

# Public Document Pack



**22<sup>nd</sup> December 2020**

To: Members of the SCR - Education, Skills and Employability Board and Appropriate Officers

You are hereby invited to a meeting of the Sheffield City Regional Mayoral Combined Authority to be held at **Virtual Meeting**, on: **Tuesday, 5 January 2021** at **1.00 pm** for the purpose of transacting the business set out in the agenda.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Smith'.

Dr Dave Smith  
**Chief Executive**



You can view the agenda and papers at [www.sheffieldcityregion.org.uk](http://www.sheffieldcityregion.org.uk) or use a smart phone camera and scan the QR code

## Member Distribution

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Councillor Sir Steve Houghton CBE (Co-Chair) | Barnsley MBC           |
| Nigel Brewster (Co-Chair)                    | Private Sector         |
| Charlie Adan                                 | Sheffield CC           |
| Councillor Nuala Fennelly                    | Doncaster MBC          |
| Councillor Abtisam Mohamed                   | Sheffield City Council |
| Councillor Denise Lelliott                   | Rotherham MBC          |
| Councillor Tim Cheetham                      | Barnsley MBC           |
| Professor Chris Husbands                     |                        |
| Dr Dave Smith                                | MCA Executive Team     |

SCR - Education, Skills and Employability Board

Tuesday, 5 January 2021 at 1.00 pm

Venue: Virtual Meeting



## Agenda

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| 1.            | Welcome and Apologies  | Co-Chair      |         |
| 2.            | Declarations of Interest by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the agenda | Co-Chair      |         |
| 3.            | Urgent items / Announcements   | Co-Chair      |         |
| 4.            | Public Questions of Key Decisions  | Co-Chair      |         |
| 5.            | Minutes from Last Meeting  | Co-Chair      | 5 - 12  |
| 6.            | Matters Arising  | Co-Chair      |         |
| 7.            | Skills Bank Next Steps   | Dr R Adams    | 13 - 18 |
| 8.            | Skills Strategy Development – principles and approach  | Ms H George   | 19 - 22 |
| 9.            | Renewal Action Plan (RAP): Update on the People Theme - Apprenticeship Training Agency           | Ms H George   | 23 - 28 |
| 10.           | AEB Update   | Ms J Chambers |         |
| 11.           | Working Win  | Ms Sue Sykes  | 29 - 36 |
| 12.           | Any Other Business   | Co-Chair      |         |

**Date of next meeting:** Tuesday, 2 March 2021 at 1.00 pm  
**At:** Virtual Meeting or 11 Broad Street West, Sheffield, S1 2BQ

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**SCR - EDUCATION, SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY BOARD**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:**

**FRIDAY, 30 OCTOBER 2020 AT 10.00 AM**

**VIRTUAL MEETING**



**Present:**

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Councillor Sir Steve Houghton CBE (Co-Chair) | Barnsley MBC           |
| Councillor Nuala Fennelly                    | Doncaster MBC          |
| Professor Chris Husbands                     |                        |
| Councillor Robert Frost (Reserve)            | Barnsley MBC           |
| Councillor Julie Dore (Reserve)              | Sheffield City Council |

**In Attendance:**

|                                 |   |                    |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Jacque Chambers                 | Assistant Director - Skills & Employment            | MCA Executive Team |
| Rob Harvey                      | Senior Programme Manager                            | MCA Executive Team |
| Sue Sykes                       | Assistant Director - Programme and Performance Unit | MCA Executive Team |
| Dr Ruth Adams                   | Deputy Chief Executive                              | MCA Executive Team |
| Gillian Richards (Minute Taker) |   |                    |

**Apologies:**

|                            |                    |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Nigel Brewster             | Private Sector     |
| Councillor Denise Lelliott | Rotherham MBC      |
| Dr Dave Smith              | MCA Executive Team |

**1 Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were noted as above.

**2 Declarations of Interest by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the agenda**

None.

**3 Urgent items / Announcements**

None.

4 **Public Questions of Key Decisions**

None.

5 **Minutes from Last Meeting**

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 be agreed as a true record.

6 **Matters Arising**

None.

7 **Terms of Reference & Meeting Arrangements**

A report was considered which summarised the governance arrangements for the Education, Skills and Employability Board approved by the Mayoral Combined Authority on 21st September 2020 and the Local Enterprise Partnership on 10th September 2020. The paper also confirmed the schedule of meetings.

The report provided Terms of Reference for the Board, summarised key changes and clarified arrangements.

It was noted that the principle role of the Education, Skills and Employability Board was to:

- Shape future policy development and priorities on issues related to education, skill development and employability for matter of city regional significance;
- Develop new education, skills and employment programmes, where these are best done at a city region geography;
- Monitor programme delivery and performance; and
- Act as the Programme Board for the Adult Education Budget delivery.

It had been agreed that the Skills Advisory Network would be a formal advisory board to the Education, Skills and Employability Board.

The Board would continue to meet on an 8-week cycle aligned to the MCA meeting schedule. Additional meetings could be agreed with co-Chairs.

RESOLVED – That the Board:

- i. Note the approved governance arrangements, with the clarification of the relationship between the city region and local arrangements.
- ii. Note the schedule of Education, Skills and Employability Board meetings.

## **Role of the Education, Skills and Employability Board**

A report was considered which built on a previous discussion to help frame the focus on the Education, Skills and Employability Board and to consider an initial programme of work.

Members discussed the potential focus for the work of the Board including:

- Making sense of the system locally
- What could be done directly
- What could be influenced
- What might the Board want to see further control over in the future.

The Board felt it important to better understand why the current education, funding and skills system continued to fail many of the regions residents and that it was important to define what the problems were as precisely as possible.

The Board needed to be clear about the outcomes they were trying to achieve and be able to show that their decisions were making a difference.

It was also important not to lose sight of what had worked in the past and could be developed further.

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic would also have to be considered and horizon scanning would be an important part of agenda planning.

RESOLVED – That the Board:

- i. Note the key points set out in section 2.1 and agree that they provided an appropriate big picture summary.
- ii. Note the framework of activity set out within the report and agree that it reflected the direction of the Board appropriately, with the addition of further emphasis on horizon scanning.

## **Renewal Action Plan (RAP): Update on the People Theme**

A report was considered which sought Members' direction on the scope of activity which could support the People theme of the Renewal Action Plan and the context in which these schemes should be considered.

The Board acknowledged the importance of working with the national offer as described in section 2.2 of the report. There should be a dialogue with government as to what would be best for South Yorkshire and what the region needed.

Members noted the programmes currently being supported, which were detailed at Appendix 1.

With regard to the extension to Working Win, which had previously been specifically for people with health conditions, the Board felt that the results of the programme needed to be evaluated before it was offered to prison leavers

or other cohorts. It was suggested that a model be worked up with and without other cohorts and then a choice could be made.

The Board discussed new opportunities to make a difference in the short term with the use of Gainshare funding. These included an adult Kickstart South Yorkshire 25+ and an Extended Apprenticeship Training Agency/Brokerage which had been proposed as highest priority interventions. Further information was at Appendix 2.

Members also considered new opportunities to make a difference which required funding before they could be delivered.

**RESOLVED – That the Board:**

- i) Confirm that the actions at paragraph 2.2 reflected the role that Members would like the MCA to engage with in relation to national programmes.
- ii) Note the activity the Board had already supported and the update on ESF at paragraph 2 and Appendix 1.
- iii) Note the proposal for Gainshare funding at paragraph 2.4 and Appendix 2.
- iv) Agree to prioritise the programme of activity should funding become available at paragraph 2.5 and appendix 3.

**At this point Prof. C Husbands left the meeting and the meeting became inquorate.**

## 10 **Skills Bank - Future Options**

A report was submitted that set out the current status of the regional Skills Bank programme, commissioned by the ESFA on behalf of the LEP, and presented for consideration some future options regarding the programme operation.

Members were informed that the current Skills Bank Operator procurement, led by the EFSA, concluded at the end of the financial year and therefore a next phase of the Skills Bank needed operationalising. The Board discussed the three options contained within the report.

Members also discussed longer term options for the Skills Bank and options for future financing. Two options were suggested:

1. Continue the Skills Bank utilising only the retained Innovation Fund.
2. Continue the Skills Bank utilising some devolved AEB budget and the Innovation Fund.

Members noted that, subject to agreement of the Skills Bank operating model, there were two delivery options to consider. These were detailed within the report.

RESOLVED – That the Board:

- i) Agree that the short-term sustainability options are progressed to maintain the Skills Bank service, including the back-stop suggestion of extending the SLA agreement to ensure continuity.
- ii) Agree that the longer term option for the Skills Bank, utilising the Innovation Fund surplus only and not AEB be developed and presented to a future Board meeting.

## 11 **Adult Education Budget Update**

A report was considered which provided an update on recent activity undertaken to prepare for the devolution of the Adult Education Budget.

Specific updates included:

- Implementation Funding.
- Communication Strategy.
- Market Engagement/Soft Market Testing.
- Procurement.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

## 12 **Programme Approvals**

A report was submitted to seek approval of two schemes with a total value of £1.62m Getting Building Fund and approval for one change request and sought delegated authority to the Head of paid Service in consultation with the S73 and Monitoring Officer to enter into legal agreements for the schemes.

The Board noted that the schemes were:

- Doncaster College Digital Infrastructure proposal.
- Doncaster College Construction Space proposal.
- A project change request from Barnsley College Digital Innovation Hub Phase 2.

The Board supported the recommendations but could not approve them as the meeting was inquorate. It was noted that approval would be sought, in writing, outside the meeting.

## 13 **Any Other Business**

None

In accordance with Combined Authority's Constitution/Terms of Reference for the Board, Board decisions need to be ratified by the Head of Paid Services (or their nominee) in consultation with the Chair of the Board. Accordingly, the undersigned has consulted with the Chair and hereby ratifies the decisions set out in the above minutes.

Signed .....

Name .....

Position .....

Date .....

**SCR - EDUCATION, SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY BOARD**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:**

**FRIDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2020**

**WRITTEN PROCEDURE**



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**Present:**

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| Councillor Sir Steve Houghton CBE (Co-Chair) | Barnsley MBC       |
| Nigel Brewster (Co-Chair)                    | Private Sector     |
| Councillor Nuala Fennelly                    | Doncaster MBC      |
| Councillor Denise Lelliott                   | Rotherham MBC      |
| Councillor Tim Cheetham                      | Barnsley MBC       |
| Professor Chris Husbands                     |                    |
| Dr Dave Smith                                | MCA Executive Team |

**Apologies:**

|                             |                        |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Councillor Abtissam Mohamed | Sheffield City Council |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|

**1 Notification of a decision by written procedures**

Permissible by section 11 of the terms of reference for the Board and in line with the Decisions Between Meetings protocol:

RESOLVED – That the Board:

1. Approve the award of a £630,000 grant to DN Colleges Group for the Doncaster College Digital Infrastructure proposal subject to conditions set out in the Appraisal Panel Summary Table.
2. Approve the award of a £990,557 grant to DN Colleges Group Doncaster for the College Construction Space proposal subject to the conditions set out in the Appraisal Panel Summary Table.
3. Approve a project change request from “Barnsley College Digital Innovation Hub Phase 2” to amend one condition prior to execution of contract into conditions prior to drawdown of funding and reprofile £1,145,000 expenditure from Q4 20/21 into Q1 21/22.
4. Approve delegated authority to the Head of Paid Service in consultation with the s73 and Monitoring Officer to enter into legal agreements for the schemes covered above.

In accordance with Combined Authority’s Constitution/Terms of Reference for the Board, Board decisions need to be ratified by the Head of Paid Services (or their nominee) in

consultation with the Chair of the Board. Accordingly, the undersigned has consulted with the Chair and hereby ratifies the decisions set out in the above minutes.

Signed .....

Name .....

Position .....

Date .....

**EDUCATION, SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY BOARD**
**05.01.2021**
**Skills Bank Next Steps**
**Purpose of Report**

Following discussion at the October meeting about the future of the Skills Bank, the Board asked for a report outlining how this programme would operate in its next phase, utilising the funds held for the LEP by the MCA in the Skills Bank Reserve.

This paper outlines for Members the Skills Bank design principles and poses a number of questions for debate on whether the principles as established continue to form the basis for the offer and approach to businesses. The paper outlines a high-level operating model for consideration and debate and further seeks a steer from members on the role of social value in the deal making process.

Following discussion, a fuller detailed business case will be developed and options on the business case presented to the Board for endorsement before being ultimately being presented to the LEP Board for a decision on the model and approach and to the MCA to release an amount of the reserve for deployment in 2021/22.

**Freedom of Information**

The paper will be available under the Combined Authority Publication Scheme

**Recommendations**

That the Board consider and agree:

1. The principles that the Skills Bank is built upon and whether the principles as set out in para 2.1 (sections 2.2.1-2.1.6), should continue to form the basis for the operating model;
2. The components of the operating Model, as set out in para 2.2 (sections 2.2.1-2.2.6),
3. The role social value indicators should play in establishing how a deal is constructed and the additional value that can be levered as a consequence;

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Skills Bank, developed in 2014, was one element of a broader programme seeking to deliver the outcomes of the original Strategic Economic Plan. The Skills Bank development was led by the LEP working with an Advisory Group made up of business representative bodies including the Chamber and the FSB, businesses, Colleges, Private Sector Training Providers and the TUC.

When developed, the Skills Bank formed an integral component of the Growth Deal negotiated between the LEP Board and national government and the LEP were in receipt of 6 years of investment totalling £21.6m. The funding model agreed with national government has enabled the creation of an Innovation and Capacity Pot to sustain the Skills Bank after the initial investment.

- 1.2 The model was based on a defined set of principles and was aimed at stimulating private sector growth through supporting business diversification and increased levels of investment. The programme, in stark contrast to other workforce development offers, was designed as part of the region's business support offer seeking to stimulate growth and not as an offer to remediate deficits in education or training amongst the working aged population nor to focus on supply-led skills development.
- 1.3 In the first 6 years of operation, the ESFA, rather than the MCA, managed the programme. Unfortunately, this resulted in the dilution of a number of the core principles. The next iteration of the Skills Bank will be directly governed locally by the LEP / MCA without the involvement of the ESFA and therefore there is the opportunity to fully focus on the agreed principles that the model was founded upon and to focus and prioritise activity based upon local priorities.
- 1.4 In response to the discussion paper presented to the Board in October 2020, Board Members requested that the next stage of the Skills Bank be scoped utilising the funding held in reserve only. This paper seeks to engage the Board in discussion on:
- The design principles of the Skills Bank based upon the original model developed and agreed by the LEP, under the direction of the then Skills for Growth Partnership Board, for consideration and validation.
  - The high-level operating Model and programme components

## 2. Proposal and justification

### 2.1 Skills Bank Principles

The Skills Bank assumes a market led, demand driven position, developed with the following principles at its core:

- 2.1.1 Businesses are rational and commercial and will invest in strategies that they assess will give a corporate or economic return on investment. The model is based therefore on a mandatory business contribution towards paying for development and training. The level of co-investment by the public sector to be based upon the estimated rate of return to the economy in terms of metrics including new jobs, productivity, access to new markets etc.
- 2.1.2 Aligning public sector investment in training to the areas that are most likely to bring about business or economic growth. The Skills Bank invests in areas previously out of scope for public investment for example Prince 2 or technological vendor qualifications.
- 2.1.3 Success measures are linked to the business return and not to completion of a qualification. If qualification-based training is funded as part of a deal the success measure will remain as the impact to the organisation in terms of its growth as opposed to the qualification per se.
- 2.1.4 A deal does not necessarily involve spending the Skill Bank money. If the business growth objectives can be achieved and supported by the core training products in the market eg those funded through Adult Education Budget, Kickstart or Apprenticeships, this is a successful outcome as it signifies the mainstream market is demand responsive.
- 2.1.5 A deal will normally be multi-faceted. Invariably business growth is not dependent upon a single corporate development need. Deals can therefore be long term and potentially complex arrangements.
- 2.1.6 Market driven model, whilst mindful of quality issues, businesses have choice of the partners they work with. They are not forced to use a pre-determined model, nor a set format for training.

### 2.2 The Operating Model

The operating model was reviewed by the LEP Board at the midpoint of the Skills Bank programme and changes made based upon business feedback and monitoring evidence.

### **2.2.1 The Skills Bank Operator**

The operator of the Skills Bank is independent of the training delivery infrastructure. This was designed into the model following feedback that identified models integrating management of a programme alongside delivery had an increased potential for a business to be sold the training offer of the Managing agent, at the expense of a more dispassionate impartial discussion and the building of a wider local training supply chain.

### **2.2.2 Independent brokerage**

The evaluation of the Skills Made Easy programme, received business feedback valuing an impartial service that challenged business strategies for their workforce, was able to refer to a wide breadth of options including apprenticeship provision or mainstream AEB, in addition to constructing a potential deal.

In the first procurement of Skills Bank by the ESFA the brokerage was integrated into the Managing Agent. At evaluation, the first phase model was perceived to perversely skew the operator to delivery of Skills Bank first deals as opposed to exploring with the business the other options including AEB and apprenticeships. This was changed in the second iteration where the brokerage became an integral part of the Growth Hub offer. The primary role of the independent brokerage is as much about supporting a business to access national and regional offers including apprenticeships, AEB and Kickstart for example, as it is about accessing the Skills Bank funding.

### **2.2.3 Marketing and Communications of the Skills Bank Service**

The marketing and communications activity in the first three years of the Skills Bank was managed directly by the Operator. In the second iteration this was led by the MCA Executive in conjunction with the Operator. This has enabled greater control the key messages about Skills Bank, and improved alignment with LEP, MCA and Growth Hub communications and campaigns. It has enabled the opportunity to flex communications to respond to specific business priorities as and when required.

### **2.2.4 A locally based delivery training supply chain**

The model requires the Operator to develop a locally based training supply chain, made up of Colleges and Independent Training Providers. The stipulation of the Operator not being able to deliver training activity means they need to access and work with a breadth of suppliers to meet the specific requirements of businesses. Once a deal has been secured the employer has the autonomy to select a training provider of their choice.

The ESFA approach has required the Operator to pre-procure its training supply chain to ensure due diligence and quality assurance standards are in place. This has been at odds with the principle of employer choice and has increased sub-contracting in the supply chain. There is the opportunity to refresh how this element works to create a balance between pre-procured providers whilst offering a more dynamic system to bring on board new providers based upon specific business need.

### **2.2.5 Co-investment and Differential deals linked to business growth**

Co-investment in training was hard wired into the Skills Bank model as a core principle. A Skills Bank deal is made where there is a credible and demonstrable business growth story and a requirement for training to realise this growth. The extent of the investment made by the Skills Bank is determined by the perceived return to the economy of the investment. In response to the current issues facing businesses, a number of agreed training offers have been made that have been fully funded to support business recovery, but this is an exception to the model.

Linked to the co-investment requirement is the potential to differentiate deals with businesses linked to the social value and public return. As an illustration - Company A and Company B are both seeking a deal to train 5 middle managers. Company A, during the negotiation of the deal, agrees to take on an apprentice and participate in providing work experience linked to a local school – thus achieving local outcomes for businesses engaging with schools and young people. Company B is unwilling or unable to take on apprenticeships and is not interested or able to support work experience. The potential

return on investment of the management training to both businesses is broadly similar however the social value associated with the Company A deal is greater given the wider benefits for young people. The operating model, as originally designed, allowed for a higher contribution to be made to Company A deal than with Company B.

This element of the operating model has been the hardest element to operationalise under the management of the ESFA. There are some recent examples where the current operator has achieved this and the extent to which Social Value is integrated into the new deal making process can be refreshed in this next iteration of the Skills Bank.

### 2.2.6 Three application routes to access a Skills Bank deal

In recognition of the need for the Skills Bank to support businesses of all sizes, not simply those that had the size and internal training capacity to make an application, the operating model provided three routes to accessing a Skills Bank deal:

- A direct single business application,
- An aggregated demand application made on behalf of a group of businesses (usually for very small businesses who do not have the capacity to apply individually) or
- A training provider application where they can evidence, they are working with businesses with shared demand – a minimum threshold of 50% named businesses was required to ensure this route was genuinely demand led and not speculative development without a market for the training activity.

## 3. Consideration of alternative approaches

**3.1 Do Nothing** – In this scenario the Skills Bank would cease to operate. This has been discounted as the original funding model was designed to enable some sustainability in the approach. The evidence supporting the priorities of both the Renewal Action Plan and the Strategic Economic Plan, the economic shock as a result of COVID and the impending issues for businesses following BREXIT provide an overwhelming case to continue to maintain support for businesses and their workforces to secure growth. Please refer to this link for a summary of the SEP evidence <https://sheffieldcityregion.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/SEP-Evidence-Base.pdf>

**3.2 Do Something** – The proposed model, outlined in section 2, is a do something option, which is strongly aligned to the original principles and operating model agreed by the LEP. The proposal is that the principles and operating model is reviewed but that the service and model continue principally as designed, given the design was led by the LEP and reviewed at the interim stage. It is also proposed that further design work is undertaken to the policy objectives and outcomes agreed in the SEP and RAP are “locked” into the preferred model along with an evaluation plan.

**3.3 Do More** – The option of doing more via aligning an element of AEB to the Skills Bank was discounted as a viable option by the Education, Skills and Employability Board. The request was for detailed evaluation of benefits leading to a fuller and detailed review. This external evaluation has been commissioned.

## 4. Implications

### 4.1 Financial

The Skills Bank Reserve held by the MCA on behalf of the LEP is £5.084m with a further £1.46m already held by the Skills bank Operator and a further £1.15m forecast to be generated by June 2021. A total of £7.69m. Based on the current spend profiles and as this is a finite reserve it is envisaged that this could sustain the Skills Bank for two additional years.

More detailed modelling is required to consider the level of intervention possible and to develop the business case covering the resourcing of the operating model

- Brokerage and Advisor Support
- Skills Bank Operator
- Marketing
- Quality Assurance
- Evaluation
- Co-investment pot
- MCA Executive costs

#### **4.2 Legal**

Subject to agreement of the Operating Model regarding the Skills Bank Operator a procurement exercise would be developed and run.

#### **4.3 Risk Management**

A full and detailed risk management action plan will be developed as part of the business plan development. Some of the initial high-level strategic risk areas that the continuation of the offer seeks to mitigate are:

- Reliance on the national mainstream offer, is insufficiently flexible and fails to provide an offer to businesses to support their growth ambitions;
- The implications of Brexit and COVID, raise demand for business support to support business diversification, resulting in increasing demand for bespoke support for workforce development, which would not be met without the Skills Bank offer;

#### **4.4 Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion**

The Skills Bank is not designed as an approach to improving social inclusion, in the same way that this features in the devolved AEB programme, however data is monitored and reported upon. The Board are asked to consider in section 2.2.5, whether they wish to focus on differentiating deals where there is greater social value which could support the achievement of these outcomes.

### **5. Communications**

- 5.1** A communication plan will be developed as part of the revised business case. Immediate communication requirements relate to the continuation of the service post March which is currently being explored to seek to ensure that there is no loss of service.

### **6. Appendices/Annexes**

- 6.1** N/A

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>REPORT AUTHOR</b> | <b>Ruth Adams</b>  |
| <b>POST</b>          | <b>Deputy Chief Executive</b>  |
| Officer responsible  | Dave Smith   |
| Organisation         | <b>MCA Executive</b>   |
| Email                | <a href="mailto:Ruth.adams@sheffieldcityregion.org.uk">Ruth.adams@sheffieldcityregion.org.uk</a> |
| Telephone            | <b>0114 220 3442</b>   |

Background papers used in the preparation of this report are available for inspection at: 11 Broad Street West, Sheffield S1 2BQ

Other sources and references:

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**EDUCATION, SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY THEMATIC BOARD**

**05.01.2021**

**Skills Strategy Development – principles and approach**

**Purpose of Report**

This paper seeks members' direction on proposals for development of a Skills and Employability Strategy. It seeks agreement for a set of core principles and an overall approach that will inform the next phase of development.

**Freedom of Information**

The paper will be available under the Combined Authority Publication Scheme

**Recommendations**

That the Board consider and agree:

1. The core principles for developing the skills and employability strategy.
2. The priority themes for inclusion in the strategy.

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1** Residents and businesses across South Yorkshire face education, skills and employability challenges that affect their lives and their ability to realise their potential. Challenges are the result of both long term trends – poor educational achievement, endemic low skills levels and higher than average levels of poverty and worklessness - and the short term impact of the pandemic, with jobs in the lower paid sectors that tend to be prevalent in South Yorkshire being hardest hit by the economic downturn.
- 1.2** There are significant opportunities in South Yorkshire, but in order for residents to benefit and for businesses to feel confident about a supply of skills, we need more people with better skills, both in terms of the flow of skills into the labour market and the skills of those already in it.
- 1.3** Members have commissioned development of a strategy for skills that would allow us to set short and longer term priorities to address these issues in the context of the wider ambitions for economic growth as set out in the Strategic Economic Plan and our commitment to a stronger, greener and fairer future.
- 1.4** This paper sets out the core principles that we would like to apply to development of a strategy and the overall approach we plan to take. Approval by the members will allow us to get work underway.

## 2. Proposal and justification

2.1 A collaborative and forward-facing skills and employability system in South Yorkshire will equip our people with information and high-quality provision enabling them to develop the skills needed to aspire and achieve their full potential. It will also support increased local productivity in an inclusive economy future proofed for everyone. In order to give focus to the skills system locally, we need a skills and employability strategy.

2.2 As we develop the strategy, we will use evidence, consultation, and partnership to understand, respond to and deliver innovative approaches and policies. Development will be co-designed with a wide range of partners, sharing knowledge and expertise, and enabling us to set out how we will work together over the next decade to create a skilled, resilient and productive workforce, driven by ambition, innovation and entrepreneurialism.

2.3 The members are invited to comment on **core principles** that will underpin development:

- This should be a South Yorkshire strategy, not a South Yorkshire version of a national strategy. It should address the very specific skills and employability issues that affect South Yorkshire, both in terms of underlying skills challenges and shorter-term issues caused by the pandemic, but also in the way it focuses future skills development on the renewal and growth opportunities of the future. It should also look to the existing strengths and capability within the region as a basis for building a response to those challenges. There is a real opportunity to learn lessons from the Doncaster Opportunity Area programme.
- Development of the strategy must start with a 'blank-page' and be firmly rooted in an evidence base that considers across all age groups – from 0-2yrs through to adults, including learning for wellbeing in later life. We need to understand the barriers to employability and success that prevent South Yorkshire residents from achieving their potential, as well as the building blocks that are working well. We will develop a road map of education and skills interventions to help us understand gaps in provision. In order to set a sensible but ambitious plan we will need a) to work collaboratively and b) to prioritise and sequence effectively and c) to set measurable improvement goals.
- The Strategy must set skills and employability development in the context of the priorities in the Strategic Economic Plan and Renewal Action Plan. It must sit alongside a robust evidence base setting out analysis of the current and future employment and skills needs in South Yorkshire. This will need to be focused on the present (impact of the COVID pandemic) and the future, we will through our intelligence hub, and the work of our Skills Advisory Network collect information regarding future labour market and job opportunities.
- Residents and businesses should be at the heart of our strategic development, both in terms of the process we go through to develop the strategy and in terms of the final document/s. The strategy should be a meaningful and accessible document and one which explains how our approach will make a difference. We therefore plan to be as consultative as possible, bringing in evidence from across South Yorkshire communities, so that residents and businesses can contribute to the process.
- Timeline: we need a skills strategy, but we need time to ensure we have the right strategy and not simply a brigading of 'everything that we usually do'. We will need to set a timetable for development that allows us time to do justice to the challenge linked to plans for future investment. In the interim, we will develop a narrative that we can use to tell a coherent story about how the programmes and initiatives we are running link to the SEP and RAP. We propose that Skills Strategy development should be a standing item on the Education, Skills and Employability Board agenda and that we should come back to members with a proposed timeline at the next meeting.

**Do members support these core principles to underpin our approach?**

- 2.4** Members are invited to comment on the priority themes for the strategy:
- Whether we are making progress across South Yorkshire in driving up educational outcomes and achievement so that young people have the right skills and qualifications to progress in learning or employment;
  - How investment in education, skills and employability across South Yorkshire will be used to drive a change in the ambitions of our residents improving skills and contributing to inclusion, prosperity and growth;
  - Information and choice – how we will ensure residents and businesses have the information they need to make career and recruitment and workforce development choices;
  - How the South Yorkshire skills system works for residents, employers and stakeholders and what our offer is for key groups – for example a ‘youth offer’;
  - Support available to residents at key transition points in their lives / career development so that they are well prepared for the world of work, career progression and further study;
  - How we will put employers at the heart of skills and employability system;
  - Establish a clear focus on progression within South Yorkshire, with clear pathways and a curriculum offer that enables residents to acquire the skills they need to progress from basic into intermediate and advanced level technical vocational professions linked to our employment and growth sectors;
  - How we will learn from health-led trials to achieve greater integration between health and skills / employment in commissioning services, capitalising on the fact that ‘good work is good for your health’.
  - Demonstrating the benefits of locally commissioned provision, including system simplification, building on the existing strengths of our locally based providers and stronger partnership with the third sector and community organisation, especially in targeting support for those with the greatest barriers in our most deprived communities.

**Do the members support these priority themes for the strategy?**

**3. Consideration of alternative approaches**

**3.1** The approach set out in this paper can be flexed in line with members’ responses.

**4. Implications**

**4.1** Approval of the approach in this paper will allow the Education, Skills and Employability team begin to put in place the consultation process necessary to underpin development of the skills and employability strategy.

**4.2 Legal**

This paper is seeking views from members in advance of development of a strategy.

**4.3 Risk Management**

Risk 1 – the approach recommended in this paper reduces the risk of us developing a strategy that does not meet needs across South Yorkshire.

**4.4 Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion**

Development of a skills and employability strategy is an opportunity to consider how we secure better outcomes for all residents across South Yorkshire, but with a particular focus on achieving better inclusion and progression for groups who are at greater risk of disadvantage.

**5. Communications**

**5.1** No immediate communications needed. Subject to members' approval, we will be developing a consultation process to support development of the strategy. We will develop this in partnership with the communications team.

## **6. Appendices/Annexes**

**6.1** N/A

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
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Background papers used in the preparation of this report are available for inspection at: 11 Broad Street West, Sheffield S1 2BQ

Other sources and references:

**EDUCATION, SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY THEMATIC BOARD**
**05.01.2021**
**Renewal Action Plan (RAP): Update on the People Theme – Apprenticeship Training Agency**
**Purpose of Report**

This paper seeks members' direction on proposals for development of an enhanced Apprenticeship Training Agency or Hub as a vehicle for increasing the volume and quality of apprenticeships across South Yorkshire as a RAP measure to support residents into employment and support our longer-term ambitions in the Strategic Economic Plan.

**Freedom of Information**

The paper will be available under the Combined Authority Publication Scheme

**Recommendations**

That the Board consider and agree:

Members are asked to consider whether their interest is

- in setting up in the short term an ATA to support an ILM for apprenticeships, or
- a vehicle with longer term potential to support apprenticeships which could either be a flexible hub model, or a more formal ATA with investment to grow in line with a long term business plan.

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This paper seeks members direction on proposals for taking forward the proposal for an enhanced Apprenticeship Hub or Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA) for South Yorkshire.
- 1.2 In October, members were supportive of the proposal to use Gainshare funding to develop a Hub or ATA to reverse the decline in apprenticeship take up and driving improved quality and completion rates.
- 1.3 The paper provides further clarification so members can decide on their preferred model enabling work to start on this in the new year.

**2. Proposal and justification**

- 2.1 Apprenticeship opportunities and completions have fallen across South Yorkshire in comparison with 2019. This follows a national trend but is exacerbated in South Yorkshire because of the low education and skills attainment levels across the region. The overall trend is in part a result of reduced opportunities as a result of COVID, but there was already an issue in the number of people accessing apprenticeships and that very few of them were at advanced (Level 3) or Higher (Levels 4,5,6). The trend is likely to be exacerbated in coming years as smaller and medium sized businesses struggle to recover and grow.

- 2.2** Evidence shows that apprenticeships offer a greater return on investment in skills compared to other programmes, so the decline in take up and the volume of apprenticeship opportunities will impact on our productivity and growth ambitions
- 2.3** Members indicated their support for using Gainshare funding to put in place a hub or ATA to help drive apprenticeship activity across South Yorkshire. The rationale would be to:
- Raise the profile of apprenticeships across South Yorkshire and stimulate demand from both young people and employers;
  - Through a brokerage service quickly matching potential apprentices with vacancies;
  - Help demystify apprenticeships for employers and support them in navigating the levy and non-levy systems;
  - Reduce the risk to businesses uncertain about the future of taking on an apprentice;
  - Drive an improvement in quality and completions across South Yorkshire.
- 2.4** The service could be enhanced by also supporting:
- Progression routes e.g. traineeships into an apprenticeship for those who may not immediately be able to secure an employer to take them on
  - Those who have completed their apprenticeship but who have not been successful in securing a permanent post;
  - Apprentices who for whatever reason have to change programme part way through.
- 2.5** There are options for putting in place an organisation to deliver services across these priorities including commissioning a standalone entity, working with and through partner organisations such as South Yorkshire FE Colleges and/or local authorities as host organisations or working with, for example, existing ATAs to deliver in South Yorkshire. Fundamental to securing the right model is whether this is about quality and de-risking apprenticeships for employers in the long term or whether this is a short-term measure designed to secure apprenticeships for those affected by the pandemic. Critical questions include the extent to which the MCA should bear the cost of wages for apprentices (and the criteria that we might think through around that in terms of age, level and sector) how the 'body' fits with the existing landscape, and the level of service needed, from promotion and support through to the 'clearing house' model as is operational in Greater Manchester.
- 2.6** Hub: hub-type models offer flexibility and an opportunity for a high degree of collaboration between partners and with providers. Employer engagement and influence over direction are critical to building credibility. With the support of Gainshare funding a hub would become a focal point for engagement on apprenticeships and carry out promotional activity. The target would be to address gaps in the market and add value – for example as a target for new investors in South Yorkshire to engage with – rather than to compete with existing provider – employer relationships. A hub could offer an apprenticeship brokerage service, something that has been developed by other MCAs and this could potentially begin by working with larger public sector employers helping them make better use of levy funding which is currently being returned to HMT as it expires. The Authority could also use the hub to support distribution of pooled levy funding if and when that is agreed by government.
- 2.7** Hub / Clearing House: a high quality hub which raising the profile of apprenticeships right across a geographical area and providing a focal point for both potential apprentices and employers could be extended to offer a matching service to help young people and employers fill vacancies. Support to showcase vacancies and to fill them with the right candidates significantly de-risks the process for both apprentices and employers.

- 2.8** ATA: members are asked to consider whether they want to go further and establish an ATA. The core purpose of an ATA is to employ apprentices, usually on behalf of other employers who fund the wages and pay a management fee to the ATA. ATAs carry out HR and payroll functions, manage performance and help with training, placements and pastoral support in addition to the promotional functions described for hubs.
- 2.9** The ESFA's current guidance on ATAs is that to operate as an apprenticeship training agency, organisations must be registered on the register of approved ATAs. The application window is currently closed but may be reviewed in the near future. To note, as a Mayoral Combined Authority we understand that we may not need ESFA approval.
- 2.10** There are broadly three types of ATA currently in existence:
- Provider-led ATAs – set up by an individual College/Local Authority or ITP
  - Sector focused ATAs – established under the umbrella of former Sector Skills Councils, including SEMTA (engineering) and Skills for Health
  - Geographically focused ATAs, offering a service across a locality.
- 2.11** Evidence from existing ATAs is that the business model is challenging. To be effective and offer the 'gold standard' service that would add value to businesses, the ATA must be resource intensive from inception with staff employed to build relations with employers, identifying apprentice vacancies and persuading them to use the ATA service. This is an investment question for the MCA. For a sustainable model, the ATA would be the employer and operate payroll, but with a full contribution from employers to the cost of wages.
- 2.12** An existing ATA in the construction sector estimates its initial costs to have been in the order of £250k per year with at least a year before the service began to realise potential. Essential to the ATA's sustainable business model is access to transferred levy funding so that the ATA itself is not limited by apprenticeship funding restrictions to 10 apprentices and is able to reduce the cost to employers of using its service. Achieving this would require significant leadership across South Yorkshire by the MCA to secure commitment to transfer funds in this way in advance of any pooling arrangement that government may eventually support.
- 2.13** Whilst the purpose of an ATA is to reduce the risk to employers of taking on apprentices, that risk would transfer at least in part to the ATA, and therefore the MCA as sponsor. As the employing organisation, the ATA would have a responsibility for paying wages and finding another opportunity for any apprentice who was affected by redundancy with no coverage for those costs.
- 2.14** ATAs that are well resourced and managed can offer a valuable service to employers and apprentices, offering support and stability and taking the burden away from employers. However, it is unclear whether a South Yorkshire ATA would add sufficient value over other hub models to warrant the level of cost and risks involved.
- 2.15** Additionally, an ATA as described above would be unlikely to make a significant difference to youth employment opportunities at the speed and scale that are required to respond to the problems resulting from the pandemic, although over the long term it would be a significant lever for to improve the take-up quality and completion by apprentices.
- 2.16** ATA / ILM model: The ATA could operate an ILM model, so that it would have responsibility for both employing and funding (or partially funding) the wage costs of apprentices, as well as identifying host organisation and supporting training. The cost of wages in this model would need a long-term commitment from the Authority, probably making use of Gainshare funding. It is not clear what reaction ESFA might have to this ATA models.

- 2.17** There is a significant degree of risk in the ATA ILM model: it is not sustainable for the long term, it distorts the employer / employee relationship that is unique to an apprenticeship, and it may put at risk quality and completions depending on how and whether employer and employee behaviour changed as a result of third party funding of wages. There is also a risk that funding wages would involve significant deadweight, resulting from the Authority paying wages in place of employers who have paused but not stopped their recruitment of apprentices. Our recommendation is that further work on the market failure that this model is trying to address should be undertaken before committing to this model. It may be that the risks involved would outweigh any advantage in this funded model and that focusing on Kickstart / Kickstart 25+ as the ILM models would be preferable.
- 2.18** This paper seeks a steer on the type of vehicle members are seeking to put in place so that further work can be done to develop proposals. The options are:
- A hub – that could carry out promotional and support functions and could co-ordinate use of levy transfer funding?
  - A hub plus – with MCA investment in a matching service and offering a focus point for vacancy filling / recruitment?
  - An ATA – with employers contributing the cost of wages, but de-risked with the MCA as direct employer. The MCA would need to understand and accept the risks in employing apprentices and the resources / time needed to develop the business model.
  - And ATA ILM – designed to get young people into apprenticeships as quickly as possible, but which is sustainable only as long as the MCA is prepared to fund wages, and noting that this does carry a level of risk for both apprentices and employers.
- 2.19** Once we have members' views, we will return in March with a detailed proposal on how the Hub or ATA could operate.

### **3. Consideration of alternative approaches**

- 3.1** Development of an apprenticeship hub for South Yorkshire
- 3.2** Development of an ATA to employ apprentices, with two options: with ATA as employer, and wage costs from employers or ATA as an employer and also paying wages using Gainshare funding.
- 3.3** We could also consider a hybrid model with development of a hub for apprenticeships in South Yorkshire, coupled with an approach to other sector focused ATAs to become more engaged / active in the region.

### **4. Implications**

- 4.1** Use of Gainshare funding as agreed to support RAP: People Strand activities.
- 4.2 Legal**  
This paper is seeking a view from members on points of principle only.
- 4.3 Risk Management**
- Risk 1 – that we set up the wrong vehicle for apprenticeships and undermine the quality of the programme across South Yorkshire.
  - Risk 2 – that an ATA would absorb some of the risk that normally rests with employers and may therefore be liable for employing and paying apprentices if an employer went out of business
  - Risk 3 – deadweight in public funds being used to pay wages for apprentices if employers would have done so – for example in sectors where we expect recovery and growth

#### **4.4 Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion**

Apprenticeships support progression and social mobility among all groups

#### **5. Communications**

5.1 None at this stage.

#### **6. Appendices/Annexes**

6.1 N/A

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
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Other sources and references:

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5<sup>th</sup> January 2021

**Working Win**

**Purpose of Report**

Members discussed and agreed at its October meeting, to take up the opportunity of submitting a business case to secure additional funding from the Work and Health Unit (DWP/Dept. of Health). Following submission of an outline business case the WHU have advised of their intention to award the MCA £3m. This paper outlines for Members additional details of the programme and seeks the endorsement of the Board in accepting the £3m grant and approval to enter into a partnership agreement with NHS Clinical Commissioning Group to procure and contract the appropriate provider(s) to deliver the programme.

**Freedom of Information and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972**

The paper will be available under the Combined Authority Publication Scheme.

**Recommendations**

The Board consider and endorse:

1. Progression to the MCA Board the request to accept the Work and Health Unit c£3m grant funding for the Working Win Programme subject to due diligence on any conditions of award.
2. Entering into a Partnership Agreement with Sheffield Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) in order for the Working Win programme to be procured as an NHS contract, as stipulated by the Work and Health Unit on terms to be agreed by the Head of Paid Service.

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1** As part of the devolution proposition development, Sheffield City Region MCA were offered the opportunity to develop a health-led employment trial to test an approach to improving employment outcomes for individuals through a programme focusing on supporting an individual's health issues. The model developed focused on participants who were in work to retain and sustain work and those out of work to access employment.

The health-led employment trial – Working Win – was one of only two national pilots funded by the Work and Health Unit, a cross department unit jointly sponsored by the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department for Health and Social Care. Since the first grant offer and a subsequent extension, the MCA has been in receipt of £9.56m to deliver the programme.

- 1.2** The Working Win Health Led Employment trial has been subject to rigorous national evaluation which continues. Our monitoring evidence is that over 3060 residents, of South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw, with mild/moderate mental health and/or any physical health issues (e.g. neck and back problems) have been supported to move into paid work or sustain employment which was at risk because of their health issue.

- 1.3 Members were advised at their October Board of the opportunity offered by the WHU to submit a business case for a further year of funding. This additional year would not be operated as a randomised control trial and the opportunity was offered to amend the focus of the extension. Board Members approved the submission of a business case, retaining the key worker model and the focus on both employed and in-work cohorts. Following that submission, on 11th December the MCA Executive has received notification that the proposal has been successful and the Director General of DWP is seeking to award the MCA c£3m to deliver the 12-month programme. The programme is currently restricted to 12 months due to the 1-year Comprehensive Spending Review.

Members are asked to consider the proposal and offer of grant and endorse a paper going to the MCA to formally accept the grant award.

## 2. Proposal and justification

### The Outline Programme

#### 2.1 Programme Focus

The vision for this continuation programme is to actively intervene in supporting employment and minimising the barrier poor health plays in enabling our residents to fulfil their potential. With a more focused aim of intervening in order to mitigate the long-term effects on employment and health as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The programme will:

- build on the core principles and fidelity scale of the established Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model but with in-built flexibilities to take into account the differing cohort that we will target and the corresponding differing support needs of that cohort.
- continue to utilise a modified IPS model to seek to deliver a transformational improvement in employment, health and wellbeing outcomes for people who have a self-defined mild/moderate mental health and/or physical health condition.

#### 2.2 The Service

The programme will provide an intensive time limited support service for people with health conditions **who are unemployed**, or in work and their employers focussing on creating and maintaining a healthy workforce following Covid-19. It will also support those with health conditions that are at risk of redundancy, which may be particularly important for those that have been supported by the furlough scheme.

As this new programme will not operate under the conditions of a medical randomised trial, we are proposing to consider some additional features to further enhance outcomes and benefits, which were not permissible in the trial due to the potential to compromise the evaluation of the model. These additions are still in development but include a consideration of broadening the travel concessions, childcare offer to offset the costs of securing or retaining work.

The full details of the proposed service are included for consideration in appendix a

#### 2.3 Engagement with Health Services

A crucial feature of the WorkingWin programme has been the relationships between the service provider and partners, particularly in the health sector. This was highlighted in the local evaluation as one of the strengths of the programme with senior buy in from a large range of health organisations. It is proposed that these relationships will continue with referrals being actively sought from:

- primary health (GPs, Improving Access to Psychological Therapies [IAPT], Musculoskeletal [MSK]), in addition to

- Community and voluntary sector organisations
- Self-referrals
- DWP
- A target cohort will be patients who are going to the GP for a fit note.

## 2.4 Benefits and Outcomes

The programme aims to support approximately 1,550 participants on the programme. Evidence from the evaluation of the first programme points to an indicative split of beneficiaries with c40% in work but struggling or off sick and c60% unemployed.

As the programme seeks to maintain the strong linkage between employment and health, the geography for the programme will continue to mirror the ICS footprint of South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw. Participants will need to be registered with a GP in one of the 5 local authority areas. This will be checked at the point of referral.

The 1,550 participant target will be indicatively split across the boroughs in the following way, whilst recognising that the model is demand driven and therefore may not perfectly correlate to the estimated split of activity indicated below:

- Barnsley: (19%)
- Bassetlaw: (7%)
- Doncaster: (21%)
- Rotherham: (18%)
- Sheffield: (35%)

## 2.5 The Operating Model

Consideration has been given to the most efficient means of procuring this activity.

The preferred option is that the procurement of the service provider will follow the route adopted for the trial, with the CCG procuring the contract via OJEU processes and the MCA funding the CCG via a grant funding agreement.

This approach enables the MCA to maximise referrals from GP's and from other NHS Departments and mitigates the challenges faced in accessing health data outside of NHS contracting could expose the MCA to a high level of scrutiny re medical ethics and patient data. Contracting via a health partner with the MCA leading the governance and programme management mitigates this risk.

At the point of developing the business case engagement with the CCG confirmed their support and agreement to continue to fulfil this role. The costs of a CCG led procurement are included in the financial forecasts for the programme. Should the CCG be unable to enter into the proposed arrangement the MCA will use this resource to undertake its own exercise.

## Consideration of alternative approaches

**3.1 Do nothing:** The alternative to progressing with the programme is to rely upon the offer available within the current national Work and Health Programme and through other small-scale national programmes. This was discounted by the Board. The Renewal Action Plan emphasises the need to support people into employment and in view of the extreme circumstances faced as a result of the pandemic, furlough, mental health issues the support offered by a WorkingWin style service is felt to be essential.

**3.2 Do something:** The proposal offered enables 1 year of support and bridges a gap whilst the Board can consider in greater detail its approach to employment and health. Whilst the scale of the need for support is greater than the beneficiaries able to be targeted through this programme, but the volume is manageable in a one-year timeframe.

Alternative approaches were considered to the operating model including commissioning outside of the NHS structure. To do this presents higher risks to the programme and delays in approval. The key reasons are cited in section 2.5. and predominantly involve

issues in accessing health data outside of NHS contracting which would necessitate a significant amount of work to become compliant with medical ethics and patient data. Contracting via a health partner with the MCA leading the governance and programme management mitigates this risk.

- 3.3 Do more:** The scale of need for alignment of health and employment outcomes will be significant as the full impact of the pandemic is realised. The development of the MCA Inclusion Strategy, planned for 2021/22 will consider in depth issues relating to inclusion, health and well-being and as a result of this enable the Board to develop a more medium-term approach to the development of the WorkingWin service and supplementary programmes and solutions. Until this depth of analysis and planning is undertaken it is not proposed the Board progresses a 'do-more' approach, although flexibility can be considered in the procurement exercise to provide opportunity if this is required.

## **4. Implications**

### **4.1 Financial**

The MCA Working Win Programme is 100% funded through the Work and Health Unit. In the absence of a memorandum of understanding to cover the main tranche of funding, the financial risks cannot be fully evaluated at this stage. Hence, officers are seeking agreement in principle to enter into the arrangement with authority delegated to the Group Finance Director to accept the grant after due diligence on the terms and conditions of the offer has been carried out.

### **4.2 Legal**

Commercial procurement and legal technical support is being sought and has been engaged in the operational stage of the programme design.

Any confidentiality obligations imposed upon the MCA by central government must not be breached because to do so may lead to government legal action and, possibly more importantly, would lead to a loss in confidence in central government in dealing confidentiality with MCA – to say nothing of the reputational risk.

The MCA has power under Schedule 2 of the BDRSCA Order 2014 regarding both the general power of competence and educational functions as well as a more general power to do "anything it considers appropriate" for the purposes of carrying out its functions, or anything which is incidental or connection to, its functions (section 113A of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009).

### **4.3 Risk Management**

The proposal is that the Education, Skills, and Employability Board provide detailed oversight of the Working Win programme and the associated strategic and operational risks. A detailed risk plan is in development.

The main strategic risks known at this stage are:

- Mobilisation of the programme, such that the full benefits can be realised. This is mitigated in part by the proposal to utilise the CCG to procure the service provider as cuts out complexity in medical ethics requirements. A milestone plan is in development to ensure that a viable programme can be delivered.
- Financial risk as the MCA is required to implement and mobilise the programme before the formal Grant Offer Letter is received. This is largely mitigated by the DWP's Director Generals underwriting of the funding.
- Local Service Infrastructure – The existing WorkingWin investment is due to conclude at the end of the financial year which could lead to a break in continuity and a loss of skills. Work is on-going to consider how best to mitigate this risk, continuing the work done through the Local Integration Boards and within the health sector.

#### 4.4 Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion

An equalities impact assessment will be undertaken, and the full programme design will go through the Medical Ethics Committee. This process will ensure that the interests of patients are protected, and any moral issues are identified and addressed.

#### 5. Communications

5.1 A communication and participation plan will be established and will be implemented. Key stakeholders including service users, employers and providers will be involved in the design and development of the models and this will continue across the life of the programmes

#### 6. Appendices/Annexes

6.1 Appendix A : The service

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
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## Appendix A: Working Win Proposed Service Offer

The programme for individuals will focus on areas such as:

- returning to work following a long period working from home or on furlough or on sick leave.
- a graduated approach back into work for those that need it, especially if previously unemployed.
- managing transport and childcare needs to enable individuals access (and stay in) employment.
- supporting those in work where their role is likely to have had an impact on their mental health e.g. care workers.
- a place then train model including rapid job search for competitive jobs.
- individualised job searches, with job matches based on an individual's employment preferences, personal goals, needs and aspirations, and support to create a CV, and tailor to specific job opportunities.
- Interview preparation and support.
- Individualised in work support, providing participants with personalised support for sustaining work based on the job, their preferences, work history, needs, etc.;
- Ongoing regular contact (i.e., every two weeks) with participants throughout the programme, providing advice, support and guidance, helping them to find and remain in work.
- supporting aspects of remote where that could be retained. We are mindful that for many people with health conditions, long periods of flexible homeworking may be their only employment option.
- Skills gaps (including digital skills) and mental health issues.

The programme for employers will focus on supporting:

- how the workplace can be made safe for those with physical and mental health conditions in relation to Covid-19
- mental health first aid and disability confidence training
- how a more flexible or blended approach to work can be continued
- a budget for additional software or transport, that will allow employees to come safely back to the workplace where other support is not available.
- individual cases where circumstances seem to indicate difficulty in employees starting work again including if required informal mediation between the employer and employee.

A fund to support and enable work

- This fund will be accessed on an individual basis to overcome barriers and allow the individual to return to work safely or to work more effectively from home, for example it could cover digital solutions, transport or childcare costs.

Employers should be involved in the support package for the individual as soon as possible in the process, however, this should always be with consent from the individual.

As this new programme will not operate under the conditions of a medical randomised trial, we are proposing to consider some additional features to further enhance outcomes and benefits, which were not permissible in the trial due to the potential to compromise the evaluation of the model. These additions are still in development but include a consideration of broadening the travel concessions, childcare offer to offset the costs of securing or retaining work.

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