

## Board Meeting

Date of Meeting	Monday 04 September 2017
Paper Title	English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) – funding for AY 2017-18
Agenda Item	9
Paper Number	BM1-H
Responsible Officer	Jim Godfrey, Interim Director of Finance & Resources
Status	Disclosable
Action	For Decision

### 1. Report Purpose

- 1.1** To inform the Board of the offer of funding for 2017-18 and consider a proposal in respect of this.

### 2. Recommendations

**2.1** The Board is invited to:

- **note** the offer of £305,751 from SFC’s Strategic Funds for ESOL provision in 2017-18;
- **approve** the recommendation of the Performance and Resources Committee that the Board:
  - **endorse** the distribution of the funds as set out in the plan developed by Glasgow colleges and partners prior to the SFC decision to allocate funds through GCRB;
  - **request** that Glasgow Clyde College be made accountable for the allocation of these funds to partners and the requirement for it to report on this to GCRB;
  - **note** the intention to work with partners to make a case to the Scottish Government and the SFC for additional regional funding for ESOL; and
  - **request** that progress is reported to a future meeting of the Performance and Resources Committee.
- **request** that the Executive Director seeks further clarification regarding the funding of additional ESOL provision for 2018-19.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1** The Government's original strategy for ESOL was published in 2007 with the aim of improving the life chances of people for whom English is not their first language. Over the course of the last decade, a significant amount of work has taken place to deliver this strategy. Since 2007, additional ESOL funding has been provided in support of the Scottish Government's ESOL strategy.
- 3.2** In 2015, the Scottish Government in conjunction with Education Scotland published Scotland's ESOL Strategy 2015-2020. A copy of this report is available from: [http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/22892/2/ESOLStrategy2015to2020\\_tcm4-855848\\_Redacted.pdf](http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/22892/2/ESOLStrategy2015to2020_tcm4-855848_Redacted.pdf)
- 3.3** The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) has provided £1.45m annually to Further Education Sector in Scotland to support the delivery of this strategy. This funding has been allocated to local authority areas, and has been coordinated by Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs), with Glasgow in receipt of around £300k annually. The majority of this additional funding has gone to the three Glasgow colleges, with allocations also being made to Glasgow Life (a Glasgow City Council ALEO), Workers Educational Association, and the Glasgow ESOL Forum.
- 3.4** Oversight of these funds has been managed by the Glasgow CPP, with a regional plan developed across the partners and progress reported to Scottish Government agencies. For practical purposes, as the additional ESOL funding was routed by the Scottish Government through the SFC, the funds flowed from SFC to Glasgow Clyde College and on to all partners.

### **4. ESOL Funding 2017-18**

- 4.1** On 6<sup>th</sup> July 2017, the SFC wrote to GCRB with a funding offer for 2017-18. The offer is £305,751 i.e. the same amount as in 2016-17.
- 4.2** As outlined above, this was a change to previous years' funding where SFC made additional ESOL funding available to CPPs via colleges. The Glasgow partnership had already agreed the allocation of funds for 2017-18, based on the 2016-17 allocation, when the SFC changed how funds would be distributed. The proposed distribution of activity, and associated funds, was provided to the Performance and Resources Committee. The SFC letter states that colleges must continue to work with CPPs and use the funding in accordance with the conditions of grant outlined within the SFC letter.
- 4.3** Since receipt of the SFC letter, the GCRB Executive Director has consulted with the Glasgow colleges, and CPP colleagues, and there is a consensus to distribute the 2017-18 funds in the manner planned prior to the SFC letter.
- 4.4** On this basis, a report was circulated to members of the Performance and Resources Committee seeking approval of this way forward. As a result, the Committee recommended that the GCRB Board:

- **endorse** the distribution of the funds as set out in the plan developed by partners prior to the SFC decision to allocate funds through GCRB;
- **request** that Glasgow Clyde College be made accountable for the allocation of these funds to partners and the requirement for it to report on this to GCRB;
- **note** the intention to work with partners to make a case to the Scottish Government and the SFC for additional regional funding for ESOL; and
- **request** that progress is reported to a future meeting of the Performance and Resources Committee.

**4.5** If the recommendations are approved, it would mean that GCRB would provide an additional grant of £305,571 to Glasgow Clyde College in return for delivering the requirements (as outlined in the letter from SFC). This would be set out in a letter of grant between GCRB and Glasgow Clyde College.

## **5. Future ESOL Funding**

- 5.1** It is important to note that the funds provided by the SFC are for 2017-18 only. The final paragraph of the letter states that, "...from 2018-19, all ESOL provision should be resourced from core teaching funding...". The implication of this is that the additional funding received in 2017-18 (and previous years) will not continue. Unless an equivalent amount is added to the core teaching grant this would represent a reduction in funding.
- 5.2** It should be noted that this SFC decision to integrate these additional ESOL funds within college core funding has caused concern to community partners, particularly as there was no consultation before the decision was made.
- 5.3** Clearly a potential reduction in funding is a cause for concern. It is recommended that the Executive Director is requested to write to the Scottish Funding Council to seek further clarification.

## **6. Risk Analysis**

- 6.1** The proposal in respect of funding for 2017-18 is considered to be a low risk. The proposal recommends using the skills and knowledge of Glasgow Clyde College to continue to deliver the programme that they have provided previously.
- 6.2** The potential risk to ESOL funding for 2018-19 is a concern. Incorporating ESOL funding within the core grant will result in an overall budget reduction unless there is an equivalent increase in grant.

## **7. Legal Implications**

**7.1** There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **8. Financial Implications**

**8.1** The total grant allocated to the region for Additional ESOL provision in 2017-18 is £305,751.

## **9. Strategic Plan Implications**

**9.1** The delivery of an effective ESOL provision is a valuable driver to achieve the ambitions set out in the Glasgow Region Strategic Plan. In particular, it is expected to make a key contribution to meeting the aim of widening access to life-changing learning, as the delivery of ESOL courses will reduce a significant barrier to learning and employment faced by some members of the community.