

**Report To:** Policy & Resources Committee      **Date:** 2 February 2010  
**Report By:** Chief Financial Officer      **Report No:** FIN/85/09/AP/GJ  
**Contact Officer:** Alan Puckrin      **Contact No:** 01475 712223  
**Subject:** A Corporate Approach to External Funding

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise Committee of the steps taken to implement a corporate approach to the accessing and reporting of External Funding.

## 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Within the Organisational Improvement Plan there is a work stream related to External Funding which has two specific actions namely, the need for the Council to develop a coherent approach to accessing external funding and also the need for the Council to optimise external funding where appropriate in order to mitigate the financial pressures which lie ahead.
- 2.2 The Corporate Management Team remitted it to the Chief Financial Officer to set up a Working Group of Officers from each Directorate to develop the corporate approach to accessing external funding. This exercise is now complete and has been reported to and approved by the Corporate Management Team. The exercise undertaken by the Working Group sought to address the issues highlighted in Appendix 1 to this report and the resultant internal application form and assessment process will address the matters raised.
- 2.3 It was agreed that the Corporate Management Team would receive 6 monthly updates in respect of applications for external funding and that the Directorate Performance reports would also provide updates to individual Service Committees detailing external funding applications with 6 monthly updates on external funding being reported to the Policy & Resources Committee.
- 2.4 The Corporate Management Team also agreed that there would be a key Council contact for each major funding stream who would provide guidance and advice to other Officers preparing applications and would also provide a one door approach to the Funding Body in respect of contact with the Council.
- 2.5 As regards the future direction of the External Funding Group the Corporate Management Team has agreed that the new post of Head of Educational Planning & Culture should chair the Officer External Funding Group which will continue to have representatives from all Directorates and the appropriate Financial and Legal support.
- 2.6 The Committee should note that as part of the Annual Budget process, Members will be presented with a list of terminating externally funded projects in order that a view can be taken as to whether Members wish to utilise mainstream funding in order to continue with projects. The envisaged improvements in respect of measuring performance outcomes for external funding projects will help Members in this regard.

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### **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 It is recommended that Members note and welcome the progress made in developing a corporate approach to accessing external funding.
- 3.2 It is recommended that the Committee note that this work stream will now move on to identifying ways in which the Council can maximise the access to external funding for relevant projects which support the Council's outcomes.

Alan Puckrin  
Chief Financial Officer

**External Funding Action Plan**

	<b><u>Issue</u></b>	<b><u>Action Needed</u></b>
1/	Lack of Corporate approach to applying for and reporting external funding opportunities	Detail full process and agree Corporate approach.  Develop standard documentation for reporting to External Funding Group/CMT/Members.
2/	Lack of Corporate experts on main funding streams.	Identify and publicise Council experts for main funding streams to provide peer support and advice.  Develop core duties/skills of "Funding Stream" experts.
3/	Full funding implications and relevant budgets are not identified at outset.	All funding issues need to be signed off by Accountancy via approved pro-forma before bid is submitted.
4/	Insufficient consideration of legislative issues early enough in process.	Corporate pro-forma will include evidence of engagement with Legal, Procurement, Planning etc.
5/	Most projects do not have a clear exit strategy.	In liaison with HR all employee impacts need to be identified at outset and communicated as part of the approval process. Financial allowances need to be factored in as required.
6/	No Corporate approach to monitoring and reporting outputs/outcomes via those envisaged at the outset.	Develop methodology for monitoring and reporting outputs/outcomes to Officers/Members.
7/	No formal Corporate Group with responsibility for External Funding Management/Monitoring.	Identify remit, lead & membership.  Agree reporting frequency/detail to CMT/Committee