

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Delegated Officer Decision – 16 January 2023

Report Title

Approval to spend the Multiply Grant for 2022/23

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

Yes

Assistant Director Approving Submission of the Report

Simon Moss, Assistant Director for Planning, Regeneration and Transport

Report Author(s)

Simeon Leach, Economic Strategy and Partnerships Manager

0794 990 1043

Simeon.leach@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

Multiply is a government funded programme to improve numeracy skills, focusing on supporting people aged 19+, who currently do not have a Level 2 Maths qualification.

The money is awarded to the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority to allocate to the four local authorities to arrange delivery in the local area. The Council has been awarded up to £200,000 for 2022/23, the majority of which will be granted to voluntary and community organisations for local delivery of predominantly engagement and confidence building work. This will help ensure the amount of spending will be maximised and have greatest local impact. Cost will also be incurred in the management of the programme (10% of total spend can be claimed) and in marketing and communications.

Options are being considered for the most effective way to commission activity in 2023/24 and 2024/25.

Multiply funding is awarded as an annual allocation that cannot be rolled forward into subsequent years. SYMCA will be required to return any unspent funds to government.

Recommendations

1. That the Assistant Director of Planning, Regeneration and Transport, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy, approve the awarding of grants to organisations delivering activities forming part of the Multiply programme as set out in Appendix 2, subject to the finalisation of individual grant agreements, as agreed by Finance and Legal.
2. That the Head of RiDO, in conjunction with the Head of Finance R&E, be authorised to finalise and manage the implementation of the associated Grant Funding Agreements up to a total in-year limit of £200,000 being Rotherham's 2022/23 Multiply funding allocation.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 Letter from SYMCA confirming funding for 2022/23
- Appendix 2 Summary of applications for 2022/23 Multiply grants, received to date (**exempt**)
- Appendix 3 Initial Equality Screening Assessment Form
- Appendix 3b Part B – Equality Analysis Form
- Appendix 4 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

The Multiply Investment Prospectus can be found at the link below:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1068822/Multiply_Investment_Prospectus.pdf

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

Yes

An exemption is sought for Appendix 2 under Paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the authority holding that information)) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 is requested, as this report contains sensitive commercial information with regards to commercial agreements which could disadvantage the bidding organisations if the information were to be made public.

It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption would outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information, as the parties' commercial interests could be prejudiced by disclosure of commercial information.

Approval to spend the Multiply grant for 2022/23

1. Background

- 1.1 Multiply is a government programme, running until 31st March 2025, that will provide funding for local areas to deliver innovative solutions to increase adult numeracy levels. SYMCA has received £7.2M of Multiply funding which it will allocate to local authorities and colleges to deliver or procure the activity.
- 1.2 Of the SYMCA allocation of £2.2 million for 2022/23, the Council has been allocated £200,000. All efforts will be made to fully allocate these funds to local organisations, as there is no provision for the rollover of funding between years, and any funding not spent by 31st March 2023 will be returned to central government.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Multiply will target those Rotherham residents, 19+, who do not have a Level 2 qualification in maths/numeracy. The Council will act as the conduit of the funding, with the majority of Year 1 activity being delivered by the voluntary and community sector in various localities across the Borough. This investment will be of considerable value and all efforts to spend it within the agreed timescales will be made.
- 2.2 Options are being considered for the most appropriate way to commission activity for future years.
- 2.3 The majority of year one activity will be engagement and confidence building with local residents. There could also be some assessing of current levels of numeracy competency.
- 2.4 Local delivery organisations have been approached directly, while a general call has also gone out for bids on the VAR websites.
- 2.5 A summary of applications received is attached at Appendix 2.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Option 1: The Council accept the funding offered of £200k and use a grant process to fund local vol/comm organisations to deliver activity. – This option will allow the delivery of numeracy support in local areas and to help those residents most in need.
- 3.2 Option 2: The offer of funding is not accepted. – This will mean that numeracy support and training will not be delivered in Rotherham (except through RNN which has also received a smaller allocation).

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 Colleagues in the Finance, Legal, Procurement, and Partnerships services have been consulted as have SYMCA and the Employment and Skills Teams in the other South Yorkshire authorities.
- 4.2 The Council has held discussion with RNN and will continue to do so to ensure activities complement each other and that there is no duplication.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 This decision needs to be made and implemented as quickly as possible in order to maximise the time available to defray the funding in the current financial year.
- 5.2 Officers within RiDO will assess applications and eligibility of grant applications and work with colleagues in finance to produce Grant Funding Agreements.
- 5.3 The Head of RiDO will be responsible for awarding of the grants, ensuring that the money is spent correctly and that the agreed outputs are delivered in return in accordance with the Grant Funding Agreement.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 Officers sought approval to bid for the Grant from SYMCA at the value of £200k via the Council's Grant Authorisation Process. Following approval of the grant award, officers confirmed via the Council's grant approval process that the proposed use of the grant was still acceptable. As such the fund will be used as follows.

Grant funding agreements will be agreed with all external partners, and payments made in advance, but with ability for the Council to reclaim the funds if the agreed activities and outcomes are not delivered. The Council is able to claim up to a maximum of 10% of the grant (£20k) to cover internal staff time, communications and marketing.

- 6.2 As the proposal is to award the monies through grant agreements there are no procurement implications.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 There are no material legal implications arising from the contents of this report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct human resource implications arising from this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 Equalities Screening Form Parts A and B are appended to this report.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 Carbon Impact Assessment is appended to this report.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1. RNN also receive funding for delivery in Rotherham for Year 1 and the Council will work with RNN to ensure there is no duplication of delivery.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Risk – Activity is not delivered before 31st March 2023 and funding is returned to SYMCA and the government. Completing £200,000 of eligible expenditure in the time available is a stretching target.

Mitigation – funding for 2022/23 will be given out via grants rather than a full procurement exercise, which will be quicker.

14. Accountable Officers

Simeon Leach, Economic Strategy and Partnerships Manager

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Named officer	Click here to enter a date.
Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Named officer	Click here to enter a date.

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