

# Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



**Nottingham**  
**City Council**

Reference Number:

4369

Author:

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Department:

Growth and City Development

Contact:

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Subject:

English Speakers of Other Language (ESOL) Integration Funding 'Learn English Together' Extension - Year 2

Total Value:

£184,947 (Type: Revenue)

Decision Being Taken:

1. To enter into a funding agreement with the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) for ESOL Integration Funding for a total of £184,947 from August 2021 to March 2022. Based on expression of interest and working with partners from the previous programme.
2. To delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Growth & City Development to administer the funds, in accordance with the MHCLG funding agreement.
3. To issue contracts to BEGIN (£10,000), ENABLE (£44,658), BELONG (£43,759) and WEA (£49,188) as referral, engagement and delivery partners of the 'Learn English Together' LET project, totalling £147,605.
4. To approve the use of the remaining budget £37,342 to fund a NCC project management team, including project management, administration and marketing. This will ensure NCC meet the MHCLG contractual requirements.

**Reasons for the Decision(s)**

Due to the successful delivery of the ESOL for Integration 2020 funding programme, MHCLG have made additional funding available for Local Authorities administering the 2020-2021 programme to extend community based English language classes for learners at New to ESOL (pre-entry - Entry level 1) for an additional year. Due to the tight timelines of the funding application the team decided to continue to work with existing delivery partners, BEGIN, WEA, BELONG and Enable. This decision was based on the success of the previous project and the delivery timelines of stage 2.

All delivery partners have a long history of delivering high quality ESOL provision, all were deeply involved in the MHCLG application submission and all have capacity to deliver within the timelines.

The Employment and Skills Team within Growth & City Development developed a successful programme pulling together a partnership of community based delivery partners, which together supported over 400 Nottingham residents improve English language and confidence when engaging with the wider community.

Due to the successful partnership, we propose to maintain existing delivery structures and deliver a programme with the same delivery partners; Enable, Basic Educational Guidance in Nottingham (BEGIN), Worker Education Association (WEA) and Belong Nottingham.

BEGIN the central referral agency for all non-accredited and accredited ESOL provision in the Greater Nottingham will be based on evidenced need within the city, engage and make referrals to delivery partners who will deliver English language training and social engagement activities to boost confidence.

Summary of the application includes: Engaging 300 participants over the 7 month period, with 80% improving spoken English Language. Other learning outcomes will remain as per previous rounds:

- Improved communication and literacy skills
- Increased sense of belong/integration within the wider community
- Increased confidence in accessing and use of local services and facilities
- Progression into formal ESOL learning, volunteering or employment related activity

The project will directly contribute to the following Council Plan targets to:

- Support delivery of the Nottingham Economic Recovery and Renewal Plan
- Support 1,000 Nottingham residents including disadvantaged groups into employment, education and training
- Help 500 people who are over 50 into work or training

To minimise risk, officers will develop risk management plans, regularly monitor performance, income, expenditure and risk, implement put in place clear escalation procedures to ensure all funding is received and any potential risks are identified and mitigated early. LET ESOL partners are paid project costs once income received from the MHCLG.

**Other Options Considered:**

Not entering into this agreement with the MHCLG would mean a loss of £184,947 grant funding for Nottingham citizens, which would impact approximately 500 vulnerable citizens, resulting in many individuals not receiving training to support their language development and social integration within Nottingham.

**Background Papers:**

**Unpublished background papers:**

**EFIF 21-22 Expression of Interest application Nottingham City Council.docx**

**Published Works:**

**Affected Wards:**

**Citywide**

**Colleague / Councillor Interests:**

**Consultations:**

**Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.**

**Crime and Disorder Implications:**

**ESOL provision encourages families, individuals and the wider community to be active members within their community and to be responsible citizens.**

**Equality:**

**EIA not required. Reasons: Equality: EIA not required. Reasons: EIA not required. Reasons: This is not a new policy change or service**

**Decision Type:**

**Portfolio Holder**

**Subject to Call In:**

**Yes**

**Call In Expiry date:**

**21/09/2021**

**Advice Sought:**

**Legal, Finance, Procurement**

**Legal Advice:**

**The City Council is to act as the Accountable Body for the ESOL integration funding agreement. This report seeks authority for the City Council in its role as Accountable Body to accept funding from MHCLG and to delegate the use of that funding. The City Council must ensure that it complies with any terms and conditions specified by MHCLG in the funding agreement otherwise it will be at risk of MHCLG invoking clawback of the funding.**

**It is understood the project ran last year and proved so successful that upon receipt of further funding from MHCLG, the project is able to continue. The EOI submitted in the bid to MHCLG proposed the same delivery partners, who have detailed what they would be able to deliver if in receipt of the funding and so the money can only be used in accordance with the MOU and grant determination with MHCLG.**

**As Accountable Body, the City Council must ensure it passes through to any recipients of grant funding, all obligations for which the City Council remains primarily liable under the MOU. The City Council has the power to undertake this role in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 pursuant to the general power of competence.**

**All contracts including grants must be awarded in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations and should include provisions which flow down any relevant provisions from MHCLG such as monitoring and reporting outputs. Grants are not governed by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and so a tender process is not required. Appropriate grant agreement terms should be put in place between the parties. Advice provided by Dionne Claire Screamon (Solicitor) on 02/09/2021.**

**Finance Advice:**

**This decision seeks the approval:-**

- to accept and allocate grant funding of £184,947 from MHCLG, of which £162,613 will be allocated to the delivery of the project. The remaining £22,334 will be retained by NCC to manage the project. The project is to run from August 2021 to March 2022.
- to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of City Development and Growth.

MHCLG have given the opportunity to extend the funding after successful delivery of the project in 2020/21. Based on an expression of interest/application on the basis that the same delivery partners are used to ensure a quick turnaround due to the tight deadlines of the extension.

As Nottingham City Council is currently the Accountable Body for this project, processes and procedures are already well established and successfully in place. As mentioned above, this also includes the partnership working with existing community delivery partners. With the existing arrangements, this will help with a smooth continuation to keep within the tight deadline, but also benefit from the same expertise and successes.

Processes and relevant training have been incorporated to minimise risks of non-compliance. There will be regular monitoring of performance, income and expenditure.

There is no requirement for match funding and all costs to the delivery partners will not be paid out until the grant has been received in full from MHCLG.

Advice provided by Michelle Pullen (Commercial Business Partner) on 28/07/2021.

**Procurement Advice:**

The proposal to accept and spend the funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) for ESOL Integration Funding from August 2021 to March 2022, based on expressions of interest, and working with partners from the previous programme, is supported from a procurement perspective. The Council will continue the funding agreements with the partners named for the delivery of the 'Learn Together' project as outlined in this decision. As this is grant funding awarded against the partnership funding application, there are no procurement implications. The use of this funding should comply with any grant conditions and suitable agreements should be in place with these providers to ensure compliance and satisfactory performance. Advice provided by Julie Herrod (Procurement Officer) on 02/09/2021.

**Signatures**

<b>Rebecca Langton (PH Skills, Growth and Economic Development)</b>
<b>SIGNED and Dated: 14/09/2021</b>
<b>Sajeeda Rose (Corporate Director of Growth &amp; City Development)</b>
<b>SIGNED and Dated: 09/09/2021</b>