

Report to CABINET

Additional UKSPF Skills Funding Allocations

Portfolio Holder:

Councillor M Ali, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Officer Contact: Matthew Bulmer, Director of Education, Skills and Early Years

Report Author: Amanda Youlden, Post 16 and Skills Lead

14 October 2024

Reason for Decision

Request for various additional funding provided by GMCA as part of the UKSPF skills funding allocation for NEET support be accepted and any variations to the original contracts agreement be agreed.

Details of funding is set out in table below:

Additional funding	
UKSPF NEET Growth Fund (top up to original grant)	£19,000
UKSPF NEET extension to Grant Funding (extension to cover time period March – September 25)	£240,000
Care Leaver Multiply GMIT top up (10% of original grant allocation)	£4,915.80
Additional allocation for NEET prevention	£100,000
Total	£363,915.80

Recommendations

We accept the additional funding to deliver the extension to schemes provided for our NEET young people. This option provides additional support to our young people in Oldham, including Care Leavers that would not normally be available.

Additional UKSPF Skills Funding Allocations

1 Background

- 1.1 In August 2023, a Cabinet report (attached at Appendix 1) was taken and agreed to accept funding from the UKSPF Skills funding via GMCA to support NEET young people to re-engage and return to the EET pathway. This funding was a total of £720,000.
- 1.2 The report outlined the intention for the funding to be attached to the existing TIIAG contract as this would provide the most effective use of the additional resource. This became the “Empower Oldham” project currently being delivered by Positive Steps. This grant agreement, contract and funding was made available until 31 March 2025.
- 1.3 In December 2023, Oldham applied to receive some additional funding from the UKSPF fund. This request originated from GMCA and was known as “Growth Fund”. Oldham was awarded an additional £19K (which increased our monitoring outputs by 10 young people reached). The agreed use of this additional funding was to support the rental costs for the new study programme provision Oldham College are developing at Positive Steps. The provision will open in September 2024.
- 1.4 In March 2024, a DDR was submitted and signed off for £49,158 for the delivery of Care Leaver Multiply (attached, Appendix 2). We have now received notification from GMCA that Oldham has been awarded an additional 10% (£4,915.80) to support staffing costs for input into GMIT.
- 1.5 In June 2024, GMCA requested confirmation LA’s were able to receive and use an additional £100K for the purposes of NEET prevention. This fund must be spent by 31 March 2025. This funding is not linked to any outcomes identified in the wider UKSPF NEET grant allocations. Oldham has worked with Oldham College to develop a programme that supports young people to sustain their placement at the College, with a view to reducing the drop out rate, which will support young people with the resilience to stay in College and therefore not drop out and become NEET. This should support the reduction of Oldham’s NEET rate and should work towards reducing the number of Y13’s who are NEET which is a significant issue for Oldham, GM and nationally. This is a departure from how the other 9 LA’s are using this fund and could become a good practice evidence base for the future.
- 1.6 In July 2024, Oldham was notified of GMCA’s intention to extend UKSPF funding and outcomes to September 2025. The extension will provide an additional £240K to cover the costs of the programme.
- 1.7 The total amount of the additional funding requested to be accepted is £363,915.80.

2 Current Position

- 2.1 All relevant departments are informed of the additional funding and the plans to spend the funds to support young people into positive activity. Without the additional funding, the programmes would be unable to go ahead.

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 Option 1: We accept the additional funding to deliver the extension to schemes provided for our NEET young people. This option provides additional support to our young people in Oldham, including Care Leavers that would not normally be available.

3.2 Option 2: We decline the additional funding. This option effectively removes provision, resource and support for young people who are an identified vulnerable group.

4 Preferred Option

4.1 Option 1 is Officer's preferred option.

5 Consultation

5.1 No consultation required and no declared interests.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 This report is seeking approval to receive additional funding from GMCA as part of the ongoing UKSPF Skills Funding allocation for NEET.

The additional funding will total £363,915.80 and will be used to cover:

Additional Funding	
UKSPF NEET Growth Fund (top up to original grant) – will be passported straight over to Positive Steps to cover the rental space for the Oldham College Study provision.	£19,000
UKSPF NEET extension to Grant Funding (extension to cover time period March – September 25) – will become a variation to the TIIAG contract currently out to tender	£240,000
Care Leaver Multiply GMIT top up (10% of original grant allocation) – will be transferred to Oldham Lifelong Learning Service to cover existing staffing costs	£4,915.80
Additional allocation for NEET prevention - £75k going to Oldham College for drop out project, £20k going to The Hive to support YMCA using the space, £5k going to GMPLN to undertake some work with training providers working across GM.	£100,000
Total	£363,915.80

As per the table above, if accepted, the funding will be passported to providers and as such the financial implications are net nil for the Council.

(Catherine Dunkerley – Accountant)

7 Legal Implications

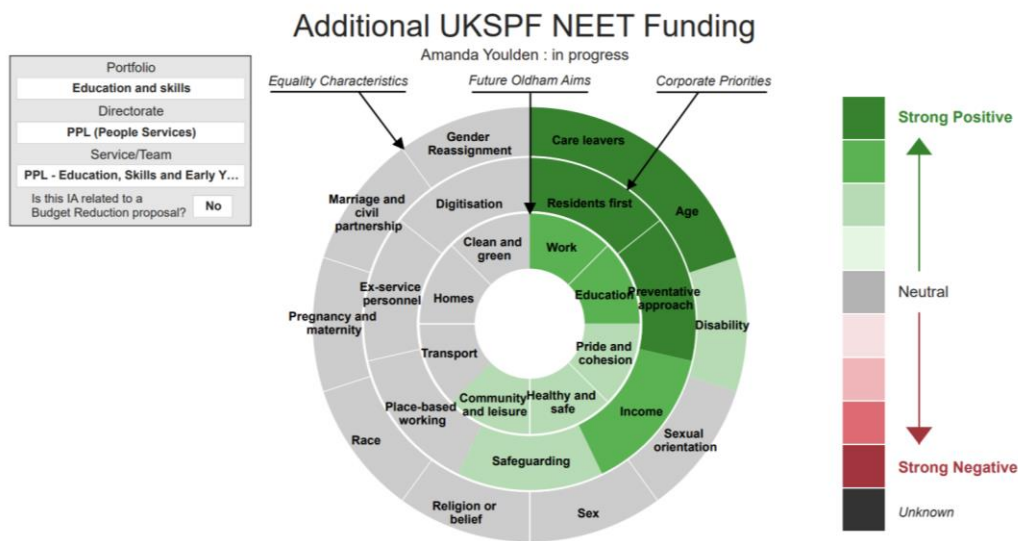
7.1 With successive and interlinked initiatives the overall position here can seem quite complex and perplexing. However, with the benefit of the legal comments made in both the Cabinet Report for the original UKSPF NEET Scheme and also the DDR for the original Care Leaver Multiply Scheme plus the clear and helpful summary from the operational team the position is in fact relatively straight forward.

- 7.2 In essence the Council is entitled to receive extra funding towards addressing the issue of supporting NEET young people. From a legal perspective no reason presents itself as to why the Council should not avail itself of this opportunity nor would any evident complication appear to arise from so doing.
- 7.3 So far the funding to date is £720,000.00 and the various extra incoming funds total £363,915.80. As needs be, the GMCA grant agreement(s) may be varied in order to accommodate and record these changes. It is likely that a supplementary GMCA – OMBC agreement will need to be by deed and executed via use of the Council’s seal.
- 7.4 Changes to the UKSPF grant funding with greater receipts by the Council have no additional legal implications. Of course the follow on consequences of this will all lead to modifications for and the extended scope to existing commissioned services and/or to extra new services being commissioned. Public procurement rules and the Council’s own regime must be complied with in order to ensure that such variations and extensions and new commissions are fully compliant.
- 7.5 Otherwise this is a process of very low if any risk at all with the Council simply to receive funding. Within the Council’s constitution there are little, if indeed any, provisions concerning the receipt of grants and therefore there is no list of criteria to be met in this instance.

(Mike Bentley – Consultant & Locum Solicitor, Commercial Team, Legal Department)

8 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

8.1



9 Key Decision

9.1 Yes

10 Key Decision Reference

11.1 CHS-06-24

12 Background Papers

12.1 N/A

13 **Appendices**

13.1 Appendix 1 – Cabinet Report accepting original UKSPF NEET funding

13.2 Appendix 2 – DDR accepting original Care Leaver Multiply Scheme funding