



**RECORD OF DELEGATED OFFICER DECISION**

Key Decision

✓

Operational Decision

**SUBJECT: Ministry of Defence (MOD) Education Support Fund Application**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

**To outline the submission of a regional grant application by Rhondda Cynon Taf to the Ministry of Defence Service Children in Education Fund.**

In accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation, this report has been prepared to accompany the intended officer decision of the Director of Education & Lifelong Learning as described below

**DELEGATED DECISION (Date):**

**To submit a regional grant application to the Ministry of Defence Education Support Fund**

  
**Chief Officer Signature**

**ESTHER THOMAS**  
**Print Name**

**27.09.16.**  
**Date**

**The decision is taken in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government Act, 2000 (Executive Functions) and in the terms set out in Section 5 of Part 3 of the Council's Constitution**

**CONSULTATION**

  
\_\_\_\_\_

**CONSULTEE CABINET MEMBER SIGNATURE**

27/9/16  
\_\_\_\_\_

**DATE**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**CONSULTEE OFFICER SIGNATURE**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE**

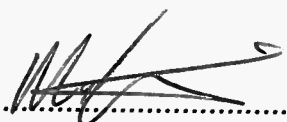
**CALL IN PROCEDURE RULES.**

**IS THE DECISION DEEMED URGENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO CALL-IN BY THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:**

YES ☒ NO

*Reason for urgency:*...Deadline for grant applications is 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016 .....

*If deemed urgent* - signature of Mayor or Deputy Mayor or Head of Paid Service confirming agreement that the proposed decision is reasonable in all the circumstances for it being treated as a matter of urgency, in accordance with the overview and scrutiny procedure rule 17.2:

  
.....  
(Mayor)

27/09/16  
.....  
(Dated)

**NB - If this is a reconsidered decision then the decision Cannot be Called In and the decision will take effect from the date the decision is signed.**

FOR CABINET OFFICE USE ONLY

**PUBLICATION & IMPLEMENTATION DATES**

**PUBLICATION**

Publication on the Councils Website:- 27 / 09 / 2016

**DATE**

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION**

**Note:** This decision will not come into force and may not be implemented until the expiry of 5 clear working days after its publication to enable it to be the subject to the Call-In Procedure in Rule 17.1 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

Subject to Call In the implementation date will be 27/09/2016

**DATE**

  
**Secretary to the Cabinet Signature**

CHRISTIAN SS HANAGAN  
**Print Name**

27/09/16  
**Date**

**Further Information**

<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Education and Lifelong Learning</b>
<b>Contact Name:</b>	<b>Zoe Lancelott</b>
<b>Designation:</b>	<b>Head of Engagement and Participation</b>
<b>Tel.No.</b>	<b>01443 744386</b>

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2016-2017**

**OFFICER DELEGATED DECISION**

**22<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER 2016**

**REPORT OF:  
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND  
LIFELONG LEARNING**

<b>MINISTRY OF DEFENCE SERVICE CHILDREN IN EDUCATION GRANT APPLICATION</b>
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**Author: Zoe Lancelott, Head of Engagement and Participation  
Tel: 01443 744386**

**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE SERVICE CHILDREN IN EDUCATION  
GRANT APPLICATION**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To outline the submission of a regional grant application by Rhondda Cynon Taf to the Ministry of Defence Service Children in Education Fund.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 The information contained within this report is noted.
- 2.2 A delegated decision is made to submit the regional grant application.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Grant funding is currently available from the Ministry of Defence Service Children in Education Grant 2017 to support the educational outcomes of children of Her Majesty's Forces (HMF) personnel. We have been successful in our last two submissions to this fund in 2015 and 2016.
- 3.2 We are seeking funding from the Ministry of Defence Service Children in Education Grant to continue to reduce the barriers to attendance, engagement and participation in learning for Service children.
- 3.3 Approval to apply for this Grant for 2017 has been given by both the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning and the Group Director of Corporate Services in line with the RCT Project Management Protocol (Appendix 1).

#### **4 THE REGIONAL BID**

- 4.1 The HMF Education Support project was successfully implemented in Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2015. The grant was used to fund two HMF Education Support Officers who during the first year focused on the identification of Service children residing in RCT and raising awareness of schools of the needs of this cohort of pupils.
- 4.2 During its second year, the project's focus expanded to include the building of relationships between RCT, the wider Armed Forces community and improving communication with other neighbouring local authorities in an effort to continue to improve the educational outcomes for Service children.
- 4.3 This regional bid gives us the opportunity to provide a specialist service for Service children collaboratively with Merthyr Tydfil CBC as well as continue to further develop services in RCT. The Service will be hosted by Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC

#### **5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 A successful application to the Ministry of Defence Service Children in Education Grant 2017 will enable us to establish a regional approach to improving the educational outcomes for Service children.



**Project Initiation Request (B)****1. DIVISION / SERVICE AREA**

Engagement and Participation Service

**2. PROJECT OFFICER**

Name: Zoe Lancelott

Tel: 01443 744386

**3. PROJECT TITLE**

Supporting Her Majesty's Forces (HMF) Service Children - Cwm Taf Regional Bid

**4. PROJECT PROPOSAL****Please provide details of your proposed project including aims; outputs; timescale and partners:**

Funding is available via the Ministry of Defence Education Support Fund 2017 to support children of Service families. This will be our third bid for funding.

The HMF Education Support project was successfully implemented in 2015 and has continued to develop focusing on reducing the barriers to attendance, engagement and participation in learning for Service children.

During the second year of the project the focus expanded to include the building of relationships between RCT, the wider Armed Forces community and improving communication with other neighbouring local authorities in an effort to continue to improve the educational outcomes for Service children.

The success over the first two years has identified the need to further develop the programme locally as well as given us the opportunity to expand to include Merthyr Tydfil LA, making this a Cwm Taf regional bid. To support these new developments a third Officer would be recruited specifically working in Merthyr Tydfil to begin the process of awareness raising and the identification of Service children, supported by the two existing Officers. In total there would be three HMF Education Support Officers covering 156 schools across Cwm Taf.

Due to the planned expansion of the project the specific actions will concentrate on two areas.

Within Rhondda Cynon Taf we will pro-actively target the children and young people who have been identified as having a lower attendance rate and/or at risk of disengaging from education.

The HMF Education Officers will make contact with the relevant school, pupil and family and assess the level of need and support requirements to overcome any barriers. Information gathered will be used to populate and agree a bespoke action plan with clearly identified outcomes and timescales. As and when required the Officers will access external services to enhance the package of support available.

As there is currently no provision available in Merthyr Tydfil LA, we will seek to recruit a new HMF Education Support Officer for the area. The primary task for the Officer will be awareness raising within schools of the potential additional barriers experienced by Service children and actively promote the identification and recording of Service children across the borough. In addition, we will increase the awareness of other key stakeholders in relation to these issues and the impact on Service children's engagement, participation and achievement. This additional HMF Education Support Officer will be based in RCT.

The main body of the proposed activity will be undertaken by our currently employed HMF Education Support Officers and new Officer for Merthyr Tydfil. The existing Officers already have good working relationships with both Service families and schools as well as

being members of the Service community themselves, which means they are ideally placed to continue to develop our work in this area.

The aims of the project are to:

- Increase in the number of Service children known to both Local Authorities
- Improved awareness of the potential additional barriers to education experienced by Service children
- Improved support networks to assist Service children with identified barriers (both educational and military)
- Regular communication with key stakeholders including Schools, Training providers, Armed Forces, AF Community Covenant etc
- Development of literature, information and activities to support the engagement and information sharing of relevant information to Service children and families.

We will measure the level of success the project has achieved by collecting the following information:

- No of Service children known to the Local Authority
- No of teachers (school staff) with improved knowledge and understanding of the potential barriers to education faced by Service children
- No of other key professionals with improved knowledge and understanding of the potential barriers to education faced by Service children
- No of Service children, young people and families receiving bespoke packages of support
- No of Service children, young people and families satisfied with the service received
- No of Service children recording improved attendance after a bespoke intervention
- No of referrals made to other services
- No of Service children with improved engagement rates

**Please explain how your proposed project contributes to your Service Area Business Plan / Single Integrated Plan:**

The proposed project contributes to the following strategic priorities:

**Single Integrated Plan**

Prosperity:

- Rolling out a programme to improve attendance across the whole county borough;
- Reducing gaps in attendance and attainment for vulnerable groups.

Safety:

- Work together to make sure that safeguarding is at the centre of all services for children and young people.

**Education and Lifelong Learning Strategic Business Plan**



- To work in partnership to overcome the barriers to learning and safeguard the wellbeing of learners

### **Engagement and Participation Service Operational Delivery Plan**

1. Continue to develop the Engagement and Participation Service to ensure young people are supported to overcome barriers to attendance, engagement and participation in learning
2. Develop the scope of Vulnerability Profiling to facilitate its wider use across the Council and partners as a diagnostic tool to drive improvements in planning, delivery and review of targeted services.
3. Review and evaluate the implementation of key WG policy across the Engagement and Participation Service ensuring that outcomes clearly contribute to Directorate priorities
4. Ensure statutory duties are efficiently and effectively discharged within a graduated response model

### **Please identify whether any preliminary work has been undertaken:**

Two HMF Education Support Officers, one primary and one secondary phase, have been in post since August 2015, working with identified Service children and their families to mitigate against the impact on children's learning as a result of mobility, deployment and resettling in RCT.

Working with individual pupils and/or families, the HMF Education Support Officers undertake initial assessment to determine the level of support required for children to fully engage in education. In addition, we are raising the awareness of schools and other partners in relation to these issues and the impact on Service children's attendance, engagement and achievement.

The Local Authority began requesting that schools identify and record the number of Service children in attendance from January 2015. Between January-July 2015 a total of 93 pupils were identified. In August 2015 the LA recruited the HMF Education Support Officers to support this work and as of June 2016 the total number of Service children known to the service was 190, this number continues to increase on a regular basis.

Analysis of the educational data for the Service children has revealed that although many do well in our schools and have the required skills and resilience to succeed, 28 Service children have an attendance rate below 90%, 10 below 80% totalling 99 with attendance rates below the LA's target.

Further analysis was undertaken to identify Service children who were at risk of disengaging or who have disengaged from education, employment or training. This was carried out using the Local Authority's early identification tool (vulnerability profiling) and identified that 9% of Service children were at high risk of disengaging (red) and 20% were at medium risk (amber).

Whilst we have made good initial progress in identifying service children on roll at schools in RCT we are mindful that not all schools may be effectively identifying pupils from service families and therefore the numbers reported may not be a true reflection of the extent of the cohort. Work to support schools to effectively identify and report is ongoing.

Whilst there are no regular Armed Forces bases located within RCT, there are 8 Headquarters, 27 Army Reserve Units, 2 Royal Navy Reserve units, 2 Royal Air Force bases, 3 Armed Forces Careers Information Offices/Army Career Information Offices within a 30 mile radius and therefore commutable from RCT. Based on this information, our assumption is that we are being significantly affected by re-basing although further

work to ascertain the full extent is required.

Research suggests that Armed Forces children who experience frequent moving of home, schools and communities may not perform as well in school as non-mobile Armed Forces children (Royal Caledonian Education Trust, 2014). There is also significant anecdotal evidence to support the view that the stresses of an absent parent to a conflict zone for some children causes anxieties that can influence their learning and behaviour (ibid.). There is currently limited research pertaining to the impact on the education of this group of children. Ofsted's 2011 report found that:

*"Service children often attend many different schools over the course of their school life. This makes continuity of progression in learning hard to achieve and there is more we should be doing. Information about each child's standards, progress and needs should be passed effectively.....too often this is not done well enough..."* (Ofsted, 2011)

The report found that although many Service children, with support, do catch up or exceed the achievement of their civilian peers, some did not achieve the grades they might have achieved if they had not been moving around so much (Ofsted, 2011).

**Please identify any outline risks and / or barriers:**

Timescale – competitive bids must be submitted by 30 September 2016

Response - Having identified 'Service' children RCT is currently not in a position to respond with the skilled support and understanding required if additional funding is not sought.

HR agreements with Merthyr need to be explored further should the bid be granted and an SLA put in place to cover off financial risks i.e. redundancy.

**Please provide an initial cost summary:**

Cost Description	2016 / 2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	Total
Revenue per annum (salaries)		£53,721	£26,859	£80,580
(on costs i.e. mileage)		£5,000	£2,500	£7,500
<b>Total Project Cost</b>		<b>£58,721</b>	<b>£29,359</b>	<b>£88,080</b>

**Please identify any ongoing revenue implications for the Council:**

During the life of the funding there are no ongoing revenue implications however at the end of the funding there are potential implications for the sustainability of the posts in terms of salary costs or redundancy costs as those in post will have 2 years service

**Please identify any potential sources of funding:**

Unknown at this point in time

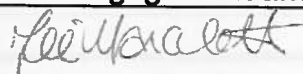
## 5. REQUEST TO PROCEED

Project Officer:

Name: Zoe Lancelott

Position: Head of Engagement and Participation

Signature:



Date: 07-09-16

## 6. AUTHORISATION TO PROCEED – STAGE 1

### a. Service Director

Approved ☒ Rejected ☐ Deferred ☐

• Comment:

Name: Gaynor Davies, Service Director for Access, Engagement and Inclusion	
Signature <i>Gaynor Davies</i>	Date 9.9.16

**Following stage 1 authorisation please return completed forms to:**

**Martine Morgan-Evans  
Regeneration & Planning  
Level 5, Unit 3, Ty Pennant  
Catherine Street, Pontypridd,  
CF37 2TB**

[Regen@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Regen@rctcbc.gov.uk)

## SUMMARY OF PROJECT INITIATION REQUESTS – 16 SEPTEMBER 2016

Project title	Service	Brief description	Value	Regeneration Comments
Supporting Majesty's (HMF) Children – Cwm Taf Regional Bid	Her Forces Service Education Engagement and Participation Service	<p>Funding is available via the Ministry of Defence Education Support Fund 2017 to support children of Service families. This will be the Council's third bid for funding.</p> <p>The success over the last two years has identified the need to further develop the programme locally as well as give the opportunity to expand to include Merthyr Tydfil LA, making it a Cwm Taf regional bid. To support these new developments a third Officer would be recruited specifically working in Merthyr Tydfil to begin the process of awareness raising and the identification of Service children, supported by the two existing officers.</p>	£88,080	<p>Project builds upon the success of previous 2 years funding.</p> <p>It is recommended that the Project Officer liaises with HR to ensure that appropriate Service Level Agreements are in place and Service Area Accountant to discuss funding package and any ongoing revenue implications.</p> <p>Application has been endorsed by Service Area Director.</p>

Authorisation to proceed granted by Director of Financial Services on 20-09-16