



Report to Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report:
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Report of: Executive Director, City Futures

Report to: Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee

Date of Decision: 30/11/2022

Subject: Approval to procure partners for delivery of Multiply Funding Grant from South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA)

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? <i>(Insert reference number)</i>				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<p><i>"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."</i></p>				

Purpose of Report:

To seek Committee approval for the commissioning of up to £1m (over 3 years to March 2025) in order to maximise the Multiply Numeracy Grant awarded by the South Yorkshire Combined Mayoral Authority (SYCMA) for the benefit of Sheffield residents.

Recommendations:

- Approve the option to subcontract funding awarded to SCC from SYMCA over 3 financial years to March 2025.

Background Papers:

Multiply DfE National Initiative papers:

[Multiply: funding available to improve adult numeracy skills - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/multiply-funding-available-to-improve-adult-numeracy-skills)

SYMCA overview of Multiply as part of the UKSPF:

[News - South Yorkshire MCA \(southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk/news/south-yorkshire-mca)

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Mark Wassell/Gerard Higgins
		Legal: Rike Ridings
		Equalities & Consultation: <i>Bashir Khan</i>
		Climate: <i>Jessica Rick</i>
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	SLB member who approved submission:	<i>Andrew Jones</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Cllr Martin Smith</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Ellie Churchward</i>	Job Title: <i>Head of Lifelong Learning, Skills and Employment</i>
	Date: <i>1st November 2022</i>	

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 The City Council has received grant funding to deliver adult education and training to those aged 19+ for many years now channelled through the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) from the Department for Education (DfE).
- 1.2 Multiply is a new national initiative for adults aged 19+ that aims to raise awareness of the benefits of understanding numeracy and creating pathways into gaining skills/qualifications in maths, equipping adults with the maths skills they need to progress in work and life.
- 1.3 This funding is part of the government's Levelling Up agenda replacing ESF with the UK Shared Prosperity Fund – with Multiply as a direct initiative for adult training provision to deliver this for adults who do not have a maths qualification at Level 2/GCSE G4 or below.
- 1.4 The range of interventions cannot displace learning delivered within the boundaries of the Adult Education Budget, but rather be a pathway to it to encourage adults to work towards a Level 2 in Maths.
- 1.5 The priority themes for this activity will be Numeracy for Work (employers and a focus on ESOL learners), Community Family Learning Education, and with adults being economically active as well as those that are unemployed.
- 1.6 The activities will focus on large scale engagement in the initial stages, with short and targeted skills activity, support to increase employment opportunities, succession planning for employers, and raising skills with employers using sector specialist numeracy activity.
- 1.7 All reporting will be completed using the existing mechanisms used for the Adult Education Budget provision, where staffing will be enhanced to meet the capacity requirements.
- 1.8 This funding will be available across all wards in Sheffield and will target vulnerable/marginalised adults and will encourage participation in learning that leads to employment, further learning and/or training.
- 1.9 Targeted activity will be sought via procurement of Voluntary, Community and Faith, Schools, and provider partners to ensure capacity for the project can be met utilising existing networks and local intelligence.
- 1.10 Learning activity may be subject to inspection scrutiny when the Lifelong Learning and Skills Service is inspected by Ofsted.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

- 2.1 There are approximately 17m adults in England that have everyday maths skills equivalent to those expected of a primary aged school child. People who improve their numeracy skills are more likely to be in employment, have higher wages, and better well-being – all further hampered by the current cost of living crises.
- 2.2 Adults/parents are influential in the choices young people make and are the first source of home education support – often failing in the subject of maths due to confidence and/or low numeracy skills.
- 2.3 Statistics demonstrate that attainment in maths across South Yorkshire is falling. Low maths skills influence future choices for skills acquisition, further education/training thus limiting earning potential and career choice. This will impact negatively on levelling up the localised skills/workforce of the future.
- 2.4 This funding will provide an opportunity for SCC to engage with a large number of potential learners and/or employers/future employers to raise the profile of why they should upskill their knowledge and understanding of numeracy.
- 2.5 Current intelligence demonstrates that numeracy is a less likely programme for adults to engage in and/or achieve well compared to other adult learning programmes.
- 2.6 Increasing adult numeracy across the population will improve labour market outcomes/sustained employment destinations.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 SYMCA have continued consultation across South Yorkshire authorities to raise the profile of the benefits of Multiply and will continue to be cited as part of the overall future skills strategy.
- 3.2 The Service continues to conduct 'learner focus groups', learner voice, and gather localised intelligence on the numeracy levels of adult learners.
- 3.3 DfE have launched a national campaign as part of their Skills for Life initiative.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 See EIA 925

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 **S31 Grant (Ring-Fenced) for Multiply (£2.194m)**

Key features (not exclusive) of the grant terms and conditions are summarised below. The Portfolio Grant Manager will need to: read, understand and comply with all of the grant terms and conditions

- Funding originally passported from DfE to SYMCA and then to SCC
- Multiply aims to boost maths ability /achieve formal qualifications
- SYMCA to develop investment plans for adult numeracy programmes
- Delivering targeted numeracy provision to adults (19+)
- Grant paid in one instalment / subject to DFE to approving investment plans
- Maximum funding allocation is set out at Annex B.

4.2.2 **Grant Conditions**

- Grant is ring-fenced and only for 'Eligible Expenditure'.
- 'Eligible Expenditure': 1/4/22 to 31/3/23 to deliver the Multiply programme.
- Interventions should not displace, replace, duplicate existing adult numeracy provision, such as e.g. existing Adult Education Budget (AEB) provision.
- Certain costs are excluded from Eligible Expenditure (see details):
- Grant is inclusive of any irrecoverable VAT
- Grant shall be used to deliver the activities that it has set out in its approved investment plan for the Multiply programme (see activity details)
- Grant can contribute to a fund made up of contributions by the Authority from both the Multiply grant and other sources of LA funding etc (see details).
- Grant usage is expected to meet the indicative outputs/outcomes detailed in each Authority's Investment Plan (as per Annex F).
- Comply with the ways of working set out in such MoU re: this grant.
- Certified by Chief Executive / Section 151 Officer by 30/4/23
- Grant may be subject to External Audit
- SCC to comply with monitoring and reporting requirements (See Annex E)
- Grant subject to clawback if terms and conditions are not complied with.
- Ensure VFM obtained in the procurement of goods/ services funded by grant.
- Where Authorities act in a consortium a signed agreement is needed
- Consult with DFE before making material change to consortium

agreement

- Records to be kept for 7 years
- DFE will assess any net under/ over delivery against the grant for FY 22-23.
- At the end of FY 22-23, DFE will recover any net underspend below 100% of grant by setting off any recovery against future payments to the Authority. Where there are insufficient future payments planned, the Authority will be invoiced for the material difference.
- All the conditions that apply to the use of the grant will continue to apply to any funds carried over.
- DFE will engage a third party to undertake an evaluation of Multiply.
- See Appendix C of the Multiply MOU for details of the schedule of reporting.

4.2.3 **Memorandum of Understanding**

- Entered into between each Authority and DFE and contains details on the objectives/ principles for the use of funding and the responsibilities of each Authority.
- Agree to deliver Multiply programme (covers a no of measures (see details)
- MoU is to establish ways of working /an agreed approach delivery responsibilities and builds upon the Multiply investment prospectus
- Applies to Financial Year 22-23, and also 23-24 and 24-25 if grant is received
- MOU should be read together with relevant documents and Grant Determination.
- Parties will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for the receipt/and disbursement of Multiply funds as set out in the Grant Determination.
- Commissioning -Complying with Public Contracts Regulations 2015,
- MOU Amendments require agreement of the relevant Parties.
- The MoU is not exhaustive or intended to be legally binding. No legal obligations or legal rights shall arise between the Parties.
- MoU will commence on the date stated at the beginning

4.2.4 **Commercial Implications.**

- External Funding colleagues need to be comfortable with the grant conditions and SCC accepting the funding and a signed funding agreement needs to be in place before procurement can proceed.
- As stated above the timescales for the timescales associated with the procurement of provision, particularly for Year 1, are

challenging and may impact on the market response.

- One aspect not mentioned in the report is the lack of clarity regarding delivery in years 2 and 3 and how the specification has the potential to change.
- All public sector procurement is governed by and must be compliant with the Grant Agreement and the relevant UK National Law. In addition, all procurement in SCC must comply with its own Procurement Policy, and internal regulations known as 'Contracts Standing Orders' (CSOs).
- CSO requirements will apply in full to the procurement of services, goods or works utilising grants. All grant monies must be treated in the same way as any other Council monies and any requirement to purchase / acquire services, goods or works must go via a competitive process

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 The Secretary of State has a duty under the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 to secure the provision of such facilities considered appropriate for adults aged 19 or over (other than those with an EHC Plan). The Act contains a power for the Secretary of State to secure the provision of financial resources to persons providing or proposing to provide education or training; goods or services in connection with education or training; and information, advice or guidance about education or training.
- 4.3.2 By virtue of the statutory instrument South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SI 2020/806), the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) exercises, in relation to their area, certain adult education functions of the Secretary of State under the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009
- 4.3.3 Sheffield City Council has a general power under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything that an individual may generally do provided it is not prohibited by other legislation and the power is exercised in accordance with the limitations specified in the Act which enables the Council to accept the funding.
- 4.3.4 The Grant Funding from the Department for Education to the SYMCA will be made pursuant to section 31(4) of the Local Government Act 2003. Section 31 Grant Conditions tend to be light touch in nature.
- 4.3.5 Upon delivery of the Multiply Programme, the Council must ensure that any contracting authority will adopt such policies and procedures that are required to ensure value for money has been obtained in the procurement of goods or services funded by the Grant.
- 4.3.6 The Council will enter into Grant Conditions by way of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department for Education. If any terms of the

Grant Conditions are breached, the Council are at risk of reduction, suspension, or clawback of funds.

- 4.3.7 The Council will ensure that this risk is 'mirrored down' in any agreements with Voluntary, Community and Faith and Employer partners following a compliant procurement process. The onward grant agreement with Voluntary, Community and Faith and Employer partners will be for a period of three years until 2025.

4.4 **Climate Implications**

- 4.4.1 The Service curriculum intent and planning considers sustainability and climate impact and fully embeds key themes of learning in every programme. There is a commitment to development of 'Carbon Literacy' with both families and adults across the provision. The service will embed a sustainability policy into the due diligence of procured provision.

4.5 **Other Implications**

None

5. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 There are no alternative viable options for this funding. The only alternative would be to not accept the funding, which would mean we miss out on this investment in adult learning.

6. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 To maximise the opportunity to raise aspirations and attainment in numeracy skills and maths achievement in Sheffield, working in partnership with those that can increase engagements and activity in learning.