Performance and Resources Committee

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 27 September 2023
Paper Title	Decisions via Scheme of Delegation
Agenda Item	6
Paper Number	PRC1-B
Responsible Officer	Martin Boyle, Executive Director
Action	For Information

1. Executive Summary

1.1. To notify the committee of uses of the agreed GCRB Scheme of Delegation. Allocations and decisions made under the scheme are generally those where there is existing consensus, and where authority is delegated to the Executive Director.

1.2. For this period there was one use of the Scheme of Delegation as follows:

1.3. The distribution of additional capital funds to address digital poverty in 2023-24, with a total of £639,908 distributed to the Glasgow colleges.

2. Recommendations

2.1. The committee is asked to **note** the allocation of £639,908 in respect of capital funding to address digital poverty, and the distribution to the three Glasgow colleges, for 2023-24.

3.   Background

3.1.   Under the scheme of delegation, the Board Chair may decide, in consultation with the Chair of the Performance and Resources Committee, whether a decision on allocation of the additional funds may be made by the Executive Director, or the Performance & Resources Committee, or referred to the full board.

3.2.   The Executive Director determined that the allocation (at section 4 below) was a non-contentious additional funding allocation that was supported by the three college principals. The Board Chair agreed, in consultation with the P&R Chair, that that the decision on allocation should be made by the Executive Director. The Executive Director approved that the additional funds for capital funding to address digital poverty are allocated to each college in 2023-24 in accordance with the table below.

4.   Decisions via Scheme of Delegation – Capital Funding to address Digital Poverty 2023-24

4.1.   On 13 July 2023, the Scottish Funding Council issued guidance on the additional funding to support digital poverty. The background, to this funding, is set out in the circular, i.e.:

> "Digital access, equipment and skills are essential for students. Digital poverty relates to a lack of access and/or skills which prevents students from taking part or progressing in the tertiary system.
>
> The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) recognises the continuing efforts colleges and universities make to provide access to learning. Given the increased digital delivery of teaching, learning and support, it is essential that all learners have the necessary equipment to engage in their programmes."

4.2.   Details of the full announcement are available via the following link:

http://www.sfc.ac.uk/publications-statistics/announcements/2023/SFCGD202023.aspx

4.3.   The basis of the allocation is the same as has been used in previous years by the Scottish Funding Council (i.e. credit target). Therefore, the proposed allocation (2023-24) for each college in Glasgow is as follows:

College Funding	Credit Threshold AY 2023-24	Total
City of Glasgow College	157,800	£293,999
Glasgow Clyde College	113,721	£211,875
Glasgow Kelvin College	71,941	£134,034
Total	**343,462**	**£639,908**

5. **Risk and Compliance Analysis**

5.1. The Executive Director is responsible for implementation of the regional strategic plan, management of risk and oversight of resources. The use of delegated authority is designed to maintain these positions.

5.2. There are no legal implications resulting from this decision.

6. **Financial and Resource Analysis**

6.1. The financial implications are set are in the body of the report above. The total funds will be received by GCRB in mid-August and will be paid immediately to the three colleges.

7. **Equalities and Learner Implications**

7.1. In accordance with the SFC publication:

> "This capital funding provides an opportunity for colleges and universities to purchase equipment to enable students to engage in their studies, with a particular focus on meeting the needs of students from the most disadvantaged communities and backgrounds.
>
> Digital poverty is not limited to a lack of funds to purchase equipment. It also covers the skills to use the equipment and the physical space to use the equipment to take part in learning. SFC expects institutions to support students in the use of this equipment and digital resources, and where required by providing physical space, especially for those from the most disadvantaged communities and backgrounds.
>
> Institutions may use alternative revenue/resource (non-capital) funding to support any non-capital elements of planned expenditure to support digital poverty.
>
> SFC expects institutions to utilise this capital funding to address digital inclusion and provide fair and equitable access to online learning for their students. Institutions can use their discretion in establishing the needs of individual students and provide additional hardware as required.
>
> To optimise the use of these capital funds and obtain best value for money, SFC encourages institutions to procure equipment in bulk as far as possible. Those administering the ICT funds should liaise with their IT managers about equipment specifications. All equipment purchased will be considered to be capital assets, and therefore must be owned and retained by institutions, as appropriate. SFC therefore recommends that institutions establish a lending or borrowing scheme and aim to recycle any items that can be reused."