

**MINUTES OF THE GRANTS PANEL MEETING HELD ON
3rd SEPTEMBER 2020 VIA TEAMS**

PRESENT: Randal Hemingway, Head of Financial Services
 Caroline Powell, Principal Auditor, Internal Audit (IA)
 Rhian Phillips, Economic Development Area Manager
 Stuart Walters, Economic Development Manager
 Alan Howells, Chair of PWG, Environment
 Nia Thomas, Chair of PWG, Education & Children (Revenue)
 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)
 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. <p><u>Matters Arising</u></p>	
2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 2 projects that are subject to the WEFO Article 55 income monitoring requirements for the European Structural Funds programme 2007-13 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials Efficiency (led by Pembrokeshire County Council) – annual checks are undertaken and no issues identified to date Y Ffwrnes – service manager to be contacted For projects funded under the Rural Development Programme, an assessment is to be undertaken to record the impact where match funding included on claims submitted by the Authority is being amended by the funding body to bring it in line with the committed percentage of match funding regardless of the sum generated. Quarterly monitoring is currently undertaken, should these control mechanisms identify a risk to the Authority then the risk is to be reported to Grants Panel. Approval has been received to appoint an officer to undertake the ongoing review of the evidence to support the community benefits provided by an appointed contractor, as part of the procurement requirements. Confirmation has been received that Grants Panel has a monitoring role of CCC projects funded under City Deal. 	<p>RP</p> <p>RP</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation to be obtained that the service level agreement with Hywel Dda LHB has been amended to reflect the approved budget figures for the Wanless return (Money Transfers) for 2019/20. • A review to be undertaken on whether there are pooled budget arrangements in place with Hywel Dda LHB in relation to Care Home Commissioning for the financial year 2020/21. • Procurement Section to be contacted to deliver training for officers in the Education & Children department and officers within the Homes & Safer Communities division of the Communities department. • Information has been forwarded to WEFO for the Article 57 reviews for projects under the 2007-13 European Structural Funds Programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Property Development Fund ○ Collaborative Communities ○ Local Investment Fund ○ Crosshands East Strategic Employment Site The review is to test that the buildings/equipment are still in place and are being used for the purpose for which the grant was awarded. Due to COVID 19 visits have been cancelled. WEFO have requested dated photographs as evidence for Collaborative Communities and Local Investment Fund. The Authority is still waiting for instructions from WEFO for the other projects. • Grants Management training is to be delivered in small groups via Teams (max of 6 officers). Training to take approximately 1 1/2 hours. Training to start with officers of the Environment department with the intention that 2 sessions a week will be provided starting in October. • The current delegation arrangements for signing of grant claims within Finance is to remain subject to Director of Corporate Services approval. • WG's Grant Centre of Excellence have confirmed that a signed document scanned and sent to them via email direct from the authorised signatory for acceptance of grant and for grant claims is 	<p>DT</p> <p>RH/LJ</p> <p>NT/LJ</p> <p>RH</p>

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	<p>acceptable. Further long term solutions are currently being considered e.g. DocuSign, Adobe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracts for school-based staff funded by the Education Improvement Grant have been extended to 31/12/2020. ERW have reached an agreement for the allocation of grant monies to each local authority. Details due in next few weeks. 	
3.0	<p><u>Audit Wales - Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following returns for 2019/20 have been submitted for auditing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Housing Benefits ○ NDR Return ○ Teachers' Pension • Pooled Budgets (Joint Equipment Store) is due to be submitted next week. • Wanless (Money Transfers) is due by 30/9/2020. • It is anticipated that the audits will commence late September/early October. 	
4.0	<p><u>Internal Audit (IA) - Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following audits for 2019/20 have been completed and no issues identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Children and Communities grant ○ Housing Support Co-ordinator • The final requirements for the 2019/20 audits for the Pupil Deprivation Grant and the Education Improvement Grant are still outstanding from ERW. However audit work has commenced. • The audit of the Enable grant has been completed. The service level agreement with Care & Repair to be updated. • The audit of Housing Support Grant is due to be signed off next week. No issues identified. • The audit of the local authority Education grant has 	

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	started.	
5.0	<p><u>Grants Register 2020/21</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An update on the grants register has been received for Education & Children (Revenue). • An exercise to be undertaken to review grants awarded in 2019/20 and 2020/21 to assess if there has been any impact on the amount of grant awarded to the Authority because of the COVID 19 crisis. 	DT
6.0	<p><u>Project Working Groups</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"> ○ Communities: 20/7/20 	
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 and in development is £44.8m with grant of £28.8m. • The Rural Market Economic Growth Plans project funded under the Rural Development Programme has been extended from October 20 to March 21. • A business plan has been submitted for the LINC project under the Rural Development Programme. The Authority is currently waiting for a response. • An update was provided to Grants Panel on the amount of outstanding grant income that is due to the Authority for European grant funded projects. The total amount claimed to date is approximately £14.8m with a total of £3.2m grant income outstanding. • For the 2 capital projects the total grant income outstanding is more than £2m. Project managers to 	SW

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	be contacted to establish reasons for the delay and when grant monies are expected.	
8.0	<p><u>City Deal Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officer to be invited to next meeting to provide update on CCC projects that being delivered through City Deal funding. 	
9.0	<p><u>New & Proposed Projects</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A grant offer has been accepted for funding from ERASMUS+ which is the European Union's exchange programme for students and staff. The total funding is for €102k. Due to the nature of the project it has been advised that a report needs to be submitted to the gold/silver recovery group (COVID 19) for approval. A business plan and an application for funding has been submitted by Trading Standards to the Welsh Government's Local Government Digital Transformation Fund. A response is expected by mid-October. 	NT
10.0	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Physical Regeneration Scheme under 2007-13 European Structural Funds programme is also subject to an Article 57 review by WEFO. Due to the COVID 19 crisis hardship claims have been submitted to WG monthly. Further information has been provided to WG where requests for additional information have been made. No indications have been received on whether these claims will be subject to an audit by IA or Audit Wales. However IA have allocated time in the business plan to review the claims in January 21. 	
11.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Date of next meeting – 10:00am on 27th November 2020 via Teams 	