

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education, Culture and Sport
DATE	7 June 2012
ACTING DIRECTOR	Patricia Cassidy
TITLE OF REPORT	Community Learning & Development Funded Projects
REPORT NUMBER:	ECS/12/032

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to note the decision under Standing Order 1(6)(b) for an exemption from the Council's Standing Orders on contracts and procurement in relation to the various external organisations which provide community learning and development services, commissioned by the Council. These organisations are: WEA, Aberdeen Lads Club, Printfield Project, Fersands and Fountain Community Project, Middlefield Project and St Machar Parent Support Project.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (a) To note the decision to provide an exemption from the Council's Standing Orders on contracts and procurement, which was sought in order to allow the funding of community learning and development services from the following organisations: WEA; Aberdeen Lads Club; Printfield Project; Fersands and Fountain Community Project; Middlefield Project; and St Machar Parent Support Project (the "Funded Projects").
- (b) Approve the allocation of the 2012/13 budget for the Funded Projects as set out in the Financial Implications section of this report.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The total budget for these commissioned projects for 2012/13 is £659,408. This amount is contained within the approved budget for the service, however the expenditure for these projects has not yet been approved by Committee. The projects have been funded at comparable levels for a number of years.

The funding for each organisation is as follows:

WEA:	£39,780
Fersands and Fountain Community Project:	£232,677

Middlefield Project:	£104,766
Printfield Project:	£65,812
Aberdeen Lads Club:	£103,957
St Machar Parent Support Project	£112,416

This report asks the committee to note the decision to continue to fund these organisations while the Service Level Agreements continue to be finalised, and to approve the allocation of the budget as set out above.

The organisations listed above, include the budgeted income from the Council within their business plan for 2012/13. Any delay to the payments could result in cash flow difficulties for these organisations.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Legal Implications

Formal noting of the extension of the Service Level Agreements and the continuation of funding for these organisations is required to comply with the Council's Standing Orders.

The Council's Standing Order 1(3) states: *No tender shall be invited or contract entered into unless the total estimated expenditure has been previously approved by the Council. This requires specific Committee approval or the use of appropriate delegated powers. The allocation of a budget as part of the Council's budget setting process is insufficient.*

To comply with this standing order, the expenditure for the funded projects under these SLAs has been approved under delegated powers.

The review of the SLAs will ensure that they contain clauses required by the Standing Orders. It is anticipated that the new Service Level Agreements will be in place from the 1st July 2012.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 Funded Projects

The service has historically provided funding to a number of organisations to deliver community learning and development activities on behalf of the Council. These organisations are all unincorporated charitable bodies.

As part of the decision to reduce the Community Learning and Development budget in February 2011, which included the budgets allocated for these projects, the Council decided that the budget reductions should not affect "effective funded projects". Although all these projects were "effective" in terms of delivering the outputs as agreed by the Council at that time, the significant budget decisions taken meant that there was a risk that the support for community, learning and development was not being delivered equitably across the city.

The services provided by the funded projects include childcare, youth work, adult learning and capacity building.

Within these funded projects an element of the funding received is used for underpinning management and administrative costs which enable these projects to access funding/services beyond that of the funding from ACC into their areas of work.

WEA (Workers Educational Association Scotland) – This organisation provides adult and family learning opportunities for adults and families across Aberdeen. The funding is used across several areas of their work: parenting and family learning; an element of the Reach Out programme working with marginalised adults; work with the elderly; and community adult learning classes.

Fersands and Fountain Community Project – Two funds are provided; one for Fersands Community Project, one for Fersands Mini-Family Centre. The organisations provide a range of childcare and parent & child services. They organise a wide range of youth work activities for primary & secondary aged young people and young adults. They run some adult learning groups in partnership with a range of agencies. They provide support to the local community, including their management committee, to engage in community development. They run an after school club and support Woodside Network in partnership with Printfield Project.

Middlefield Community Project – This project organises extensive youth work activities, for primary & secondary aged young people and young adults. They run some adult learning groups in partnership with a range of agencies. They provide support to the local community, including their management committee, Middlefield Area Residents Action Group and a range of volunteers, to engage in community development. The project also runs an extensive range of childcare services which are primarily funded from another ACC service.

Printfield Project – This project provides childcare services. They provide youth work activities including clubs and playschemes for 5-16 year olds, mostly with primary aged children. They support some adult learning groups in partnership with a range of agencies and run a social enterprise charity shop. They provide support to the local community, including their management committee and Printfield Forum, to engage in community development. They run an after school club and support Woodside Network in partnership with Printfield Project.

Aberdeen Lads Club – This project provides childcare services including after school care. They provide youth work activities including clubs and play schemes for 5-18 year olds, with the largest groups being with primary aged children. They organise a community café. They lead the partnership that runs Feeling Great events across several regeneration areas. They provide support to the local community to engage in community development. The Club is run by an Executive Committee.

St Machar Parent Support Project – Provides support to pupils attending St Machar Academy or any of its feeder primaries and their parents/carers/families and to parents/carers/families living within the

catchment of the St Machar Learning Community whose child has additional support needs and attends a school run by Aberdeen City Council. This support aims to improve pupil attendance and attainment and improve parent's engagement with schools and their children's learning. The Project is run by a Management Committee.

5.2 Review

Officers have now commenced a comprehensive review of all funded activity, which is scheduled to be concluded around the end of 2012. This review aligns with the root and branch review currently underway for all Culture and Sport commissioned work.

As part of the early part of this work, officers have started to review the Service Level Agreements (SLAs) which are in place with each of these organisations. This has highlighted issues which require significant amendment and updating of the SLAs to improve the clarity of, and to modernise, the relationship between the providers and the Council.

This work is being carried out in conjunction with the Commercial and Advice Legal Team and is anticipated to be complete by the end June 2012. Legal have identified that all but one of the projects are run by unincorporated associations ("UAs"). A UA does not exist independently from its members and where a UA enters into an SLA with the Council its members are exposed personally to liabilities under the SLA. The UAs have therefore been given an opportunity to consider their legal status and some may choose to incorporate before they enter into the new SLA.

5.3 Extension of current SLA periods

Extension of current SLA periods, and approval to continue funding the organisations during this extension, is required to provide time to amend SLAs in line with policy and consult with service providers as necessary whilst ensuring that the contractual relationships are formalised in writing.

In line with Standing Orders, approval under delegated powers was sought from the Chief Executive, Head of Finance, Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Head of Procurement.

6. IMPACT

This report relates to the Combined Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement as follows:

- Protecting children and vulnerable adults
- People of all ages take an active part in their own learning to achieve their full potential Learning and training is appropriate and accessible to learner's needs
- Children and young people access positive learning environments and develop their skills, confidence and self esteem to the fullest potential
- Children, young people and their families/carers are involved in decisions that affect them. Their voices heard and they play an active and responsible role in their communities

- Educational attainment in Aberdeen is continuously sustained and improved
- School leavers enter positive destination of employment, training or further and higher education with a focus on and support for young people who require More Choices and More Chances
- Children and young people actively participate in their communities and have optimum involvement in decision making
- All children, young people and their families have access to high quality services when required and services provide timely, proportionate and appropriate response that meeting the needs of children and young people within Getting it Right for Every Child, (GIRFEC) requirements
- Improve the quality of life in our most deprived areas
- Citizens are increasingly more active in their communities regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, where they live, disability or faith/religion/belief and contribute to 'active citizenship'
- Develop pathways to participation which enhance the diversity of local representation at and engagement with regional, national and international arts, heritage and sporting events
- Our public services are consistently high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs

Public – This report will be of interest to the public, as the recommendations will impact on services delivered throughout the city.

An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment has been completed in respect of the budget decision.

7. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

8. **REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

Gail Woodcock
Service Manager Communities
gwoodcock@aberdeencity.gov.uk
01224 522732