

**MINUTES OF THE GRANTS PANEL MEETING HELD ON
26th SEPTEMBER 2022 VIA TEAMS**

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

APOLOGIES: Helen Pugh, Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance
 Simon Davies, Chair of PWG, Education & Children (Capital)
 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 Local Health Board (LHB) for Wanless (Money Transfers) is currently with the Director of Community Services for signing. The results of an exercise to review the audit requirements stipulated in the terms & conditions of grants awarded to Education & Children for 2021/22 to be forwarded to IA. Initial discussions have been undertaken to identify areas to be considered as part of the closure of the European grant funded projects. Further discussions to be presented to the next Grants Panel meeting as a separate agenda item. An email has been sent to the Welsh Government's (WG) Grant Centre of Excellence raising concerns on issues identified in relation to the WG grant claims. No response received to date. A review of the closure guidance for grant funded projects to be undertaken to ensure it includes guidance on the retention of documents held electronically as well as those in paper format. New UK Subsidy rules are due to come into force. A workshop outlining the new rules has been arranged 	<p>NT</p> <p>RP/DT</p> <p>RP</p>

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	by WG for 27th September 2022. Any amendments will need to be incorporated into the Grants Manual.	
3.0	<p><u>Audit Wales - Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The audit of Pooled Budgets for 2019/20 and 2020/21 has been completed. • Audit Wales have confirmed that the audit programme for 2021/22 grants will be the same as 2020/21. It is anticipated that the audits will not start until December 2022. Audit Wales are currently contacting the relevant authorities to agree revised audit deadlines. 	
4.0	<p><u>Internal Audit (IA) - Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following audits on the 2021/22 grant funded projects have been completed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enable ○ Supporting People Regional Development Co-ordinator • There are still audit queries outstanding for the following projects before the audit can be finalised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Housing Support grant ○ Pupil Development grant ○ Regional Consortia Improvement grant • There are no changes to the audit requirements for the 2022/23 Regional Consortia School Improvement grant and the Pupil Development grant as decided by Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) who is the administrative body for the Partneriaeth Consortia. 	
5.0	<p><u>Grants Register 2022/23</u></p> <p>Work has commenced on the grants register for 2022/23. Grants information has been received for the revenue grants within the Education & Children's Department. Information on grants from the other departments is not being forwarded to the GCO for</p>	

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	the grants register to be updated. A reminder to be sent by the PWG Chairs to remind officers to forward this information.	Chairs of PWGs
6.0	<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): 26/7/2022 ○ Communities: 27/7/2022 ○ Environment: 23/3/2022 & 27/7/2022 • The following updates were provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Works on the YMCA in Llanelli is progressing. Completion is expected late summer 2024. The project is funded by WG's Transforming Towns grant. ○ Planning has now been approved for Market Street Llanelli. Funding has already been received from WG. Options on how to progress are being considered by Procurement, Legal and Consultancy. ○ Works on the Carmarthen Hub which is part of the Carmarthen & Pembroke Hubs project, funded by grant through the UK Government's Levelling Up fund, is progressing well. For the Pembroke Hub discussions are still ongoing on finalising the service level agreement with PCC. ○ The Towy Valley Path project also funded through the Levelling Up fund has seen delays in spend due to the land acquisition process. ○ Expressions of interest have been received for a third-party grant from the Business Renewable Energy fund which is core funded. Total grants to be allocated is £500k with a maximum grant of £10k per applicant. Commitment levels are high however the pace for awarding the grants is slow due to supplier capacity issues. ○ Clarification to be sought on the allocation of grant for the Regional Integration Fund (RIF). Previously known as Integrated Care Fund (ICF). 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Concerns have been raised on how work is prioritised for grant funded projects and core funded projects. For grant funded projects there is pressure to maximise spend in tight timescales and how this then impacts on spend on core funded projects when work is delayed. ○ The impact of the pay award when agreed on grant funded projects will need to be considered. Project managers will need to look at options to cover the increased costs and discuss with their Head of Service if necessary. 	
7.0	<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 is £49m with grant of £32m. ● Additional grants monies of £300k awarded for Llandeilo Market Hall by WG. The project is due to be completed in the New Year. ● Good progress is being made on-site for Crosshands Plot 3. The Authority has received confirmation from WG of additional funding. ● 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 £22.7m with a total of £2.3m grant income outstanding. ● Concerns were raised on the delays on the receipt of grant income from lead authorities where CCC is a partner. An email to be sent to the respective local authorities. 	RH

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8.0	<p><u>Successor Schemes Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The South West Wales Regional Investment Plan has been submitted to the UK Government for the Shared Prosperity Fund. The approval of the Investment Plan is expected in October 2022. The plan has been developed on a regional basis to ensure consistency across local authorities. • Thematic projects that will manage major parts of the investment strategy primarily by offering third-party grants to organisations. Proposed anchor projects include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Communities ○ Place ○ Rural and Valleys ○ Supporting Local Business ○ People and Skills • There will be a number of standalone projects which will be managed by a competitive bidding process to cover areas where there are gaps in strategic delivery. There will also be specific commissioned projects with a defined activity that are not covered by the standalone projects. • Bids have been submitted for Levelling Up funding for Llanelli Town Centre and Transport Interchange. Discussion on the outcome of the bids is expected soon. 	
9.0	<p><u>New & Proposed Projects</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval is expected from the WG for the ARFOR 2 project. The project covers 4 local Authorities which includes Gwynedd, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Anglesey with Gwynedd being the lead authority. The project aims are to retain the Welsh language in these specific areas. 	
10.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date of next meeting – 2:00pm on 28th November 2022 via Teams 	