

| MINUTES OF THE GRANTS PANEL MEETING HELD ON 1st OCTOBER 2019 IN CORPORATE SERVICES MEETING ROOM, COUNTY HALL. | | |
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| PRESENT: | Randal Hemingway, Head of Financial Services Nia Thomas, Chair of PWG, Education & Children (Revenue) Alan Howells, Chair of PWG, Environment Rhian Phillips, Economic Development Area Manager Caroline Powell, Principal Auditor, Internal Audit (IA) Delyth Thomas, Grants Compliance Officer | |
| APOLOGIES: | Helen Pugh, Head of Revenues & Financial Compliance Les James, Chair of PWG, Communities Simon Davies, Chair of PWG, Education & Children (Capital) Stuart Walters, Economic Development Manager Helen Morgan, Economic Development Manager Kate Havard, Financial Audit Team, Wales Audit Office (WAO) | |
| | SUBJECT | ACTION |
| 1.0 | <u>Minutes of the last meeting</u> | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The minutes were agreed. | |
| 2.0 | <u>Matters Arising</u> | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The revised Grants Manual was approved by Audit Committee on the 13th September 2019. The Manual is to be distributed via the Heads of Service by email. The Chairs of the PWG are to be copied in on the email as they will have a co-ordinating role to ensure that all staff involved in grant funded projects receive a copy. Any training requirements to be fed back to the Grants Compliance Officer and the Economic Development Area Manager. | RH |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An email to be sent to all Directors requesting that they send confirmation to the Corporate Services Business Support Unit (via email) as to which Heads of Service have been given delegated authority to sign the acceptance of grant. Details to be recorded on the Authority's Authorised Signatories List. | RH |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation has been received from ERW that the Authority has met the delegation requirements for the Education Improvement Grant as per the Welsh Government terms & conditions. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A copy of the audit report on the Regional Integrated Care Fund has been received from WAO and is available for all Grants Panel members. | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation to be sought from WAO if any issues had arisen regarding the management of sensitive information between local authorities for the Social Care Workforce Development Programme which is managed on a regional basis led by Ceredigion County Council. An exercise to be undertaken by Carmarthenshire County Council to monitor projects subject to Article 55 in accordance with WEFO requirements for the European Structural Funds Programme 2007-13. Confirmation has been received from WG that arrangements for signing the Annual Statement of Grant Expenditure for the Children and Communities Grant may be signed by either the organisation's Internal Auditor or Chief Finance Officer but will not necessarily require an audit by Internal Audit. | <p>DT</p> <p>RP</p> |
| 3.0 | <p><u>Wales Audit Office - Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All grants claims and returns included in the 2018/19 audit programme have been passed to WAO. Audits have commenced on Housing Benefits, NDR, Teachers Pension, 21st Century Schools and Sustainable Waste Management. No significant issues identified to date and it is expected that all audits are on track to be completed by the agreed deadlines. A letter has been received from WG regarding the audit certification of Welsh Government local authority grant schemes by WAO. From 2019/20 onwards, local authority grant schemes will no longer be audited by WAO, however, for grants 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. <p>Confirmation to be received from WG if any communication has been sent to local authorities on a grant-by-grant basis.</p> <p>Additional time to be allocated in the Authority's IA audit plan to undertake additional grant testing.</p> | <p>KH/DT</p> |

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| 4.0 | <p><u>Internal Audit (IA) - Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2018/19 audits have been completed of the following grants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Education Improvement Grant (EIG) ○ Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG) ○ Supporting People ○ Supporting People - Regional Development Co-ordinator ○ Supporting People - Outcomes return ○ Enable – Support for Independent Living ○ Rent Smart Wales • The audits of the Homelessness Prevention Grant and Post 16 are due to be completed by the end of January 2020. | |
| 5.0 | <p><u>Project Working Groups – Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of PWG meetings were circulated to Grants Panel members for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Education & Children (Capital): 23/7/19 ○ Education & Children (Revenue): 1/2/19, 22/3/19 ○ Environment: 24/7/19 ○ Communities: 25/3/19, 19/7/19 ○ Chief Executives: 24/9/18, 27/11/18, 23/1/19, 27/3/19 • Issues have arisen regarding the Additional Learning Needs grant which is managed on a regional basis by the Authority. Queries have been received from Neath Port Talbot CBC regarding the financial distribution of funds. This has resulted in a delay in allocating grant monies to other local authorities and the signing of the service level agreement. | |
| 6.0 | <p><u>European Grants Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A current schedule of all European funded projects was presented to Grants Panel. The total estimated project costs approved and in development is £41m with a grant of £27.6m. | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 'In principle' Offer of Support under the Building for the Future programme for Llandeilo Market Hall has been received with total project costs of £3.8m and a grant of £1.4m. Formal approval is still to be received from WG • An application for funding for LINC phase 2 is currently being drafted under the Rural Development Programme. • As some grants are claimed and monies received in euros concerns have been raised on the impact of exchange rate fluctuations due to Brexit arrangements and how this should be managed e.g. forward contracts, hedging. | |
| 7.0 | <p><u>Grants Register</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The draft grants register for 2019/20 has been circulated to the chairs of the PWGs. A deadline of 14th October 2019 has been given for any amendments or updates to be provided to Grants Compliance Officer. | Chairs of PWGs |
| 8.0 | <p><u>AOB</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The due diligence process that is being undertaken for procurement and third party grants is currently under review. When the review is complete the process will be documented accordingly. • Different arrangements are currently in place on how local authorities manage and distribute grants for the School Uniform Grant received from WG. It is considered that the Authority currently has a robust system and it has been agreed to continue with the current arrangements as it provides assurance that any monies provided are solely used for the purchase of school uniforms. | |
| 9.0 | Date of next meeting – 1:00pm on 22 nd November 2019 Corporate Services Meeting Room County Hall | |