

# Cabinet (Resources) Panel

## 10 January 2017

<b>Report title</b>	External Funding Update	
<b>Decision designation</b>	AMBER	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor John Reynolds City Economy	
<b>Key decision</b>	Yes	
<b>In forward plan</b>	Yes	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Keren Jones, City Economy	
<b>Originating service</b>	Service Development Team	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Heather Clark	Service Development Manager
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<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>	Place Leadership Team	21 April 2016

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### Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Cabinet (Resources) Panel is recommended to:

#### EU Funds

1. Authorise the Director of Governance to sign the Grant Funding Agreement relating to the Black Country Blue Network project and enter into Service Level Agreements with Delivery Partners (Walsall MBC, Environment Agency, Canal and River Trust and Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust) relating to the delivery of this project.
2. Delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Resources, in consultation with the Director of Finance, to approve budgets for Black Country Blue Network project upon signing of the Funding Agreement.
3. Delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for City Economy, in consultation with the Service Director City Economy and Director of Finance to submit outline applications to future calls for European Regional Development Fund projects.

4. Delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for City Economy, in consultation with the Service Director City Economy, to enter agreements to progress the delivery of the RAINBOW project if the bid is successful.

#### **Other Funding**

5. Delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for City Economy, in consultation with the Service Director City Economy to submit a full business plan to the Edge Foundation should the initial bid be successful.
6. Approve submission of bids for the Communities Fund, Libraries Opportunities for Everyone Innovation Fund and mitigating the impacts of immigration on local communities and delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for City Economy, in consultation with the Service Director City Economy, to enter agreements to progress the delivery of this scheme.
7. Delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Resources, in consultation with the Director of Finance to approve budgets for Communities Fund, Libraries Opportunities for Everyone Innovation Fund, mitigating the impacts of immigration on local communities and RAINBOW project should the bids be successful.
8. Delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for City Economy, in consultation with the Service Director City Economy to issue a grant up to £50,000 to our named Voluntary Community Sector partner should our bid to the Communities Fund be successful.

## 1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To provide an update on current and future bids for European Structural funds and seek necessary approvals for other externally funded projects.

## 2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Black Country European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) Strategy, developed on behalf of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), outlined the Black Country's priorities for allocating European funding between 2014 and 2020. The Black Country's allocation between 2014 and 2020 was €177 million split 50/50 between European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and European Social Fund (ESF).
- 2.2 Cabinet (Resources) Panel agreed on 26 April 2016 to submit a full bid to ERDF as accountable body for Black Country Blue Network and to delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for City Economy, in consultation with the Service Director City Economy to sign the Grant Funding Agreement if successful.

## 3.0 European Funding Update

- 3.1 Approvals are sought for the following externally funded bids:

Corporate Priority	Project	Update and Outcomes	Approvals required
Place: Stronger Economy: delivering effective core services that people want	<b>Black Country Blue Network</b> will create a high quality ecological network with a diverse range of habitats, centred on the area's historically important waterways and associated green spaces. This will be achieved through a three year programme of infrastructure and habitat improvements improve habitats along canals and rivers in the Black Country as well as other key nature greenspaces linked into this blue network facilitating better visitor management and improved access for local communities. The sites within Wolverhampton are Smestow Valley Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Wyrley & Essington Canal Proposed LNR.	Approved in principle subject to funding agreement  Smestow Valley – 4.4 ha. rehabilitated and 7.65 improved Wyrley & Essington Canal LNR – 3.4 ha. improved Bradley Arm – 6 ha. improved	To sign the funding agreement and enter into Service Level Agreements with partners  Delegate authority to set up a budget once the funding agreement is signed.

- 3.2 The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) issued a call for outline applications against Priorities 1 Innovation (£3 million available), 4 Low Carbon (£5

million available) and 6 Environment (£3 million available). The following projects are being developed:

- **Heath Town Low Carbon project:** innovative retrofit project focusing on housing in Heath Town trialing innovation new technologies
- **Integrated transport scheme around the Interchange**
- **BC Blue Network Phase 2** including Fowlers Park
- **Smart City Demonstration Project**
- **Electric Vehicle Charging**

3.3 As approved in previous Cabinet (Resources) Panel reports, updates on the performance of other European funded projects are given below:

<b>Corporate Priority</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Update</b>
Place: Stronger Economy: An environment where new and existing businesses thrive	<b>Black Country Advice Investment and Markets (AIM)</b> will offer specialist support for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) pooling business support across four local authorities, the University and Chamber of Commerce, enhanced with specialist consultancy and delivered via the Growth Hub. The City of Wolverhampton Council is acting as accountable body on behalf of the Black Country. Funded by £1.8m ERDF against a total project cost of £3.8m.	Funding approved and funding agreement in place.  Recruitment has begun and the AIM Programme Manager appointed.
Place: Stronger Economy: An environment where new and existing businesses thrive	<b>Black Country Transformational Growth Opportunities Local Delivery (BCT GOLD)</b> project will issue grants to Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) to enable a sustainable step change in their working processes, business development and performance. SMEs will apply for grants using an application process. Funded by £1.6m ERDF against a total project cost of £5m	Funding approved and funding agreement in place.  Launch event held and 25 Expressions of Interest from local businesses received.
Place: Stronger Economy: people develop the skills to get and keep work	<b>Impact in the Black Country</b> will support young people between 15-29 not in employment, education or training move towards employment. It aims to engage with 3343 young people, support 1743 with customised support and 859 into positive outcomes by July 2018. The project is funded by £7.7m comprising one third European Social Fund (ESF), one third Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) and one third staff time.	10 Key Workers are in place at outreach locations across the city. To date, it has engaged with 524 young people (against yearly target of 600) supporting 386 into customised support and 41 into a positive outcome (both ahead of profile).

<p>Place: Delivering effective core services that people want</p>	<p>The Raising Awareness Initiative for a Beautiful Open World (<b>RAINBOW</b>) project will deliver sustainable development goals with different cities focusing on different goals. As part of delivery of the project, the City of Wolverhampton (CWC) would lead on cleaner air quality be aligned with other externally funded projects including a bid to the Office of Low Emission Vehicles for electric taxi infrastructure and a bid to Defra and the Department for Transport's joint Air Quality Grant Scheme to fund a trial of electric pool and fleet vehicles. It is further developing proposals for public charging infrastructure for electric vehicles.</p>	<p>CWC are a partner in a bid submitted by the Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA). An Individual Executive Decision notice agreed to sign a mandate authorised ALDA to submit the application form and sign the standard grant contract with the Contracting Authority the European Commission on behalf of all the co-applicants.</p>
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#### 4.0 Other Funding Opportunities

4.1 The Council is actively seeking and bidding for other external funding opportunities that contribute to its corporate priorities as follows:

Corporate Priority	Funding source	Proposed Project and Outcomes	Approvals required
<p>Place: Stronger Economy: people develop the skills to get and keep work</p>	<p>Edge Foundation (independent education charity)  £100,000 bid submitted 1 December 2016</p>	<p>Offer young people interventions supported by enhanced careers guidance in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support young people to understand the full range of curriculum and career options;</li> <li>• ensure young people are better prepared for the world of work;</li> <li>• support teacher placements in industry so enabling teachers to bring their learning back into school;</li> <li>• better prepare young people to compete within the labour market; and</li> <li>• enable them to demonstrate their understanding of the world of work.</li> </ul>	<p>To delegate authority to submit a full business plan by 16 February 2017 for the Edge foundation should the bid be successful</p>

<p>Place: Stronger Economy: people develop the skills to get and keep work</p>	<p>Libraries Opportunities for Everyone Innovation Fund - to enable libraries to trail innovative projects that benefit disadvantaged people</p>	<p>Development of Fab Labs in libraries to improve digital access and literacy and help everyone achieving their full potential.</p> <p>Projects can bid for between £50,000 and £250,000 starting 1 April 2017. 10% of the budget must be match funding through either cash or in kind.</p>	<p>Approval to sign funding agreement and implement the project should the bid be successful</p>
<p>Place: Stronger Economy: people develop the skills to get and keep work</p>	<p>Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Communities fund – joint Community and Local Authority bids to improve service delivery.</p>	<p>Extend reach of the Wolverhampton Work Box through working with community partners to facilitate access to those who need additional support to get online.</p> <p>Up to £2.5m is available over the next 2 years with the majority of funding available for projects implemented quickly in 2016/17 and a smaller cohort in 2017/18.</p>	<p>Approval to submit the bid on 16 January 2017 and implement if successful. Delegated authority to issue grants of less than £50,000 to named Voluntary Community Sector Partner(s) if successful.</p>
<p>People: Stronger Communities: people and communities achieve their full potential</p>	<p>Controlling Migration Fund: mitigating the impacts of immigration on local communities.</p> <p>Bid/s being developed with third sector partners. Planning to submit bid/s in Q4 2016/2017.</p>	<p>A partnership comprising several City of Wolverhampton Council departments including Education, Health and Social Care and Housing as well as 3<sup>rd</sup> sector partnerships are developing a project around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment: creating employment opportunities for new arrivals.</li> <li>• Education: providing English classes for speakers of other languages.</li> <li>• Education: parent ambassador scheme training migrant parents to support newly arrived families, extension to train parents from resident community.</li> <li>• Housing: tackling rogue private sector landlords.</li> </ul>	<p>Approval to submit a bid</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential for specific action to help individuals who have 'no recourse to public funds'.</li> <li>• Looked after Children training / learning for staff around meeting the emotional needs of new arrivals.</li> <li>• Health / Clinical Commissioning Group have identified the need for additional support in some GP practices.</li> </ul>	
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## 5.0 Financial implications

5.1 The Black Country Blue Network project application has requested £1.5 million ERDF grant based on total project costs of £3.0 million as follows:

	Capital £000	Revenue £000	Total £000
ERDF	1,384	136	1,520
Match	1,385	137	1,522
Gross	2,769	273	3,042

Wolverhampton submitted the full application on behalf of a wider partnership consisting of other Black Country local authorities, Canals and River Trust and the Environment Agency. Partners have committed match funding for their sub-projects and this will be agreed in the Service Level Agreement. Wolverhampton has identified match funding for three Wolverhampton projects amounting to £336,000 with the majority being identified via Section 106. This report seeks delegated approval for the Cabinet Member for Resources, in consultation with the Director of Finance to approve budgets for Black Country Blue Network based on the grant offered by DCLG and match required where this is available from existing approved resources or from new or additional external income.

5.2 The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) issued a call for outline applications against Priorities 1 Innovation (£3 million available), 4 Low Carbon (£5 million available) and 6 Environment (£3 million available). Wolverhampton is currently working with partners to develop a strong pipeline of schemes. In anticipation of tight turnaround times it requested that authority is delegated to the Cabinet Member for City Economy, in consultation with the Service Director City Economy and Director of Finance to submit outline applications in this round of funding.

- 5.3 A bid has also been submitted by Colton Hills and New Academy Schools for £100,000 Edge funding for CWC to provide enhanced careers guidance to their pupils. CWC will work in partnership with the schools to submit a full business plan should the initial bid be successful.
- 5.4 This report also seeks approval to submit a number of bids for grant funding with tight bidding deadlines. These include:
- Communities Fund - up to £70,000 is available to fund schemes across 2016/17 and 2017/18.
  - Libraries Opportunities for Everyone Innovation Fund - between £50,000 and £250,000 capital and revenue resources are available for 2017/18
  - Controlling Migration Fund communities - £25 million is available in each of the four years from 2016-17 to 2019-20 for Local Authorities to mitigate negative impacts on the provision of local services linked to recent migration. A bid will be prepared with various partners.
- 5.5 The Cabinet Member for City Economy, in consultation with the Service Director, City Economy has previously approved Wolverhampton commitment to the ALDA Rainbow bid in accordance with delegated approval granted by Cabinet (Resources) Panel. CWC has applied for €161,570 revenue funding from ALDA which provides €145,410 (maximum of 90%) grant to be match funded by €16,160 (10%) from CWC.
- 5.6 Delegated authority is sought as part of this report for the Cabinet Member for Resources, in consultation with the Director of Finance to approve budgets for Communities Fund, Libraries Opportunities for Everyone Innovation Fund, mitigating the impacts of immigration on local communities and RAINBOW project should the bids be successful. Detailed financial implications will be covered as part of this approval including the funding available, the risks associated with each scheme and the delivery arrangement.  
[ES/21122016/K]

## **6.0 Legal implications**

- 6.1 As accountable body, the City of Wolverhampton Council will be required to enter into a funding agreement with the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) which outlines the bid and also European rules and regulations that must be complied with. Service Level Agreements will subsequently be entered into with each Delivery Partner to set out their roles and responsibilities and ensure compliance with EU rules and regulations and minimise risk to the Accountable Body from non-compliance of delivery partners.  
[RB/19122016/R]

## **7.0 Equalities implications**

- 7.1 Equal opportunities is a cross cutting objective of all European funded bids, therefore must be considered in the delivery of all European funded projects with equalities data monitored as part of delivery, however we are able to commission specific support for

some protected characteristics. The monitored equalities targets are set by the funder as part of the cross cutting themes. The people centred projects set out above would have a positive equalities impact by helping to advance equality of opportunities amongst new arrivals, young people and community groups. SLA include clauses relating to Delivery Partners not unlawfully discriminate within the meaning and scope of any law, enactment, order, or regulation relating to discrimination.

## **8.0 Environmental implications**

8.1 Sustainability is a cross cutting objective of all European funded bids, therefore must be considered in the delivery of all European funded projects. Black Country Blue Network will support will support 37 hectares across the Black Country to attain better conservation status, 17 hectares of which are in Wolverhampton.

## **9.0 Human resources implications**

9.1 Costs for the project management of externally funded projects are built into project costs with staff recruited on fixed term contracts. The Job Descriptions of employees that are used to match fund these projects, enabling the drawdown of additional resource will need to include wording and the European flag added as a requirement of securing the funding.

9.2 Appointment letters, job descriptions and requirement campaigns for funded posts must include wording that the post is part funded by ERDF and contain the appropriate logos.

## **10.0 Corporate landlord implications**

10.1 There are no corporate landlord implications.

## **11.0 Schedule of background papers**

- Cabinet (Resources) Panel 26 April 2016 External Funding Update
- Cabinet (Resources) Panel 15 September 2015 Black Country European Funded Projects