

Performance and Resources Committee Meeting

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 16 March 2020
Paper Title	Flexible Workforce Development Fund – 2019-20
Agenda Item	9
Paper Number	PRC3-E
Responsible Officer	Jim Godfrey, Finance and Resources Director
Recommended Status	Disclosable
Action	For Noting

1. Report Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update in respect of the Flexible Workforce Development Fund.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Committee is invited to **note** that:

- £1,369,000 of Flexible Workforce Activity has been contracted/agreed in the first six months of 2019-20.
- This is positive progress and represents 66% of the funds available after 6 months of the financial year.
- £796,000 of Flexible Workforce Activity was contracted in 2018-19 and is being delivered in 2019-20.

3. Report

- 3.1. The Colleges and GCRB have actively promoted the Flexible Workforce Fund since it was introduced in September 2017. As can be seen from the table below, levels of activity have increased significantly since the fund commenced.

Flexible Workforce Fund	Funds Available £'m	Funds Used £'m	Under- utilisation £'m	% of funds used
2017-18	£1.92	£1.07	£0.85	56%
2018-19	£1.92	£1.89	£0.03	98%

- 3.2. Work is progressing in respect of the Flexible Workforce Fund for 2019-20. In accordance with the monitoring arrangements set out in the SFC guidance, GCRB has submitted returns on behalf of the region at the end of September, November 2019 and January 2020.

A summary of the latest return for 2019-20 is provided below:

Flexible Workforce Fund 2019-20	City of Glasgow College £'000	Glasgow Clyde College £'000	Glasgow Kelvin College £'000	Total £'000
Initial Allocation	£894	£632	£393	£1,919
Contracted/Agreed Training at 31 Jan 2020	£444	£607	£318	£1,369
Balance Remaining	£550	£26	£75	£ 651
Percentage of funds to allocate	62%	4%	19%	34%

- 3.3. Of the balance remaining, this is subject to 'discussion with employers but without a contractual commitment' at 31 January 2020. We are confident that this will be fully utilised before the year end.
- 3.4. The amount of training undertaken so far (against 2019-20 activity) is relatively modest. This is due to the fact that there is a significant volume of training being delivered in the current academic year that was contracted for in 2018-19¹.

Flexible Workforce Fund 2019-20	City of Glasgow College £'000	Glasgow Clyde College £'000	Glasgow Kelvin College £'000	Total £'000
Contracted/Agreed Training at 31 Jan 2020	£444	£607	£318	£1,369
Value of training undertaken at 31 Jan 2020	£58	£46	£62	£ 166
Percentage of training delivered at 30 Nov 2019	13%	8%	19%	12%

- 3.5. For comparison purposes, the table below provides a summary of the position at 31 January 2019 (for 2018-19). The value of training contracted/agreed at 31 January 2020 (£1,369,000) compares favourably with the same period last year.

Flexible Workforce Fund 2018-19	City of Glasgow College £'000	Glasgow Clyde College £'000	Glasgow Kelvin College £'000	Total £'000
Committed Training at 31 Jan 2019	£155	£215	£357	£ 727

¹ SFC wrote to the Interim Executive Director on 6 November 2019 confirming that the value of this activity was £734,276. In addition, a further amount of £61,000 had previously been received to make a total value of £796,276.

4. Additional Activity 2019-20

- 4.1.** The Scottish Funding Council wrote to colleges on 20 December 2019 inviting confirmation of credit, and Flexible Workforce, activity for the financial year. There was also an opportunity to request additional funding to meet unmet demand. Following careful consideration, the Glasgow College region indicated that it would be able to increase Flexible Workforce activity by approximately 10% (circa £200,000) in 2019-20.
- 4.2.** Furthermore, Colleges Scotland met with Scottish Government colleagues in February 2020. Again the matter under consideration was the potential for additional funds being made available.
- 4.3.** At the date of issuing this report there has been no confirmation about the availability of additional funding for Flexible Workforce activity.

5. Risk Analysis

- 5.1.** The arrangements set out in this report, and those previously considered by the Board, are designed to minimise the risks. In particular, these actions are intended to minimise the risk 002 that “Effective working relationships are not developed/maintained with key partners”.
- 5.2.** The increase in levels of activity has ensured that the fund is utilised and reduced the risk of an underspend.

6. Equalities Implications

- 6.1.** There are no equalities implications as a direct result of this report.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1.** No legal implications are identified.

8. Resource Implications

- 8.1.** The financial implications of the Flexible Workforce Fund are outlined in the report.
- 8.2.** The requirement to actively promote the Fund and submit regular monitoring information to SFC has a resource implication for the colleges and GCRB. This is a significant additional administrative burden.

9. Strategic Plan Implications

- 9.1.** The curriculum delivery, supported by these funds, will provide significant support to the achievement of ambitions set out in the Glasgow Region Strategic Plan. Delivery supported by the Flexible Workforce Fund makes a significant contribution to meeting the aim of meeting Glasgow’s ambitions working with employers to deliver a range and depth of training opportunities.