

Decision Pathway Report



PURPOSE: Key decision

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 28 April 2020

TITLE	Workforce for the Future - developing thriving economies and communities in Bristol		
Ward(s)	City Wide		
Author: Jane Taylor	Job title: Head of Service (Employment, Skills and Learning)		
Cabinet lead: Cllr Anna Keen	Executive Director lead: Jacqui Jensen		
Proposal origin: BCC Staff			
Decision maker: Mayor Decision forum: Cabinet			
<p>Purpose of Report: to obtain Cabinet approval to submit a WECA/ESF Workforce for the Future bid to the value of circa £750K. This funding will enable us to support SMEs to become key agents in building thriving local economies and communities in Bristol, starting with a pilot in South Bristol then targeting all areas of the city that have benefited least from skills resources and economic growth, fulfilling Mayoral commitments to inclusive growth including the expansion of experience of work and apprenticeships.</p>			
<p>Evidence Base: In Bristol there are around 22,000 small and medium sized businesses with up to 250 employees across a range of sectors. These businesses are critical for the development of thriving local economies and communities, but – due to low capacity – they are often disconnected from local education, skills, employment/business support and community resources.</p> <p>The Business West Employer Skills Survey 2019 results show that there remain issues for local businesses in accessing a recruitment pipeline so that they can develop a workforce with the right skills. The Bristol Post 16 Strategy published in October 2019 highlighted that Bristol is still experiencing entrenched education and skills gaps in priority neighbourhoods. This strategy also highlighted the urgent need to strengthen links between local businesses and the employment and skills eco-system. The WECA Workforce for the Future programme provides an opportunity for Bristol to apply for critical funding to build a new local approach to education, skills and employment/business support to achieve improved progression to work and in work – whilst at the same time enabling local companies to improve their business performance and productivity.</p> <p>With this now in the tender stage, BCC is already engaging with and gaining commitments to a collaborative bid from key strategic and delivery partners including the local FE college, independent training providers, business support providers, local SMEs and community partners. We are now seeking approval to progress with the submission of a full ESF Bid.</p>			
<p>Officer Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That Cabinet authorises the Executive Director of People to prepare a full application and negotiate with WECA and, if successful, to accept the funding offer and lead on the local implementation and delivery of the South Bristol SME skills and employment programme. 			
<p>Corporate Strategy alignment: Improving SME skills and workforce development support, including paid work trails and apprenticeships, contributes to the Mayors commitment to inclusive economic growth and equalising education and skills outcomes. It also helps connect people to jobs and opportunities in their local community.</p>			
<p>City Benefits: By developing new SME networks and enabling SMEs to plug into the local skills and employment</p>			

ecosystem, Bristol City Council can lead the way so that local employers can improve their access to specialist support and resources so that their workforce and business can benefit from diverse local talent.

Consultation Details: The initial proposal to use WECA/ESF funds for this proposal was discussed and agreed with WECA over 6 months ago. A planning team was formed across People and Growth and Regeneration. A successful application to the LGA in December has provided additional support as part of the national Work Local pilot; Bristol has been able to draw on consultant support through the Shared Intelligence agency to help build our local consortium and business case. Our detailed business model and proposal has been discussed with potential external bid partners: the City of Bristol; local training providers; business support providers; SME umbrella bodies serving South Bristol; community organisations. Consortium co-design workshops were held at the Gatehouse Centre in Withywood on March 5th and were attended by over 40 external stakeholder organisations.

Background Documents: WECA is leading the call for Workforce for the Future applications. Full details of programme criteria and the application process is outlined on the WECA [website](#).

Revenue Cost	Not applicable	Source of Revenue Funding	WECA/ESF
Capital Cost	Not applicable	Source of Capital Funding	Not applicable
One off cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Ongoing cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Saving Proposal <input type="checkbox"/>	Income generation proposal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:

Finance Advice: It is intended that Bristol City Council will submit an application for funds to WECA which, if secured, would comprise £750K for 3 years from European Social Funding matched by WECA.

There are a number of financial considerations to need to be accounted for should the funding be approved: The grant conditions for funding from ESF and WECA with implications of deliverables and milestones will need to be fully understood with risks identified and mitigated. As BCC will be in direct receipt of grant funding from ESF and WECA, grant conditions will have to be conferred to any sub contracted delivery partners.

Finance Business Partner: Graham Booth, Finance Manager – Children & Education, 21st February 2020

2. Legal Advice: In the event of a successful bid, consideration will need to be given to any conditions attached to the grant/funding, and Legal Services can advise on this, and will provide advice in taking the project forward, including, for example, in relation to any joint working and/or commissioning arrangements, and any procurement and state aid issues.

Legal Team Leader: Eric Andrews, Team Leader, Legal Services, 21st February 2020

3. Implications on ICT: There are no immediate IT implications arising from this proposal. Should the application for funding be successful, there may be some IT implications arising from subsequent initiatives, but these are unknown at these stage. In any event, they would need to be processed via exiting business prioritisation channels.

ICT Team Leader: Simon Oliver, Director Digital Transformation, Resources – IT, 19th February 2020

4. HR Advice: As the current proposal is presented there are no internal HR issues, however if there is agreement to the proposal and the funding is granted then there may be an HR impact then and further HR input would be required at that point.

HR Partner: Lorna Laing, HR Strategic People Partner – Health and Social Care, 20th February 2020

EDM Sign-off	Dr Jacqui Jensen, Executive Director, People	26 th February 2020
Cabinet Member sign-off	Cllr Anna Keen	27 th February 2020
For Key Decisions - Mayor's Office sign-off	Mayor's office	16 th April 2020

Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal Appendix 1: – ESF Call Workforce for the Future	YES
Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external	NO
Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny	NO
Appendix D – Risk assessment	NO
Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal	NO
Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal	NO
Appendix G – Financial Advice	NO
Appendix H – Legal Advice	NO
Appendix I – Combined Background papers	N/A
Appendix J – Exempt Information	NO
Appendix K – HR advice	NO
Appendix L – ICT	NO