

Public Report with Exempt Appendices
Delegated Officer Decision

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Delegated Officer Decision – 31 August 2023

Report Title

Approval of the allocation of Multiply Grants for 2023/24 and 2024/25

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

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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 funding to deliver Multiply is awarded to the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) which then allocates to the four local authorities to manage delivery locally. Rotherham has been awarded up to £408,000 for both 2023/24 and 2024/25. Acceptance of this grant was approved by Cabinet on 19th June 202 and included delegation to AD to agree the grant awards

A proportion of the funding will be used to fund the Council's Multiply Manager, with the remaining funds granted to voluntary and community organisations for local delivery of engagement activities and substantive learning.

Appendix 2 gives details of the awards made. The organisations will report monthly on spend and outputs, to the Multiply Manager

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 those 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.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 - Multiply Delivery Plan for 2023/24 between SYMCA and RMBC **(exempt)**
- Appendix 2 - Summary of Multiply awards for 2023/24 and 2024/25 **(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

Cabinet report 'Multiply Programme', 19th June 2023

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

Yes

An exemption is sought for Appendices 1 and 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 of the allocation of Multiply Grants for 2023/24 and 2024/25

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 In 2022/23, the Council was allocated £194,000 to deliver Year 1 of the Multiply Programme. Year 1 had a total of 8 weeks delivery time. The funding was used to provide grants to 13 training organisations, the majority of them local, to deliver numeracy support and learning, including engagement focussed activity and short courses. Total spend for Year 1 was £132,500.
- 1.3 The Council have been allocated funding of £408,000 per annum for both 2023/24 and 2024/25. This funding will pay for a Manager post for the programme, with the remainder allocated to provider organisations to deliver numeracy learning, preferably within the community.

June 2023 Cabinet 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.

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 activities 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 The activity will be a combination of engagement and confidence building with local residents who are disengaged from learning and more substantive numeracy learning.
- 2.3 Deliverers will be expected to provide Information, Advice and Guidance to learners on options to progress and continue learning post Multiply.
- 2.4 RNN as the major training provider in the Borough have been directly awarded funds to deliver activity under two of the strands within the Programme.
- 2.5 A summary of the proposed awards is attached at Appendix 2.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Option 1: The Council allocate the funding as set out in Appendix 2. These figures were agreed following an open bidding process and are predominantly Rotherham based Vol/comm organisations. – 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

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.

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 have assessed applications for eligibility and value for money and are working with colleagues in Legal to produce Grant Funding Agreements.
- 5.3 The Assistant Director Planning, Regeneration and Transport 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 As this work is being commissioned via grant agreements, there are no direct procurement implications as grants do not fall within the scope of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended).
- 6.2 The Council has been awarded funding of £408,000 per annum for each of the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25, in respect of the Multiply programme. Appendix 2 sets out the proposed funding allocations to provider organisations, totalling £352,656 for 2023/24. The remaining grant funding in 2023/24 will be used to fund a programme manager post in the Service. Payments to providers will be dependent on the finalisation of individual funding agreements, which require sign off from Finance and Legal.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

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

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no human resources implications arising from the recommendations within this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 There are no implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults in this report

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 The approved 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. The Council are working with RNN and a range of partners from the Third Sector, to ensure that Multiply is delivered to as many Rotherham residents as possible.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Risk – Activity and/or outputs are not delivered within the agreed timescale and funding is returned to SYMCA and the government.

Mitigation – Deliverers are monitored on a monthly basis, so any issues are picked up quickly and suitable action taken. Payments are made on a unit cost basis for outputs delivered, so money should not need to be recouped from deliverers.

13. 2 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 Department for Education.

14. Accountable Officers

Simeon Leach, Economic Strategy and Partnerships Manager

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

Named Officer	Date
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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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