

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children, Education, and Skills

Education & Skills

Officer Contact:

Reference: CES-01-24

Year 3 Grant Awards Multiply Programme

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of the report is to provide information around the decision to award Section 31 Grant funding received by the LA for the purpose of delivering the Multiply Programme to partners who have expressed an interest in working with us, and who are able to deliver the interventions that we require.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. There is a strong link between mental health and finances, the Multiply Interventions seek to support people to manage their finances, understand budgeting, debt, and the cost of living through increasing numeracy confidence. This links to Business Plan 2: Resilient Communities. Many of the interventions will be delivered in the community.
3. To support a thriving economy, Multiply seeks to break down barriers to people accessing employment due to lack of maths qualifications, a lack of numeracy confidence or both. Furthermore, in work progression is often limited by lacking numeracy skills and qualifications, often sector specific. Multiply interventions will address these by providing bespoke in work skills support for progression. By targeting some Multiply provision to Care Leavers and resettlers we will ensure that there are opportunities for all people to engage in wider society.

Background

4. Multiply allocations and prospectus were published in April 2022. Wiltshire Council was allocated £2.1m from September 2022 to March 2025. The context for this programme is the universal importance of numeracy for individuals' life chances and the nationally high proportion of working age adults with entry level maths skills. People who improve their numeracy are more likely to be in employment, have higher wages and better wellbeing.
5. Local areas are expected to invest in meaningful participation that boosts people's ability to use maths in their daily life, at home and work- and adults to achieve a formal qualification that can open doors for them (such as into a job, progression in a job, or progression to further study).

Main Considerations for the Council

6. Stakeholder engagement has taken place, expressions of interest received and discussed, and interventions selected to provide breadth across a range of settings and a range of interventions.

7. This funding has been allocated to the local authority by the Department for Education and the Department has agreed our investment plan which outlines the interventions selected and the costs associated with the delivery.
8. Employers were invited to complete a numeracy gaps questionnaire prior to the completion of the investment plan, to capture their input.
9. A small amount of delivery took place in year 1, and officers have adjusted year 2 & 3 delivery to reflect learning.

Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

10. There have been no engagements around scrutiny

Safeguarding Implications

11. There are no direct safeguarding implications, however Multiply officers are fully trained in safeguarding, and Grant awardees are subject to the safeguarding clause within the grant agreement, and direct delivery providers submitting ILR for learners will be subject to Ofsted inspection, which requires stringent safeguarding policies and procedures.

Public Health Implications

12. Supporting residents with budgeting and cost of living, may indirectly reduce stress associated with financial pressures.
13. Providing access to and confidence in numeracy skills and qualifications may improve employment opportunities and progressions.
14. Accessing community based provision, improve mental health associated with socialising.
15. Public health impacts may include, but are not restricted to: direct health implications, sustainability, maintaining a healthy and resilient environment, economic impacts, reducing or widening inequalities and the wider determinants of health (e.g. good housing, employment opportunities, education and reducing social isolation)

Procurement Implications

16. Discussions have taken place with the Procurement Hub and Legal Services from the outset who have provided advice and support in preparing grant agreements and procuring the services.
17. Expenditure does not include third parties.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

18. An EIA has not been prepared, however one of the driving themes of the approach to multiply is to reach underrepresented groups.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

19. Providing remote provision, utilising existing community locations any additional energy or utility usage will be minimal.

Workforce Implications

20. The Multiply Programme Manager is working with HR&OD to pilot workforce projects that support work force development which will be taken forward in year 2 of the programme. All staff in the council have been offered the opportunity to become a numeracy champion

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

21. If the proposed decision is not taken, then the council is at risk of not being able to maximise the benefit of the government grant to impact residents. Funding is not eligible for roll forward to subsequent financial years. The allocation for 2024-25 is £735,694.75

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

22. If the decision is taken, there is a minimal risk that the delivery partners are not able to fulfil their obligations, but this will be mitigated by robust project management and DfE oversight

Financial Implications

23. As this is not Council spend, and spend has been agreed with the DfE, there are no financial implications.

Legal Implications

24. Engagement has taken place with the Council's legal services who have advised on the grant agreements, engagement with Democratic Services and Information Governance

Options Considered

25. We considered apportioning all grant money via opening up to an application process, however by working with a range of stakeholders and shaping provision initially, we are likely to be able to reach and engage with more residents in a wider variety of settings.

Conclusions/Proposal

26. The proposal is to approve the awarding of the grants outline above.

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Background Papers

[Multiply: funding available to improve adult numeracy skills - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/multiply-funding-available-to-improve-adult-numeracy-skills)