

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 19 June 2023

Report Title

Multiply Programme

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

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

Simeon Leach, Economic Strategy and Partnerships Manager

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

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

Multiply funding is allocated through the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA), which intends to devolve funding to the four local authorities in South Yorkshire to arrange delivery in their local area. The Council received £194,000 for 2022/23, which was granted to voluntary and community organisations for local delivery of predominantly engagement and confidence building work.

SYMCA is providing a further £408,000 per annum to the Council for each of the years 2023/24 and 2024/25. This will provide funding for a Multiply Manager to design and secure implementation of a Multiply Programme in Rotherham and grant funding to commission third party organisations to contractually deliver the programme outcomes and activity agreed with the South Yorkshire Combined Mayoral Authority.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Approve the acceptance and planned spend of an annual Multiply grant of £408,000 from SYMCA, for each of the years 2023/24 and 2024/25.

2. Delegates authority to the Assistant Director of Planning, Regeneration and Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy, to agree grant awards, within the terms and conditions of the funding, to colleges, community organisations and other training providers to deliver the agreed learning activity and outputs for the Programme.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 Initial Equality Screening Assessment Form
- Appendix 1b Part B – Equality Analysis Form
- Appendix 2 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

No

Multiply Programme

1. Background

- 1.1 Multiply is a national 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 to deliver and/or procure the activity within their areas.
- 1.2 In 2022/23, the Council was allocated £194,000 to deliver Year 1 of the Multiply Programme. This funding was used to provide grants to 13 training organisations, the majority of them local, to deliver numeracy support and learning, mainly engagement focussed activity.
- 1.3 Rotherham's funding award for 2023/24 and 2024/25 is £408,000 per annum.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Multiply will target Rotherham residents, 19+, who do not have a Level 2 qualification in maths/numeracy. The Council is to act as the accountable body for the funding. This investment will make a material difference to local residents through delivering adult education outputs and deliver outcomes with lasting impact.
- 2.2 During Year 1, the Multiply Programme was delivered to 534 Rotherham residents:
 - Of these 376 learners, participated in sessions designed to increase interest and learner engagement with functional numeracy skills whilst diagnosing the individual's learning goals and needs.
 - Of these 165 learners progressed onto substantive short courses, accessing an average of 4 hours planned learning time with progressive learning outcomes for each session.
 - The provision was delivered by a mix of external tutors and maths specialists including accountants who delivered sessions specialising in money management.
 - Providers designed their own learning models to bring innovative approaches to the teaching of functional Maths skills. These included cooking on a budget, understanding maths and money, pattern making, family learning classes and teaching Maths through ESOL.
- 2.3 For Years 2 and 3, the funding will be used to procure activity to deliver the Multiply Delivery Plan. This Plan sets out the outputs that are expected to be delivered against an agreed amount of funding for each Multiply intervention. Outputs are split between "engagement" of learners (less than 2 hours of support) and "substantive learning (more than 2 hours).

Multiply Delivery Plan - Programme Outputs

| | | Number of Learners per year | |
|---|---|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | | Substantive (2 hours +) | Engagement (less than two hours) |
| 1 | Innovative numeracy programmes delivered together with employers – including courses designed to cover specific numeracy skills required in the workplace | 204 | 415 |
| 2 | Courses aimed at people who can't apply for certain jobs because of lack of numeracy skills and/or to encourage people to upskill in numeracy order to access a certain job/career | 107 | 58 |
| 3 | Numeracy activities, courses or provision developed in partnership with community organisations and other partners aimed at engaging the hardest to reach learners (disadvantaged) | 68 | 293 |
| 4 | Numeracy activities, courses or provision developed in partnership with community organisations and other partners aimed at engaging the hardest to reach learners (numeracy life skills) | 68 | 293 |
| 5 | Courses for parents wanting to increase their numeracy skills in order to help their children, and help with their own progression | 74 | 203 |

2.4 A Multiply Manager has been employed in order to design the programme and secure implementation through commissioning third party organisations to contractually deliver the programme outcomes.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 Option 1: **Recommended** - The Council accept the funding of £408,000 per annum over two years (23/24 and 24/25) and, through a grant award process, within the terms and conditions of the funding, commissions

colleges, community organisations and other training providers to deliver the agreed learning activity and outputs for the Programme. 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 unless SYMCA is able to agree an alternative delivery approach (for example direct contracting with providers). This is not a favoured approach for SYMCA; it is not in line with the delivery approach being implemented across the rest of South Yorkshire and is likely to result in additional cost and delay to the programme resulting in reduced outputs and outcomes. This option is not therefore recommended.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 The Rotherham Employment & Skills Board, SYMCA and the Employment and Skills Teams in the other South Yorkshire authorities have been consulted.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The funding is available from 1st April 2023. £408,000 of funds are allocated for each year. There is no roll-over of unspent funds, so any grant not spent within year, must be returned to SYMCA and then Central Government.
- 5.3 The RiDO team will be responsible for management of grant agreements, ensuring that the money is spent correctly and that the agreed outputs are delivered in accordance with the Grant Funding Agreement that will be signed with SYMCA.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The Multiply Project commenced with an award to the Council of £194,000 for 2022/23, which was then granted to voluntary and community organisations for local delivery of predominantly engagement and confidence building work.
- 6.2 The Council has now been awarded a further £408,000 per annum for each of the years 2023/24 and 2024/25. This funding plan includes a management role for the Council's delivery of the initiative. It is envisaged that providers will include Rotherham and North Notts College (RNN) who will receive grant funding under a sealed funding agreement in line with the regional Multiply Delivery Plan. The Council will then invite service providers to bid for grants for the delivery of the programme with the remainder of the funding and as such there are no direct procurement implications.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 Subject to Legal Services approving the Grant Funding Agreement, there are no substantive legal issues arising from the content of this report other than as already detailed within the report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 The staffing resource implications regarding the management of the programme are outlined within section 2 of the report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 Multiply is a programme to improve numeracy skills, focusing on supporting people aged 19+, who currently do not have a Level 2 Maths qualification. Clients will include young people aged 19 to 25 and vulnerable adults and will assist those who are struggling with poor numeracy skills, not just in securing employment, but also in other areas of their lives.

9.2 Specific programme outcomes will include:

- Courses for parents wanting to increase their numeracy skills in order to help their children and help with their own progression.
- Numeracy activities, courses or provision developed in partnership with community organisations and other partners aimed at engaging the hardest to reach learners – for example, those not in the labour market or other groups identified locally as in need.
- In-work numeracy through ESOL.
- Courses aimed at people who can't apply for certain jobs because of lack of numeracy skills and/or to encourage people to upskill in numeracy order to access a job/career.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

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

10.2 The Programme will focus on those areas and communities of interest that are most disengaged. Initial activity will focus around engagement and confidence building and activity will be delivered in localities, with an emphasis on engaging with the hardest to reach groups and those furthest from the employment market. The programme is expected to have a positive effect on equality and diversity by enhancing the life chances of excluded and under-represented communities across the borough.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 Carbon Impact Assessment is appended to this report. Approval Number CIA063.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 The Council will work with RNN, Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR) and other partners to make as wide a range of local organisations as possible aware of the opportunity to bid for funding.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 That the full funding allocation is not spent, and some money has to be returned to Government.

Mitigation: The procurement process should identify any major risks. Deliverers will be required to make monthly monitoring returns, and any emerging issues will be identified early. In Year 1, over £150,000 of spend was delivered in just over 2 months.

- 13.2 There is insufficient interest in delivery of the activity.

Mitigation – 13 organisations delivered in Year 1 and the majority have shown an interest in delivering in subsequent years. The contract will be advertised on the Council and VAR websites. RNN has stated that it will be able to deliver further activity if additional funding became available for them.

14. Accountable Officers

Simeon Leach, Economic Strategy and Partnerships Manager
Tim O'Connell, Head of RiDO

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

| | Named Officer | Date |
|--|----------------------|-------------|
| Chief Executive | Sharon Kemp | 05/06/23 |
| Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer) | Judith Badger | 31/05/23 |
| Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer) | Phil Horsfield | 30/05/23 |

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This report is published on the Council's [website](#).