 2022/2023 Audit Plan. • A meeting to be arranged to discuss the audit requirements for the education revenue grants. 	<p>CP</p> <p>CP/NT</p>
5.0	<p><u>ERW (Education through Regional Working) Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ERW Consortia led by Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) has ended 31st August 2021 • A new education partnership/regional consortia commenced 1st September 2021. The partnership includes CCC, PCC and Swansea Council. • Grants that were awarded via ERW will now be awarded directly to each local authority for 2021/2022. CCC is required to act as a broker for grant monies due to individual schools. • The audit requirements under the new arrangements will be clarified when the Terms & Conditions have been received. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation of the arrangements in place for the new consortia and the audit requirements to be discussed at next Grants Panel meeting. 	NT/CP
6.0	<p><u>Grants Register 2021/22</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A draft register was presented to the meeting detailing current grant funded projects. Details to be reviewed with any updates/amendments to be forwarded to the GCO. 	Chairs PWGs
7.0	<p><u>Project Working Groups</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes of PWG meetings were received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education & Children (Capital): 23/3/2021 & 27/7/2021 Education & Children (Revenue): 29/4/2021 Communities: 28/7/2021, 22/9/2021 Chief Executive's: 23/3/2021 Environment: 28/7/2021 The following updates were provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WG required the Authority to provide a procurement register for all RDP funded projects before any further claims are submitted. Any future procurement process will require WG sign off before the spend is included in a grant claim Grants management training to be undertaken for new employees in Chief Executive's The online system for the PDG Access grant was launched at the start of the academic year. There has been a significant increase in the number of applications following the change in eligibility requirements as advised by WG. Evidence to support the purchase of uniforms is no longer required. Concerns were noted on the delays in the recruitment of staff and the impact this may have on the delivery of grant funded projects 	

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8.0	<p><u>European Grants Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A schedule of all current European grant funded projects was presented to Grants Panel. The total estimated project costs approved and in development is £49.4m with grant of £32.5m. • An update was provided to Grants Panel on the amount of grant income outstanding to the Authority for European grant funded projects. The total amount claimed to date is approximately £16.7m with a total of £1.4m grant income outstanding. • The Connecting Green Infrastructure project led by Neath Port Talbot with the Authority as a partner, has now been approved. The CCC element of the project is £295K and is 100% funded under the Rural Development Programme. • The Authority is awaiting a decision on the full application submitted for the Food COVID Recovery Plan project under the Rural Development Programme. 	
9.0	<p><u>Successor Schemes Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects applications under the Community Renewal Fund & Levelling Up Fund were submitted in June 2021. The Authority is still awaiting a decision. 	
10.0	<p><u>New & Proposed Project</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Authority has submitted a bid into the WG Local Broadband Fund. The bid is to support digital connectivity projects within rural Carmarthenshire. 	
11.0	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is still being undertaken by the TIC Team on the use of electronic signatures. Both Adobe sign and DocuSign are being reviewed as options for use by the Authority. Until this has been resolved it is important that any document requiring approval is 	

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	<p>forwarded to the funding authority direct from the email address of the authorising officer. The Financial Procedure Rules will be updated accordingly when the use of electronic signatures has been approved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact on grants and the introduction of the new regional corporate joint committees by WG has yet to be assessed. These are expected to be in place from April 2022. 	
12.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date of next meeting – 10:00am on 29th November 2021 via Teams 	