



Scottish Funding Council

Promoting further and higher education

SFC/17/107
Agenda item 11
22 December 2017

Use of delegated authority

Purpose

- To report the Chief Executive's use of delegated authority during the period 1 September 2017 until 30 November 2017.

Recommendation

- Note the use of the Chief Executive's delegated authority from 1 September 2017 until 30 November 2017, under the Council's scheme of delegation.

Use of delegated authority

Purpose

1. This paper asks Council to note the use of the Chief Executive's delegated authority during the period 1 September 2017 until 30 November 2017.

Background

2. The Council's agreed scheme of delegation is:

Money	'Risk'	Decided by
Up to £500,000	Low/Medium/High	Chief Executive
£500,001 to £5M	Low/Medium	Chief Executive
£500,001 to £5M	High	Council board
Above £5M	All	Council board

Use of delegated authority

3. Under the scheme of delegation in operation the Chief Executive has approved the following actions under delegated authority from the Council.

Consents

4. There have been no borrowing consents awarded during this period.

HE Capital funds

5. No HE capital funds were approved under delegated authority during this period.

FE Capital funds

Grant Line/project	Capital Funding: Forth Valley College (Falkirk Campus)
Delegation element	General delegated authority to accept offers of ring-fenced funding from Scottish Government
Amount and purpose	£66.5m of capital funding has been allocated to Forth Valley College for the Falkirk campus project over a 3 year Financial Years (FY) 2017/18 to 2019/20. This funding incorporates £65m capital funding approved by Mr Swinney in his letter of 4 October 2017, and a specific condition of grant that SFC will give Forth Valley College an advance of £3.5m in FY 2019/20 ahead of the sale of the existing Falkirk campus. The funding being offered incorporates £2m in disposal receipts which Forth Valley College have already received from Glasgow Kelvin College.
SG strategic priorities	High quality learning in a learning system which is seamlessly connected for the learner, the highest standards of governance and financial accountability in colleges to ensure the efficient and effective running of these bodies and SFC operating as a highly effective public body working collaboratively with others to maximise its impact on individuals, society, and the economy.
Identified risk	Low

FE programme funds

Grant Line/project	Effective Institutions: New College Lanarkshire Business Plan: Voluntary Severance
Delegation element	General delegated authority, on advice from the Strategic Funding Group by correspondence on 17 November 2017.
Amount and purpose	SFC has already been supporting the College in the development of a Business Plan to address its financial challenges. The draft business plan, covering a three year recovery period, includes a reduction in staff to be delivered through voluntary severance. The plan envisages this activity being actioned in three phases, with phase 1 in Academic Year (AY) 2017-18 targeting a reduction of 27 staff. Funding has been offered of up to £866,000 to initiate this voluntary severance scheme in AY 2017-18.
SG strategic priorities	The highest standards of governance and financial accountability in colleges to ensure the efficient and effective running of these bodies and SFC operating as a highly effective public body working collaboratively with others to maximise its impact on individuals, society, and the economy.
Identified risk	Medium

Grant Line/project	Employability and Skills: Scottish Institute for Enterprise (SIE)
Delegation element	General delegated authority on advice from the Strategic Funding Group meeting on 6 November 2017.
Amount and purpose	<p>Scottish Institute for Enterprise's (SIE) role is to promote and support delivery of enterprise and entrepreneurship education in Scotland's universities and colleges to develop innovative and entrepreneurial graduates that, in turn, drive Scotland's economic growth. At the 30 June 2016 meeting, the Strategic Funding Group agreed to continue funding of SIE from Academic Years 2016-17 to 2018-19 (£180,000 per AY from FE funding and £450,000 per AY from HE funding, representing a 30%/70% split. An additional £100,000 of HE funding was awarded in February 2017 for SIE's Regional Business Advisor activities in AY 2016-17 only).</p> <p>While the offer of grant was for £1,990,000 over the 3 AYs, it was a condition that SIE must take part in discussions with SFC to review the governance and funding arrangements during year one as we establish the appropriate combined funding model for a collaborative offering of the four enterprise projects (SIE, Bridge 2 Business, Converge Challenge and Enterprise Campus). Participation in these discussions was required to secure the funding to support activity in AYs 2017-18 and 2018-19.</p> <p>The Strategic Funding Group agreed that an updated offer of grant be issued confirming continued funding for the remainder of AYs 2017-18 and 2018-19.</p>
SG strategic priorities	<p>High quality learning in a learning system which is seamlessly connected for the learner, including learning which prepares people well for the world of work and successful long term careers, prioritising provision that meets known skills gaps in the economy.</p> <p>Ensuring provision of quality learning in Scottish higher education institutions.</p> <p>Effective knowledge exchange and innovation, including excellent collaboration between universities, colleges, and industry.</p>
Identified risk	Low

HEI programme funds

Grant Line/project	Ring-fenced SG funding: Clinical Academics and Senior Academic GPs
Delegation element	General delegated authority to accept and award ring-fenced offers of grant from Government.
Amount and purpose	£6,624,000 in AY 2017-18. Funding to cover the additional salary costs incurred for Clinical Academics (Consultants) and Senior Academic GPs (the General Practice equivalent of a Clinical Academic) who have a dual role to work for universities, where they are engaged in teaching and research, and the NHS, delivering direct care to patients. There are around 350 Clinical Academics and 25 Senior Academic GPs in Scotland split between the five universities with medical schools: Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow and St Andrews.
SG strategic priorities	High quality learning; ensuring provision of quality learning in Scottish HEIs; internationally competitive and impactful research; effective knowledge exchange and innovation, including excellent collaboration between universities, colleges and industry.
Identified risk	Low

Grant Line/project	Research Excellence: Global Challenges Research Fund
Delegation element	General delegated authority to accept and award ring-fenced offers of grant from Government
Amount and purpose	£4,012,495 in AY 2017-18. The Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy allocated this funding to SFC from the Global Challenges Research Fund in AY2017-18. The funding is intended to support cutting-edge research that addresses the challenges faced by developing countries through: disciplinary and interdisciplinary research; strengthening capacity for research and innovation within both the UK and developing countries; and providing an agile response to emergencies where there is an urgent research need.
SG strategic priorities	Internationally competitive and impactful research.
Identified risk	Low

Grant Line/project	Ring-fenced SG funding: Knowledge Transfer Partnerships
Delegation element	General delegated authority to accept and award ring-fenced offers of grant from Government.
Amount and purpose	£1,500,000 in AY 2017-18. The programme, managed by Innovate UK, is a UK-wide intervention aimed at enabling businesses to improve their competitiveness, productivity and performance by linking them with a university and a graduate to work on a specific project of strategic importance to the company.
SG strategic priorities	Internationally competitive and impactful research; Effective knowledge exchange and innovation, including excellent collaboration between universities, colleges and industry.
Identified risk	Low

Grant Line/project	Research: Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021
Delegation element	General delegated authority on advice of the Strategic Funding Group, 29 June 2017
Amount and purpose	£2,471,130 over AYs 2017-18 to 2021-22. SFC's contribution towards the costs of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021. The REF is the system for assessing the quality of research in HEIs in the UK and was last conducted in 2014. The REF is carried out jointly by the four UK HE funding bodies.
SG strategic priorities	Internationally competitive and impactful research
Identified risk	Low

Grant Line/project	Research: Continued Development of the Soillse Research Pool
Delegation element	General delegated authority on advice of the Strategic Funding Group, 6 November 2017.
Amount and purpose	<p>£562,500 over AYs 2017-18 to 2022-23. Soillse's aim is to pool Gaelic language research capacity across the participating academic institutions and establish (1) an international quality research capability that will support, inform and influence policy at national and local levels in the effort to maintain and revitalise the Gaelic language in Scotland and beyond; and (2) a powerful research network across the participating Scottish HEIs, linking national researchers with expertise and interest in contemporary Gaelic language matters, with international minority language research institutions.</p> <p>This investment will allow the pool to continue its central core functions and to build on and expand its research network, broadening the expert disciplinary base to include new partners. In addition it will continue the small research funds, international engagement, seminar programme and wider collaborative project development.</p>
SG strategic priorities	Internationally competitive and impactful research; Effective knowledge exchange and innovation, including excellent collaboration between universities, colleges and industry.
Identified risk	Low

Publication

5 This paper will be published on the SFC website following the Council meeting.

Recommendation

6 The Council is asked to note the use of the Chief Executive's delegated authority from 1 September 2017 until 30 November 2017, under the Council's scheme of delegation.

Further information

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