

# WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL CABINET

13<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2022

**CABINET MEMBER RESPONSIBLE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION AND GROWTH: COUNCILLOR DANIEL LISTER**

---

**Report Title**                      **WNC Multiply Funding Investment Plan**

**Report Author**                      **Julia Raven**  
Interim Head of Economy, Culture & Tourism  
[Julia.Raven@WestNorthants.gov.uk](mailto:Julia.Raven@WestNorthants.gov.uk)

## Contributors/Checkers/Approvers

<b>West MO</b>	Catherine Whitehead	3 August 2022
<b>West S151</b>	Martin Henry	16 August 2022
<b>Other Director/SME</b>	Jane Carr	28 July 2022
<b>Communications Lead/Head of Communications</b>	Becky Hutson	28 July 2022

## List of Appendices

None

### **1. Purpose of Report**

---

- 1.1 To update Cabinet Members on West Northamptonshire Council's (WNC) Multiply Funding Investment Plan, submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) on 30 June 2022, to draw down £1.9m funding for 2022 to 2025 to support Adult Numeracy in West Northamptonshire.

### **2. Executive Summary**

---

- 2.1 Multiply Funding is part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), which replaces the European Social Fund and is one of the first programme areas under the UKSPF People and Skills Pillar. The

Multiply funding required WNC to develop a separate investment plan for bespoke adult numeracy programmes, against a national menu of interventions.

- 2.2 People who improve their numeracy skills are more likely to be in employment, have higher wages, and better wellbeing, and will be more able to progress to higher levels of free training to secure a skilled job.
- 2.3 Businesses who develop their employee's numeracy skills can boost productivity, increase profits, and improve employee retention.
- 2.4 The overall objective of Multiply funding is:
  1. More adults achieving maths qualifications courses (up to, and including, Level 2 – with GCSEs and FSQs as the qualifications of choice in England – or equivalent) and an increase in participation in numeracy courses. Government expects local areas to evidence improvements in functional numeracy, rather than solely participation in Multiply interventions.
  2. Improved labour market outcomes, for example fewer numeracy skills gaps reported by employers, and an increase in the proportion of adults that progress into sustained employment and / or education.
  3. Increased adult numeracy across the population – this overall impact, which goes beyond achieving certificates or qualifications, will track both the perceived and actual difference taking part in the programme makes in supporting learners to improve their understanding and use of maths in their daily lives, at home and at work - and to feel more confident when doing so.
- 2.5 Multiply funding will enable West Northamptonshire Council to have the flexibility to determine what provision is needed to deliver high quality, innovative numeracy interventions that meet the needs of local people and the national aims for Multiply.

### **3. Recommendations**

---

- 3.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:
  - a) Note an investment plan to secure the Multiply funding was submitted to the Department of Education on 30 June 2022.
  - b) Note the expectation is that DfE will assess the WNC Multiply investment plan and the provisional allocation will be signed off and approved by September 2022.

### **4. Reason for Recommendations**

---

- a) To secure the maximum level of investment to enhance local skill levels, benefiting the community and economy.

- b) To ensure West Northamptonshire benefits from this grant funding to enhance the community, boost the economy and support local residents and businesses.
- c) To maintain ongoing economic growth within the area, particular with the impending loss of EU funding and the need to utilise UKSPF to deliver positive economic development within the community.

## **5. Report Background**

---

- 5.1 The overall objective of Multiply funding is to increase the levels of functional numeracy in West Northamptonshire's adult population, in addition to and differentiated from that which is already fully funded through the Adult Education Budget (AEB) legal entitlement and would not displace that provision.
- 5.2 The DfE designed a menu of 10 interventions to draw down the Multiply funding:-
  1. Courses designed to increase confidence with numbers for those needing the first steps towards formal numeracy qualifications
  2. Courses designed to help people use numeracy to manage their money
  3. Innovative numeracy programmes delivered together with employers – including courses designed to cover specific numeracy skills required in the workplace,
  4. Courses aimed at people who can't apply for certain jobs because of lack of numeracy skills and/or to encourage people to upskill in numeracy order to access a certain job/career
  5. New intensive and flexible numeracy courses targeted at people without Level 2 maths, leading to a Functional Skills Qualification.
  6. Courses for parents wanting to increase their numeracy skills in order to help their children, and help with their own progression
  7. Numeracy courses aimed at prisoners, recently released from prison or on temporary licence
  8. Numeracy courses aimed at those aged 19 or over, leaving, or who have just left, the care system
  9. Numeracy activities, courses or provision developed in partnership with community organisations and other partners aimed at engaging the hardest to reach learners – for example, those not in the labour market or other groups identified locally as in need.
  10. Additional relevant maths modules embedded into other vocational courses.
- 5.3 WNC's investment plan included a range of projects and proposals from local, regional and national partners that would use the Multiply funding to deliver the 10 interventions by:
  - targeting individuals who are unemployed or economically inactive and have no qualifications and/or who are low skilled;
  - targeting low skilled adults in the workplace to boost numeracy skills to enable progression in the workplace;
  - targeting adults in disadvantaged areas that have higher percentages of individuals with no qualifications ;

- boosting numeracy skills in the workplace, as identified by the Local Skills Improvement Plan, for example understanding data and data analysis;
- adopting creative approaches to embedding numeracy into a range of learning activities to enable the effective engagement of adults;
- bitesize innovative maths workshops/sessions for groups such as families to help intergenerational learning, help for parents/carers to support their children through specific exams;
- maths through employment routes such as working with employers through workforce development tools, working with union learning reps to support adult numeracy, helping remove the taboo of low numeracy skills and raising the chances of promotion and progression within the workplace;
- maths for work - working with the self-employed on maths required to run their own business;
- maths for life - short courses on financial literacy, budgeting for food, bills, household energy calculations, etc;
- maths bites - filling in the gaps for those who want to do a GCSE but have a few gaps – building skills to prepare for the next step of working towards and gaining a formal qualification the equivalent of a GCSE (FS level 2 or above or a GCSE grade 4 or above);
- developing digital online learning platforms;
- mobile maths - taking the programme to villages, shopping centres, sport grounds, etc;
- working with Northamptonshire Children’s Trust to support those 19 or over that are leaving, or have just left, the care system with delivering numeracy courses;
- working with the Probation Service and prisons to support ex-offenders to improve their maths to help them get back into life/work;
- provision of numeracy champions within different setting to aid the longevity of the programme and embed support.

5.4 The WNC Multiply investment plan also set out how the Multiply funding provision strategically fitted with local priorities, coordinating where possible with wider skills and employment interventions in West Northamptonshire. Using a variety of sources including the West Northamptonshire Council’s Anti-Poverty and Live Your Best Life strategies, the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership Skills Strategy, Northamptonshire Chamber of Commerce’s’ Local Skills Improvement Plan, as well as data sources from the Annual Population Survey, the Indices of Multiple Deprivation and the UK Numeracy Index.

## **6. Issues and Choices**

---

6.1 To note, not submitting an investment plan for Multiply funding by the deadline would have resulted in a loss of potential investment into local skill levels, addressing existing and potential anti-poverty, impacting the local quality of life, local employment and future of West Northamptonshire residents.

## **7. Implications (including financial implications)**

---

### **7.1 Resources and Financial**

- 7.1.1 The Multiply Funding is 100 per cent grant funding, meaning there is no financial risk to West Northamptonshire Council's budgets.
- 7.1.2 The Multiply Funding annual allocations will be monitored in line with the Expenditure Profile submitted with the Multiply Investment Plan.
- 7.1.3 There is a risk that any unspent funds will be returned to DfE, however this will be monitored on a regular basis with DfE support to ensure the funds are spent in line with the expected outputs for each intervention receiving funding.
- 7.1.4 10% of the Multiply funding can be used for management of the Multiply funding, which will include a Funding Manager to oversee the management and delivery of the fund, mitigating any risks and ensuring the Multiply achieves the outputs/outcomes of WNC's allocation.

## 7.2 **Legal**

- 7.2.1 To access Multiply funding, the Council as a Lead Authority for the Funding was required to complete an Investment Plan. The Plan must be agreed by both the Council and by the Government to unlock the allocation.
- 7.2.2 The Council will receive the allocation to manage, including assessing and approving applications, processing payments and day-to-day monitoring and will have overall accountability for the funding and how the Fund operates.
- 7.2.3 The Council has the necessary legal powers under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to deliver the Fund's levelling up objectives. The Council will be required to ensure that the proposed projects are delivered in a legally compliant way in accordance with all relevant legislation in relation to the activities undertaken.

## 7.3 **Risk**

- 7.3.1 There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendations in this report.
- 7.3.2 There is a risk to West Northamptonshire Council's reputation and the economic recovery/growth to not have submitted a West Northamptonshire Multiply Investment Plan to secure this funding.

## 7.4 **Consultation**

- 7.4.1 To successfully assess impact, deliverability and strategic fit while considering the interventions to address using Multiply funding, WNC engaged with numerous local, regional and national partners in the of development of the investment plan, which included:-

- Adult Learning
- Business2Business
- Diversiti
- DWP
- Evolve Your Future

- Job Centre Plus
- Learnings and Skills Academy CIC
- National Numeracy
- Northampton College
- Northampton Town FC Community Trust
- Northamptonshire Children’s Trust
- Northants Chambers of Commerce
- University of Northampton
- West Northamptonshire Council – Employment Support Hub Partners

## 7.5 **Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny**

7.5.1 N/A

## 7.6 **Climate Impact**

7.6.1 N/A

## 7.7 **Community Impact**

7.7.1 Securing this funding will result in a positive impact on West Northamptonshire communities, including the quality of the place, resulting in economic growth and delivery of priorities set out within WNC’s vision.

## 7.8 **Communications**

7.8.1 Communications will be developed to inform and engage stakeholders, to raise wider awareness of the opportunities the Multiply funds creates for partners, employers and residents once the investment plan has been approved by the DfE.

## 8. **Background Papers**

---

8.1 14 June 2022 - June Cabinet Report – UK Shared Prosperity Fund & Multiply Funding

8.2 Multiply Investment Prospectus -  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1068822/Multiply\\_Investment\\_Prospectus.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1068822/Multiply_Investment_Prospectus.pdf)