



Report of the Cabinet Member for Delivery & Performance

External Funding Panel – 5 March 2020

Welsh Government Circular Economy Capital Fund 2019-20 - Offer of Capital Support for the Setting up of Agile Working at Guildhall, Swansea

Purpose:	To provide details of the Welsh Government Circular Economy Capital Fund FY 2019-20 to support the continued roll out of agile working at the Guildhall
Policy Framework:	Asset Management Plan 2017/21. Corporate Priority Transformation and Future Council Development. Financial Procedure Rules
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: 1) Approval is given to accept any grant offer following the submission of a funding bid to the Welsh Government Circular Economy Capital Fund FY 2019-20 to support the rollout of Agile Working at Guildhall Swansea.
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Legal Officer:	Tracey Meredith
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide the External Funding Panel with the background regarding a Welsh Government (WG) grant opportunity that will be used to support the Council in the roll out of Agile Working at Guildhall.
- 1.2 The primary purpose of the project is to continue with the introduction of Agile Working and New Ways of Working born out of the drive for City and County of Swansea (CCOS) to become sustainably responsible with their office furniture procurement.

- 1.3 An initial pilot project was conducted some two and half years ago in Civic Centre, which highlighted Circular Economy benefits that far exceeded expectations. The success was documented in a case study by WRAP Cymru, which can be found here:

[.../Desktop/20180305 Swansea Council Case Study Final V1%20\(1\).pdf](#)

- 1.4 CCOS plan to rationalise space and transform a traditional office environment into a modern, economically viable, social, and environmentally friendly working environment. In doing so, we collaborated with a local furniture business, Ministry of Furniture who are members of social firms Wales, to assist with delivery of this new circular economy concept.

2. Welsh Government Circular Economy Capital Fund

- 2.1 The Welsh Government issued a letter on 19 December 2019 asking for bids against this Capital Fund for a variety of activities including “Prioritise the use of wood and remake and recycle more items”. Bids needed to be returned by 23 January.

- 2.2 Successful bids are due to be announced mid February, with funding spent or committed by 20 March 2020.

- 2.3 The Authority’s submission under this Capital fund is for the expenditure required to continue with the roll out of the Agile Project at Guildhall in line with Accommodation strategy.

- 2.4 The funding would be utilised to transform the Councils traditional furniture by completely remanufacturing into modern beam desking configuration utilising approximately 70% of the legacy furniture in the new desks. The process includes taking the surplus wood panels from desks, pedestals and storage cupboards cutting down, re edged and transformed into modern wooden agile lockers. Old meeting chairs will be powder coated and reupholstered to fit in with the redesigned modern environment.

- 2.5 There are currently approximately 900 staff working at Guildhall, when this project is completed it is hoped that this figure could increase by 50%. This demonstrates efficiency and increased space utilisation.

- 2.6 Refurbishment of identified areas would commence on approval of the grant funding, in line with proposed programme that has already been shared with affected Heads of Service.

The full process will be as follows:

- Decant staff from existing office space to enable existing furniture to be remanufactured.

- Furniture that can't be reused in scheme to be offered to schools/ community groups.
- Relocate staff to new refurbished areas.
- Space gained to be offered to commercial partners, gaining income generation.

2.7 The creation of this new agile working environment and upgraded technology will reduce the need for office space and enable staff to work remotely and access facilities such as video conferencing. This will help to cut carbon emissions from unnecessary travel.

3. Equality and Engagement Implications

3.1 The Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) and must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Our Equality Impact Assessment process ensures that we have paid due regard to the above.

3.2 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening tool confirms that a full EIA is not required at this stage. We will revisit the assessment if the funding bid is successful.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 This funding bid is for the provision of Capital funding to enable the Authority to continue and complete the Agile Working Project at Guildhall. The total sum of Capital funding bid for under this application amounts to £406,247.49.

This sum can be broken down as follows:-

To complete project the following equipment was assessed to be needed. Due to the timescales it is likely that there will be amendments to the specification.

- 570 workstations , including desk /chair etc @£500 per station = £285,000
- 900 lockers @£86 per locker = £77,400
- Break out area furniture – approximately. £70,000
- 65 height adjustable desks@ £600 = £39,000

- 17 recycling stations 60ltrs, including signage on each bin in Welsh & English) = £4,847.49

Total cost £406,247.49

	2019/20 £	2020/21 £	2021/22 £	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	Total £	Ongoing £
Total project cost:							
Capital	406,247.49 committed					406,247.49	Nil
Revenue	Nil						
Grant applied for:							
Capital	406,247.49						
Revenue	Nil						
Deficit	Nil						

5. Legal Implications

5.1 The Council will need to ensure that it complies with any terms and conditions attached to this Welsh Government grant funding.

Background Papers:

Grant Application

NGA2 – Notification of Grant Award

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - EIA screening