

# EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

## CONFIDENTIAL

**Title of Report:** FIG Training Programmes and Eligibility Criteria for the Community Development Scheme

**Paper No:** 63/14

**Date:** 9 April 2014

**Report of:** Director of Education.

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### 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to secure Hon Members approval of the revised Eligibility and Criteria for the Community Development Scheme.

### 2.0 Recommendations

**2.1** That Executive Council is recommended to

- Approve the proposed Eligibility and Criteria for the Community Development Scheme (Appendix 1). In doing so, ExCo would be explicitly approving significant changes to the scheme – ExCo are therefore also asked to confirm that:
  - I. Persons not in work will be eligible for support.
  - II. Persons in employment will be eligible for different levels of support depending on whether the developmental activity relates to their current job/career or not.
- Agree that CDS funding for Traineeships should be capped at £50,000 per annum (leaving a balance of a minimum of £150,000 per year to fund other types of developmental activity).
- Approve the current Skills Shortage List to be used in assessing applications (and note that this will be updated following completion of the Islands-wide Training Needs Assessment later this year).
- That the CDS panel is tasked with managing the CDS Fund (and distribution of funds); and that the Panel be requested to prepare a quarterly report to ExCo detailing funding approvals, outputs and outcomes.

### **3.0 Additional Budgetary Implications**

None

### **4.0 Background**

- 4.1 ExCo agreed a report on the localisation of posts and succession planning on the 21st October 2010. Since 2010/11 Budget Select Committee has agreed a budget of £200,000 per annum to be included for Career Development and Succession Planning training. At the end of July 2013, Members and CMT met to discuss ways to broaden the access to, (and use of) the rolling £200k per annum which at that time was spread across a number of separate schemes (including a Career Management Scheme; a Succession Planning Scheme; and a Career Development Scheme).
- 4.4 These discussions led to a number of changes being proposed to the parameters of the original schemes, not least of which was the decision to combine all previous development schemes into one overarching one (ref: ExCo 204/13).
- 4.5 The combined funding scheme created in July 2013 was referred to as the Community Development Scheme (CDS). In addition to agreement to merge the previous FIG training schemes into one, ExCo also agreed that:
- The level of qualifications to be supported through the scheme should be widened beyond the previous focus on academic and management training. Hence it was envisaged that the CDS could fund a wide range of training from non-certificated competency courses right through to tertiary education (such as PhDs, Masters degrees etc.)
  - The type of support offered should be expanded beyond just course and exam fees. Hence travel and subsistence costs could be funded.
  - Funding should be allowed to be used to create training posts within FIG – these would be entry-level trainee post for school leavers or persons lacking formal qualifications, or for other types of training such as secondments. This provided a mandate for the creation of such posts under the CDS where they were to last for less than a year (with ExCo approval required for positions lasting more than 12 months).
- 4.7 In Sept 2013 an evaluation panel was formulated to manage the CDS. This panel was chaired by the Director of the Education Department and had representatives from Human Resources and Treasury in attendance. The Head of Policy has since been co-opted onto this panel to further support its knowledge and skills base.
- 4.8 In March 2014, ExCo requested that a further paper should be presented to ExCo detailing the criteria for eligibility for the CDS, the decision-making process involved and details of what types of activity will be funded. This request was

based on a need to provide greater clarity to the CDS processes and to amalgamate previous decisions on eligibility into one definitive statement.

- 4.9 Specific issues were raised in relation to clarification on the distinction between the CDS and other departmental training provided within FIG, issues around the requirement for 50% employer contributions for applicants currently in employment, and provisions for persons who are unemployed.
- 4.10 The remainder of this paper seeks to address these issues.

## **5.0 Role of CDS versus FIG Departmental Mandatory Training**

- 5.1 The CDS is not intended to provide funding for mandatory training within FIG departments. Mandatory training is training that is required as part of a person's job i.e. any type of training that an employee must attend as a component of his or her job. Hence mandatory training does not include training that is developmental (i.e. that would help a person progress in their job/career).
- 5.2 Directors and department heads make funding requests for mandatory training through the annual budget cycle. A total of £200,000 was allocated to mandatory training for 2013/14 and it remains the responsibility of Directorates to utilise this funding in support of essential service delivery.
- 5.3 Given this approach to mandatory training, the CDS scheme excludes persons seeking training that is mandatory to their jobs within FIG – the responsibility for provision of such training rests with the relevant Director.
- 5.4 Any developmental training (not essential to the job role) would remain eligible for support via the CDS.

## **6.0 Proposed Eligibility Criteria for the Community Development Scheme**

- 6.1 Executive Council is asked to approve the revised criteria for CDS funding as presented at Appendix 1. This combines the previous lists into one comprehensive statement in order to simplify the application process and avoid any confusion arising from separate lists that were produced and amended as the scheme evolved.
- 6.2 Addressing the specific issues and changes within this:

- As previously proposed, FIG employees will be entitled to 100% of funding, however the scheme has been expanded such that persons not currently in work will also be entitled to seek full funding for relevant courses/development.
- The proposal to limit FIG funding to 50% of the cost of training for persons employed in the private sector has been retained – though with a caveat that this applies to training/development relevant to their current role. This is a measure to encourage the local private sector to invest in training their own

staff by offsetting some of the cost of doing so, and it is suggested that applicants seeking training related to their current job/career ambitions within that role should support their application with evidence of support from their employer. ExCo are advised not to consider allowing 100% funding for such applicants. If ExCo so desire, it would be possible to amend the scheme to allow for funding of up to 100% of training costs in cases where the employee's application had the full support of the employer. Doing so may deliver some benefits in terms of up skilling staff, however given the limited budget available to the fund it also risks the fund being heavily oversubscribed as there would be no incentive for employers to fund training themselves if Government indicates that it is willing to pay for it.

- For individuals who are in employment but who wish to pursue training unrelated to their current job role, then they will be entitled to seek 100% funding for this. This may prove unpopular with local employers (in terms of staff retention and recruitment issues that it may cause), but it may deliver benefits in enabling individuals to up skill and seek different/more rewarding types of employment within the Islands. The danger of this approach is that it also provides a disincentive for employers to provide any training themselves i.e. employers will come to rely on the CDS to deliver the skills that they need rather than investing in these themselves. It is recommended that the appraisal panel monitor the number and type of such applicants that are being supported to ensure a balanced approach to funding across all eligible groups.
- Additional provisions have been added with respect to the obligations of individuals who receive funding in order to ensure that the outcomes of training (and completion rates etc.) can be monitored over time.

6.3 Applications will be assessed against the current Skills Shortage List that has been compiled by the Policy Unit and Customs and Immigration (See Appendix 2). Executive Council is recommended to approve this list as a statement of the current priority skills needs to be funded by the CDS. . This is an interim measure and it is intended that the list will evolve and be revised periodically to reflect emerging skills issues. The findings of the Training Needs Assessment that is being commissioned by the Department of Education will enable a more detailed list of priority skills to be adopted later in the year.

## **7.0 CDS Application and Appeals Processes**

7.1 The following processes are suggested for the administration of the CDS:

- Applications will be assessed by a Panel of experts comprising the Director of Education, Director of Human Resources, Financial Secretary and the Head of Policy. The Panel will meet on a monthly basis to assess applications and will periodically review the progress of individuals who have accessed funding through the CDS. The group will agree any changes to the skills shortage list as and then required.
- The Panel will assess all applications using the approved eligibility criteria and will have the authority to approve or reject applications (and hence award funding without recourse to Executive Council).

- The Panel will provide feedback to any unsuccessful applicants on the reasons for the application being rejected and, where appropriate, will provide additional guidance that might improve any future application the individual may make.
- If an applicant wishes to appeal a decision of the Panel, the Chief Executive will hear the appeal and reach a final determination on the outcome of the application. In doing so the Chief Executive may seek further information from members of the Panel, the applicant, or employers/line managers who have provided evidence in support of the application.
- Any applications for the creation of training posts within FIG that are proposed to last for more than 12 months will be referred back to the line manager for consideration as part of the normal annual FIG budget process.

7.2 The CDS Panel will review progress and outcomes and produce a quarterly report to ExCo on the nature of activities funded, and outputs and outcomes achieved.

## 8.0 Financial Implications.

8.1 There are no additional budgetary implications at this time. At the time of writing there was a total of £483,000 available within the CDS fund – much of this being carry-over from unspent funds in the various training funds that existed prior to the decision to create the CDS. Going forward, it is proposed that the standard allocation of £200,000 be requested during the annual budget cycle to enable the fund to continue on an annual basis.

	2013/14	2014/15
Original Budget	200,000	200,000
Carry over (approved August 13)	442,510	200,000 (assuming this as a minimum carry over)
Total Budget	642,510	400,000
Current spend up to 11/02/14	33,410	
Total	609,100	
Less committed	125,768	124,127
Total	483,332	275,873
Internships pending ExCo approval	95,415	79,815
Total Budget	387,917	196,058

8.2 ExCo has already agreed that traineeships (lasting up to a maximum of 12 months) should be eligible for support through the CDS. It is recommended that a maximum of £50,000 per year be allocated for this purpose (approximately two traineeships per year), leaving a balance of a minimum of £150,000 per annum to fund developmental courses.

Based on approved funding to date, some £124,000 is already committed for the 2014/15 financial year and £78,000 for 2014/15. Care will need to be taken to ensure that sufficient funds remain within the CDS to support new applications in future years. Additional awards are possible at this current time due to the previous

underspends, however this will not be sustainable in the longer term. The CDS panel will monitor actual and forecast spend on a quarterly basis.

Appendix 3 presents a full breakdown of funding awards to date, and their financial implications over time.

### **8.0 Legal Implications**

A legal agreement has been drawn up by the Education Department and Attorney Generals Department for applicants to sign.

### **9.0 Human Resources Implications**

None for the purposes of this paper.

## **Criteria for Community Development Scheme**

The following criteria will be used in allocating funding from the Community Development Scheme:

### **Who Can Apply?**

- You must be a Falkland Islander or hold Falkland Islands Status or Permanent Residence Permit to be considered. Applications from persons holding any other type of status will not be considered.
- Applications will be considered from persons currently in employment and from persons not currently in work.

### *Who cannot apply?*

- If you have previously applied to the CDS and your application has been refused, no further applications from you for the same development activity will be considered within 6 months. You are free to apply again after 6 months.
- If you are already undertaking training/development funded through the CDS, you cannot apply for a second activity until the first one has been completed.
- If you have not completed a previously funded course of study, without good reason. Any future funding will be disallowed.

### **What Types of Training/Development will be considered for Support?**

The CDS will support training or development in a broad range studies. This can include academic qualifications (at all levels, including PhDs and Masters); vocational qualifications; professional qualifications; non-certified competency based training; secondments etc.).

- In determining applications FIG will rely on:
  1. The most recent Skills Shortages list compiled in conjunction with the Policy Unit and Customs and Immigration.
  2. Information from the relevant FIG officer responsible for delivery of any service and/or strategic development in the area in which the development activity is sought ('Sector' input).
  3. Any other relevant source of information or economic data which can be justifiably used to determine what the local economy will need in the short, medium and long term to sustain it. ('Market awareness' input).

## **What Can the Funding be Used For?**

- Course fees and exam fees
- Costs of training materials
- Reasonable travel and subsistence costs associated with the training (e.g. cost of travel and accommodation where necessary).
  - For funded activities that are more than 12 months in duration, applications for return travel to the Islands mid-term will be considered.
  - The CDS will only fund travel and subsistence costs for the individual named in the application. No financial support will be provided in respect of any accompanying family members.

### *Payment of Expenses*

Expenses will only be paid upon the production of valid receipts (unless the Director of Education in consultation with Treasury) are prepared to make an exception. This will only be done as an extraordinary measure.

All expenses will normally only be reimbursed if they are considered as being 'reasonable'. In the case of travel expenses, they will normally be reimbursed only where it is also shown that the expenses consist of the use of the least expensive form of public transport. FIG will not pay:

- Taxis (unless pre-approval from the Director of Education is received).
- First/ business class travel.
- The travel and/or accommodation costs for any other family member.

FIG will allow accommodation costs of up to £150.00 per week for a long term/residential course and up to £75.00 per day for a short term course where the accommodation costs are not included in the cost of the course.

## **How much funding can I apply for?**

There is no cap on the total amount of funding that you can apply for under the CDS. However, there are restrictions on the proportion of training costs that the CDS will fund depending on your circumstances:

- For FIG employees and persons not currently in employment, the CDS will consider applications for up to 100% of the training costs.
- For persons employed elsewhere (i.e. non-FIG employees), the CDS will consider applications for up to 50% of the total costs for training and development activities intended to assist you progress in your current role/career (with the balance expected to be provided by your employer).
- For employed persons seeking training and development that is unrelated to your current job/career, applications for up to 100% of the training costs will be considered.

### **What must I demonstrate for a successful application?**

- How the proposed training will improve your future career prospects (in the form of a development plan highlighting how you will apply the training in your career)
- How the proposed skills/training that you will obtain will benefit the Falkland Islands in the future
- Evidence to demonstrate that you are likely to successfully complete the education/training
- A detailed breakdown of the costs of the training (and any associated travel and accommodation costs)
- Evidence of match funding where you are applying for less than 100% of the total training costs e.g. a letter of support from your employer.
- For FIG employees, evidence from your line manager supporting the application.

### **What is expected of me if I am successful?**

- If you are awarded funding you will need to sign a financial agreement stating that you will repay the monies if you do not apply the training undertaken on the islands within a 5-year period.
- You will be expected to provide evidence of expenditure (course fees etc.) and expenses incurred.
- You will be required to provide regular formal feedback on your student performance during the course
- You will be required to provide feedback to the CDS on request with respect to the progress of the approved training.
- You will be required to provide evidence of successful completion of any training/development activities that are funded.
- You will be required to participate in future monitoring to ascertain how you have applied the training/development to further your career / contribute to the development of the Falkland Islands.

### **What if I fail the course?**

- If you fail the course you are funded for, you will be required to repay the funding. Only at the discretion of the Head of Department, and in consultation with the Director of Human Resources, will you be paid for a second attempt.

**Priority Areas for Funding:**

**Current Skills Shortages**

- Teachers (inc' camp and travelling – all phases and subjects)
- Health professionals/specialists i.e. Drs/Nurses/Pharmacists/Midwives etc
- Engineers, (Civil, Mechanical and Electrical in particular) and technicians
- Vets and Agricultural Advisers/Specialists
- Lawyers/Legal Practitioners
- Finance professionals including Accountants, Auditors and Tax specialists
- Fisheries Scientists/Researchers
- Business Managers
- Social Workers
- Aviation Engineering Specialists
- Commercial and Business skills
- Hospitality and Tourism skills
- Catering Services including cooks and related Food Hygiene expertise
- All key trades skills i.e. Plumbers/Joiners/Electricians/Painter-decorators/Mechanics etc
- Administrative Skills (Receptionist/Admin /Secretary/Clerk/Personal Assistants etc)
- Childcare workers/carers (nursery assistants/nannies etc)
- Project Managers
- Warehouse/Stock Control expertise

**Anticipated Skills Needs (Oil Industry Related)**

- Security Personnel
- Stevedores
- Welders
- Civil Engineers
- IT Hardware and Software Support