

**Divisions Affected – N/A**

**CABINET MEMBER FOR  
CHILDREN, EDUCATION & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES  
16 January 2024**

**Multiply Maths: Adult Numeracy Development Service Provider**

**Report by Executive Director: People**

**1. RECOMMENDATION**

**The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to**

- a) Approve the open tendering of Multiply Maths to secure an adult numeracy development service provider(s) for a twelve-month period commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 and concluding 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.
- b) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Children's Services, in consultation with the Head of Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer, to agree the contract with an adult numeracy development service provider(s) upon satisfactory completion of the open tendering exercise.

**2. Executive Summary**

In September 2022 the Department for Education (DfE) approved Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) £2.578m grant funding over three years for Multiply Maths.

The grant funding is part of a national levelling up programme targeted at reducing the barriers that poor math skills present in our communities. This funding is to support people who are aged 19 or over and do not currently have a GCSE or equivalent qualification in math and live, work or volunteer in Oxfordshire.

OCC is seeking agreement to tender for an adult education specialist to provide over 700 Oxfordshire residents the opportunity to participate in maths learning and courses. These courses will be delivered between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

An open tender is proposed, with a contract value of up to £600,000. This will be resourced through the multiply maths DfE grant.

### 3. Background

In September 2022 the Department for Education (DfE) approved Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) £2.578m grant funding over three years for Multiply Maths.

Multiply maths is designed to provide Oxfordshire residents, who may lack function maths skills, the opportunity to engage in numeracy learning in new, attractive, and innovative ways. Breaking down the personal psychological barriers and negative social narratives is critical to rewiring and renewing how we think about maths. The purpose of this funding is to create numeracy opportunities for people over the age of 19 without a good maths GCSE or equivalent qualification.

In the final year of delivery (1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025), a single provider or consortia of specialist adult education providers is required to create a range of opportunities for eligible people to build their numeracy skills for work and for life. Expertise, energy, capacity and a passion for adult learning will be paramount. This will include a highly visible community presence, a wide range of learning and engagement approaches that inspire participation for some of the hardest to reach in our Oxfordshire community.

Numeracy learning opportunities will be required to target the following outcomes benefitting at least 700 Oxfordshire residents in a twelve-month period.

- Courses designed to increase confidence with numbers for those needing the first steps towards formal numeracy qualifications.
- Courses designed to help people use numeracy to manage their money.
- Innovative numeracy programmes delivered together with employers – including courses designed to cover specific numeracy skills required in the workplace
- 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
- New intensive and flexible numeracy courses targeted at people without Level 2 maths, leading to a Functional Skills Qualification
- Courses for parents wanting to increase their numeracy skills in order to help their children, and help with their own progression
- Numeracy courses aimed at prisoners, those recently released from prison or on temporary licence
- Numeracy courses aimed at those 19 or over that are leaving, or have just left, the care system
- Numeracy activities, courses or provision developed in partnership with community organisations and other partners aimed at engaging the hardest to reach learners
- Additional relevant maths modules embedded into other vocational courses

An open tender is proposed, with a contract value of up to £600,000. This will be resourced through the multiply math DfE grant. The open tender process will encourage a wide range of applicants and ensure best value is achieved for Oxfordshire County Council.

#### **4. Alignment with our corporate priorities**

The vision for Oxfordshire is 'working in partnership to make Oxfordshire a greener, fairer and healthier county'. Multiply maths has a pivotal role in helping to tackle inequalities. It will create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential, providing support for their parents and carers. In addition, by working with local businesses and partners generate economic and social benefit.

Multiply is aligned to Oxfordshire's skills priorities. The delivery approach will also need to be considerate of these priorities.

- Supporting the reform of vocational and technical skills provision, which includes promoting Apprenticeships and T Level offers.
- Help to provide clear, diverse, and inclusive career pathways for young people and adults to ensure they are aware of the Oxfordshire Labour Market and sectors.
- Managing Oxfordshire's consistently tight labour market
- Business skills provision and support
- Ensure training and re-skilling provision in identified priority sectors.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

The total value of this open tender will be up to £600,000. The value is based on the delivery of numeracy learning interventions including formal courses across Oxfordshire. The contract opportunity will be resourced fully through the DfE grant fund.

Comments checked by:

Ohaz Ikedionu, Accountant (Education-Finance),  
ohaz.ikedionu@oxfordshire.gov.uk  
8<sup>th</sup> December 2023

#### **6. Legal Implications**

The Council has a statutory power to engage in the provision of adult numeracy courses pursuant to its general power of competence under s 1 of the Localism Act 2011. The procurement of the new services will follow a competitive tendering process in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules which themselves ensure that the Council is compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended). Legal Services will

assist with the preparation of the terms and conditions of the proposed contract.

Comments checked by:

Jonathan Pool, Solicitor (Contracts), jonathan.pool@oxfordshire.gov.uk  
7<sup>th</sup> December 2023

## **7. Staff Implications**

There are no directed or indirect staffing implications for Oxfordshire County Council.

The DfE grant includes an annual allocation for the management and administration of the Multiply Maths by the Council. This administrative allocation has been and will continue to be used by the council for resourcing procurement (tender) exercises, contract management and monitoring as per the DfE funding requirements.

The open tender will require the successful applicant(s) to be responsible and retain responsibility for all resourcing (staffing or otherwise). The tender is for an explicit period of 12 months with no anticipated opportunity to extend, owing to the tender being linked to the DfE multiply programme which concludes on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

## **8. Equality & Inclusion Implications**

The tender process will require applicants to show how in planning, delivering, monitoring and evaluating their work, equality and diversity issues are appropriately considered from the outset.

## **9. Sustainability Implications**

The tender process will require applicants to consider sustainability implications, particularly relating to Climate Action demonstrating a commitment to carbon neutrality.

## **10. Risk Management**

The tender process will require applicants show how risks and opportunities to have been considered

Stephen Chandler, Executive Director: People

Annex: None

Background papers: None

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