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ADDITIONAL CIRCULATION



To: Councillor Lumsden, Convener; Councillor Graham, Vice Convener; and Councillors Allard, Cameron, Donnelly, Jackie Dunbar, Flynn, Houghton, John, Laing, Macdonald, Catriona Mackenzie, Nicoll, Reynolds, Sellar, Townson and Yuill.

Town House,
ABERDEEN 27 June 2017

FINANCE, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The undernoted items are circulated in connection with the meeting of the **FINANCE, POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE** to be held here in the Town House on **THURSDAY, 29 JUNE 2017 at 2.00 pm.**

FRASER BELL
HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

B U S I N E S S

- 9.4 Erasmus+ Key Action 1 School Education - Staff Mobility Project - ECS/17/038 (Pages 3 - 10)
- 9.5 Non-Domestic Rates Relief Options - CHI/17/157 (Pages 11 - 20)

EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

- 10.9 Non-Domestic Rates Relief Options - CHI/17/157
This item is now a public report and is Item 9.5 on the agenda.
- 10.10 Pinewood - Progress Report - CHI/17/170 (Withdrawn)
Please note that this item has been withdrawn.
- 10.11 Site 16 Lang Stracht - Demolition of Buildings - CHI/17/171 (Pages 21 - 28)
Please note that this item was named incorrectly in the first agenda circulation.

Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Mark Masson, tel. 01224 522989 or email mmasson@aberdeencity.gov.uk

SUBMISSION OF LATE REPORT

NAME OF COMMITTEE : Finance, Policy and Resources

DATE OF COMMITTEE : 29th June 2017

TITLE OF REPORT : Erasmus+ Key Action 1 School Education Staff Mobility Project

Please explain why this report is late.

The application form for funding from the UK National Agency was approved by Education and Children Services DLT committee and signed by ACC legal representative. However, the following the award of the full amount of the grant by the UK National Agency, we were made aware as of the 14th of June that under the current scheme of delegation the Head of Legal did not have authority to accept this grant on behalf of the Council. To this end, once establishing that the report fell under the terms of reference of the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee, we have submitted a late report to ask approval for the acceptance of the grant; approval for the expenditure of the grant monies and delegation to the Head of Legal to sign the Grant Agreement.

[Signature]
(Acting) Director: Helen Shanks, Head of Inclusion & Interim Head of Education Services
Date 23 June 2017

The following section must be completed by the Convener where a report must be submitted less than three clear days¹ before a meeting of the Council/Committee.

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An item of business not open to inspection for three clear days may be considered at a meeting only by reason of special circumstances, which shall be specified in the minutes, and where the Convener is of the opinion that the item should be considered as a matter of urgency.

Please explain why you are of the opinion that the item should be considered as a matter of urgency.

The National UK Agency has informed us that the signed copies of the agreement must be returned to them within 30 days from the date of communication on 8th June 2017. If not returned by this deadline, their offer of a grant may be withdrawn.

Convener [Signature]
Date 23.06.17

Please note that under Standing Order 12.9, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services may refuse to allow any item of business on to the agenda or may withdraw any item of business from an agenda, following consultation with the Convener and Vice Convener.

¹ For example if a letter is posted on Monday advising of a meeting on Friday, it gives 3 clear days notice (i.e. Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday). Saturday, Sunday and public holidays are included within the definition of Clear Days.

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COMMITTEE	Finance, Policy & Resources
DATE	29th June 2017
REPORT TITLE	Erasmus + Key Action 1 School Education Staff Mobility Project
REPORT NUMBER	ECS/17/038
DIRECTOR	Gayle Gorman
REPORT AUTHOR	Marie-Claire Lyon

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:-

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval for the Council to accept a European grant for an Erasmus+ Key Action 1 School Education Staff Mobility project entitled “Developing Modern Languages Opportunities for Aberdeen City Council Primary Teachers” and to spend the grant as detailed in this report.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 It is recommended that members:
- a) Delegate authority to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to accept a grant from the UK National Agency, British Council and enter into a Grant Agreement for the Erasmus+ Key Action 1 School Education Staff Mobility Project grant funding of €91,980 (c. £80 410) and
 - b) Approve expenditure of the grant funding by the Council for participation by primary school teachers in a French immersion course.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Acceptance of the 100% funded Erasmus+ Key Action 1 School Education Staff Mobility Project grant will allow 28 primary school teachers from Education and Children Services to participate in the ‘Developing Modern Languages Opportunities for Aberdeen City Council Primary Teachers’ project. The 28 primary school teachers from Education and Children Services will attend a two week French immersion course at the CAVILAM language centre in Vichy, France. The course will take place during the school holidays.
- 3.2 Supporting the Scottish Government 1+2 Modern Languages Initiative.

All primary schools in Aberdeen City Council are engaged in implementing the 1+2 Modern Languages Scottish Government initiative. All teachers have a responsibility to deliver a language. Many practitioners have not studied French to a high level and need to acquire the knowledge in language and methodology that will allow them to teach lessons confidently. They will familiarise themselves with techniques and approaches. The course will give them a wider knowledge of culture allowing them to support inter-disciplinary projects, a key component of the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence programme. Their contact with colleagues from the UK and other countries will create a platform for exchanging good practice. Participating teachers will be able to include this study in their CPD programme of activities and use it for GTCS (General Teaching Council Scotland) professional update.

3.3 European mobility and cooperation activities.

The CAVILAM – Alliance Française Language school is situated in the region of Clermont-Ferrand and the participants will receive a certificate on completion of the course signed by the CAVILAM language school and the University Blaise Pascal in Clermont-Ferrand. This will strengthen educational links between the twinned cities of Aberdeen and Clermont-Ferrand. Some of the teachers are participating in work in schools where a link has already been established and others will have opportunities to create new partnerships. Members from Aberdeen City Council Education and Children Services have visited the premises of the CAVILAM centre in March 2016, as part of an educational visit to Clermont-Ferrand and have discussed the programme with the course director and the school administrator. During their visit, the Curriculum Officers from Aberdeen City Council explained the needs and requirements of the primary school teachers who would attend the course. In 2012, the centre was commended by the French Ministry of Education for the quality of courses, expertise of teaching staff, welcoming, premises and administration.

3.4 Objectives of activities.

The immersion course will give teachers the opportunity to secure language skills and get further knowledge of the local area and French daily life and culture. The cultural activities organised by the CAVILAM will have an impact on the understanding of local and international cultures. The participants will do a language test at the start to ensure that their needs are best addressed during the course.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Approval from committee is essential for the project, in order not to lose the total amount of the grant awarded. The UK National agency has set 30 days from 8th June 2017 to sign and return the Grant Agreement.

4.2 The UK National Agency British Council has awarded 100% of €91980 (= £80410) applied for to sustain the entire project. The application was sent on 30th January 2017 and the reply from the British Council confirming the award of the grant received on 26th May 2017.

4.3 The grant will cover:

Staff mobility: € 7700 (£ 6742)

Individual support:	€ 54880 (£ 48056)
Organisational support:	€ 9800 (£ 8609)
Course fees:	€ 19600 (£ 17162)

Staff mobility	Travel from Aberdeen to Vichy, France (Standard Travel Grant per Participant + top-up for "Expensive Domestic Travel Cost")
Individual Support	Accommodation, food, local travel to and from the placement in the host country Participants are eligible for unit costs per day that they engage in the mobility activity (€140 per participant per day)
Organisational Support	Participants preparation (pedagogical, intercultural, linguistic) Educational materials Monitoring of participants during mobility Validation of learning outcomes
Courses Fees	Invoice from the CAVILAM Language Centre

Payment arrangements:

The UK National Agency will pay Aberdeen City Council within 30 days following the entry into force of the Agreement a pre-financing payment of €64386 (£ 56561) corresponding to 70% of the grant awarded.

Within 60 calendar days of the end of the project and following submission of the final report, the payment of the remaining balance will be made.

- 4.4 The 28 teachers will travel and take part in the course during their school holidays and there will be no additional cost for staff cover.
- 4.5 The duration of the project is set between 2nd July 2017 and 1st January 2019
- 4.6 No additional funding will be required from Aberdeen City Council or any other agency.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Prior to issuing the grant, the UK National Agency require the Council to enter into a Grant Agreement, which requires the Council to comply with funding guidance. The Grant Agreement has been reviewed by Legal Services and it is recommended that Members delegate authority to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to sign the Grant Agreement on behalf of the Council.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

- 6.1 Financial
The funding will be managed following the recommendations set by the UK National Agency and in accordance with Aberdeen City Council procedure. There are no associated risks from Brexit as the full programme will be

complete by the period that Britain leaves the EU. In addition, the Scottish Government has confirmed that any agreements entered into before Brexit will be respected by the Government.

Risk – Low

6.2 Employee

The health and safety implications of all visits are taken into account during planning, with any exceptional implications addressed at the time of application. Adventure Aberdeen, Education and Children Services, regularly review the travel advice provided by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and ensure that information to participants is accurate and up-to-date. When participating in overseas visits, Council employees are covered by the Council's insurance policy.

Risk – Low

6.3 Customer/citizen

Attending an immersion course ensures that representatives from various schools in the city can roll-out the 1+2 Modern Languages implementation in their areas. Failure to sign this agreement risks the quality of implementation into primary schools across the city.

Risk – Low

6.4 Environment

All travel undertaken will be by public transport.

Risk – Low

6.5 Technological

There are no associated technological risks.

Risk – n/a

6.6 Legal

Failure to delegate authority to Head of Legal & Democratic Services to sign the Grant Agreement will result in not being able to undertake the project.

Risk – High

6.7 Reputational

Aberdeen City Council is known to National Languages organisations for its implementation of 1+2 ML initiative, with best practice case studies published in newsletters. Aberdeen City Council have taken a sustainable and strategic approach to the implementation. Participating in this programme ensures that Aberdeen City Council continues to support the development of teachers in the implementation of this nationally identified educational priority.

Risk – High

7. **IMPACT SECTION**

7.1 Economy

This project demonstrates Aberdeen City Council's commitment to teachers' professional development. Providing such opportunities, which can be used in nationally recognised GTCS (General Teaching Council of Scotland)

Professional Update, creates a culture which encourages teachers to stay in the area.

7.2 People

The skills learnt from this course will be disseminated through a number of events to pupils and teachers, ensuring a wide-reaching impact across the city. There are 28 teachers participating in this course from 17 schools across the city. The implementation of 1+2 ML instils life-long learning skills of young people throughout the city.

7.3 Place

This opportunity ensures that young people from multiple areas of the city can realise their full potential in language development through the skills learnt from their teachers attending this course. This raises the international profile of schools within communities.

7.4 Technology

This experience will promote modern languages within schools. To continue to promote such opportunities with native language speakers, E-Twinning Online resources will be explored through a variety of dissemination events.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Erasmus + Key Action 1 (KA1) Handbook for Beneficiaries
Erasmus + 2017 Key Action 1 School Education Staff Mobility

9. APPENDICES (if applicable)

NA

10. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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HEAD OF SERVICE DETAILS

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Phone number: 01224 522473

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SUBMISSION OF LATE REPORT

NAME OF COMMITTEE : F,P&R

DATE OF COMMITTEE : 29th June 2017

TITLE OF REPORT : Non-Domestic Rates: Options for a Relief Package

Please explain why this report is late.

Developing options for a relief package has taken time and involved acquiring data and subsequent analysis that wouldn't have been possible until recently as the data wasn't available.

Please explain:

- why this report must be submitted to the next meeting of the Council/Committee; and
- why it cannot be submitted to a meeting of the Council/Committee at a later date.

The report is required for the 29th of June Committee as an urgent response to a number of queries from local businesses requesting information on the outcome of the correspondence with the Scottish Government and the introduction of a local scheme.

Director

Date

27/06/17

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Please explain why you are of the opinion that the item should be considered as a matter of urgency.

As disclosed above a number of local businesses requesting the outcome of correspondence.

Convener

Date

27/6/17

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COMMITTEE	Finance, Policy & Resources
DATE	29 June 2017
REPORT TITLE	Non-Domestic Rates: Aberdeen City Council Relief Package
REPORT NUMBER	CHI/17/157
DIRECTOR	Bernadette Marjoram
REPORT AUTHOR	Jamie Coventry

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:-

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is update the Committee on the response of the Scottish Government to the Chief Executive's written request calling upon the Scottish Government to further use its legislative powers to introduce a rate relief scheme which, would ensure that all businesses located within Aberdeen are paying business rates no higher than their current levels.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 It is recommended that the committee note the letter from the Chief Executive and the response contained within the appendices to this report.

3. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 3.1 At the Finance, Policy & Resources committee meeting of 9th March 2017. The Committee instructed the Chief Executive to write to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Constitution calling upon the Scottish Government to further use its legislative powers to introduce a rate relief scheme which, would ensure that all businesses located within Aberdeen are paying business rates no higher than their current levels.
- 3.2 The Chief Executive wrote to The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Constitution, Derek Mackay, on 14th March 2017. The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Constitution, Derek Mackay, responded on 11th May 2017. A copy of both letters can be found in the appendices to this report.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendation of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendation of this report.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

The following categories, namely Financial, Employee, Customer/citizen, Environmental, Technological, Legal and Reputational, were considered and there were no risks arising from the recommendations.

7. IMPACT SECTION

This section demonstrates how the proposals within this report impact on the strategic themes of Aberdeen City Council and Community Planning Aberdeen, as set out in the [Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26](#) and the [Aberdeen City Council Strategic Business Plan](#).

7.1 Economy

- 7.1.1 The report is of importance to the economy in terms of the potential economic benefits that a relief package could bring to the city by mitigating against some of the increases in costs that businesses face as a result of any increases in NDR that businesses may face. The relief could mitigate against potential employment losses and a fall in future investment.

7.2 People

- 7.2.1 If the Council decides to implement a local relief scheme the Council must ensure that any reduction is fully funded by the local authority and before exercising the power to create such a scheme, it must have regard to its expenditure and income and the interests of persons liable to pay council tax set by it.
- 7.2.2 In the longer term a relief scheme could ensure the viability of businesses generating greater NDR receipts for funding future council services that people use. It could also help the city's key business stakeholders and their employees by ensuring that additional costs are mitigated against in the context of other business costs and required investment by the businesses.

7.3 Place

- 7.3.1 A relief scheme could help ensure that during the next year of responding to the effects of the oil and gas downturn, there is further mitigation to businesses that are not catered for in the existing schemes, helping to support the overall commitment to Aberdeen of these businesses and inward investors.

7.4 Technology

- 7.4.1 There are no technology implications as a result of this report.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 General Fund Revenue Budget 2017/18 to 2021/22 and Non-Housing Capital Programme 2017/18 to 2021/22, Appendix 9 – Options for a Non-Domestic Rates Relief, Council Committee 22 February 2017
<http://councilcommittees/documents/s66669/General%20Fund%20and%20NHCP.pdf>

9. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Letter from Chief Executive
Appendix 2 - Response from Scottish Government

10. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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ABERDEEN
CITY COUNCIL

14th March 2017

Derek Mackay MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Constitution

by email: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

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Dear Cabinet Secretary

Non-Domestic Rates Relief Scheme

Following the meeting last week of the City Council's Finance, Policy and Resources Committee I write about the above. I am aware that the Committee Convener, Councillor Young has already written and I do not intend to repeat the content of his correspondence to you.

The Committee resolved to instruct me to write to you to call on the Scottish Government to use further its legislative powers to introduce a rate relief scheme which would ensure that all businesses located within Aberdeen are paying rates no higher than their current levels. Officers here at the Council would of course be pleased to work with your officials on the above.

I look forward to hearing from you. I will of course share your response with elected members here.

Yours sincerely

Angela Scott
Chief Executive

ANGELA SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE



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Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Constitution
Derek Mackay MSP



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Office of Chief Executive
Aberdeen City Council

15 MAY 2017

Ms Angela Scott
Chief Executive
Aberdeen City Council
Business Hub 12
Marischal College
Aberdeen
AB10 1AB

Your ref: AS/CM
Our ref: 2017/0010068
11 May 2017

Dear Angela,

Thank you for your letter of 14 March 2017 conveying the resolution of the City Council's Finance, Policy and Resources Committee in respect of non-domestic rates. I apologise for the delay in replying.

Since your letter, I laid legislation targeting additional rates relief for certain businesses within the city, having closely studied the assessors' revaluation data and met with and listened to the local Chamber of Commerce and individual businesses. On top of my earlier budget announcements, this brought the overall rates relief funded by the Scottish Government to around £660 million.

Notwithstanding that the Committee resolved to agree to set aside £3 million to a local scheme provided it was backed by match funding of at least the same amount by the Scottish Government, I note as per your letter that the Committee also resolved to instruct you to write to me calling upon the Scottish Government to further use its legislative powers to introduce a rate relief scheme which would ensure that all businesses located within Aberdeen were paying business rates no higher than their current levels.

However that proposal would seem to involve negating most of the revaluation effect for those with rateable values increasing, but not necessarily offsetting any of the associated cost by adjusting the effect for those with rateable values decreasing. While I recognise the range of effects of the revaluation, I have already acted to target additional support where it is most needed across the city, within the hospitality sector and for office space, and am not minded to increase the estimated £660 million of rates relief across the country funded by the Scottish Government.

I would however reiterate the powers granted to local authorities by the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, to apply further rates reductions if they so choose. I would be happy to continue to work in partnership with the City Council to inform and explore options in that respect, and more widely in respect of other options to stimulate investment and growth, if that would be of interest.

Yours

DEREK MACKAY

Exempt information as described in paragraph(s) 6, 9 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

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