



**REPORT of  
DIRECTOR OF SERVICE DELIVERY**

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**to  
COUNCIL  
24 FEBRUARY 2022**

**UPDATE ON SOCIAL ENTERPRISE ACCELERATOR FUND AND MEMBER REPRESENTATION**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To update Members on the Additional Restriction Grant (ARG) funded Social Enterprise Accelerator Fund and to consider the appointment of Member representation to an Internal Awarding Panel.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- (i) That the creation of an Internal Award Panel for the Social Enterprise Accelerator Fund be approved;
- (ii) That the Member nominations set out in section 3.11 be ratified and one additional Member appointment be approved for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

**3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 On 6 January 2022, the Strategy and Resources Committee approved the defrayal approach for the remaining ARG funding and endorsed the business support schemes set out in the report presented, in which this project was included. The Committee also approved the Director of Service Delivery be given delegated authority in consultation with the Chairman of the Strategy and Resources Committee, to approve schemes for the remaining ARG to ensure defrayal can be targeted to changing business needs and restrictions.
- 3.2 Maldon District Council (MDC) is working in partnership with Social Enterprise East of England (SEEE) to deliver a Social Enterprise Accelerator Fund. The project forms part of the wider business support under the COVID-19 Economic Recovery and Transformation Plan (CERT) with funding for its delivery provided via the authorities ARG allocation. Projects delivered under the ARG must be defrayed (spent) by 31 March 2022 in accordance with the guidance received from Government.
- 3.3 £250,000 has been allocated to this project for grants up to £50,000 made available to social enterprises, community focussed organisations and social entrepreneurs to enhance the economic, social and cultural life in the Maldon District. These activities will develop a resilient social economy for the benefit of residents and local communities.
- 3.4 A grant application process has been developed whereby applications to the fund are administered by SEEE who will undertake initial eligibility checks. Applications will then be forwarded to MDC who has ultimate approval of awards.

- 3.5 To ensure a fair and clear decision making, it is proposed that an Internal Awarding Panel is formed who will review and approve / decline applications in accordance with the eligible criteria.
- 3.6 The Internal Awarding Panel is proposed to meet on two occasions, in line with the closing deadline for applications. Applications up to £5,000 can be made until 28 February 2022 with applications up to £50,000 open until 15 March 2022. The Terms of Reference for this Internal Awards Panel will be agreed at the initial meeting once Members have been appointed.
- 3.7 The Internal Awarding Panel will be sent the applications to be reviewed within three days of the relevant closing deadline. The Panel is to individually review applications and have questions (if any) ready for panel approval / review. The Panel will convene and approve or question specific applications within seven days of the relevant closing deadline. This review of the applications will be based on set criteria.
- 3.8 Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application. With successful applicants being asked to submit further information to satisfy the audit requirements of the ARG policy.
- 3.9 It is proposed the Internal Awarding Panel is made of four Members, a Director and the Lead Specialist for Prosperity.
- 3.10 The spend approved within this project will be reported back to Strategy and Resources Committee under the CERT programme.
- 3.11 The Group Leaders have nominated the following three Members for appointment and the rationale for these nominations is set out in the table below:

<b>Member Nominations</b>	
Cllr Mrs P A Channer	As Leader of the Council
Cllr R H Siddall	As Chairman of Strategy and Resources Committee
Cllr C Mayes	As liaison with the Maldon Business Forum

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 The Social Enterprise Accelerator Fund provides the authority with the opportunity to enhance the economic, social and cultural life in the Maldon District. This in turn will support the economic and community recovery of the district.
- 4.2 Any unspent funds would need to be returned to Central Government if not defrayed by 31 March 2022.
- 4.3 This project forms part of the wider business support under the CERT programme.

#### **5. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES**

- 5.1 The CERT programme primarily supports the Council Prosperity Objectives of Supporting Existing Local Businesses and Enhancing and Promoting the District Visitor Economy.

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – The proposal will provide organisations with additional support opportunities and enhance the current offering available via Maldon District Council.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – Defrayal is at risk and it is vital that programme activity is aligned and adequately reported to the funder to ensure the funding is not subject to return.

The programme will reduce the risk to the economy presented by COVID-19.

The Council faces increased reputation risk if it fails to deliver to the expectations of stakeholders.

- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – Project is grant funded (paid in advance). Whilst the cost of officer time cannot be recouped from this fund, however, all scheme activity will be.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – The activity is being led by the Lead Specialist Prosperity, whose position is part funded externally by the Welcome Back Fund. However, inevitably, there may be additional work to enhance efforts of existing staff (within existing establishment).
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None anticipated.
- (vii) **Impact on Strengthening Communities** – The grants awarded will aim to enhance the economic, social and cultural life in the Maldon District therefore increasing opportunities for the community to come together.

### Background Papers:

[Additional Restrictions Grant Local Authority Allocations](#)

[Additional Restrictions Grant Guidance for Local Authorities \(updated 20 January 2022\)](#)

[Strategy and Resources Committee Paper – 6 January 2022 – agenda item 14](#)

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