

## Mayoral Combined Authority Board

Tuesday, 04 June 2024

### Education, Skills and Employability Approvals

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**Is the paper exempt from the press and public?** No

**Reason why exempt:** Not applicable

**Purpose of this report:** Funding Decision

**Is this a Key Decision?** Yes

**Has it been included on the Forward Plan of Key Decisions?** Yes

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**Portfolio:** Education, Training & Skills

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Sir Steve Houghton CBE

**Lead Chief Executive:** Kate Josephs

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**Director Approving Submission of the Report:**

Tom Bousfield, Corporate Director Growth, Business and Skills

**Report Author(s):**

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#### Executive Summary

This paper seeks approvals linked to the future delivery of existing Skills and Employability programmes (Adult Skills Fund, Free Courses for Jobs and Careers Hub), and approvals to expand delivery of employment support in the region through two new nationally funded programmes (Work Well and Universal Support). Organisations delivering activity, whether grant funded or procured are referred to collectively as Learning Organisations.

## **What does this mean for businesses, people and places in South Yorkshire?**

Through the strategic delivery of its programmes SYMCA is investing in the people and businesses of South Yorkshire to deliver economic growth, improve living standards and provide the skills needed for residents to live productive and resilient lives.

## **Recommendations**

That the Board:

1. Approve final grant allocations of Adult Skills Fund (ASF) (£31.8m) and Free Courses for Jobs (FCFJ) (£1.28m) for academic year 2024/25
2. Approve creation of £0.5m Adult Skills Fund Pre-Apprenticeship allocation and delegate authority to the Portfolio Lead for Skills and Employment, in consultation with the Section 73 and Monitoring Officer to approve grant awards to learning organisations.
3. Accept up to £0.7m grant from the Careers and Enterprise Company for the Careers Hub for academic year 2024/25
4. Delegate authority to the Portfolio Lead for Skills and Employment, in consultation with the Section 73 and Monitoring Officer to accept up to £3.57m of grant funding from South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board for delivery of the Work Well programme across the financial years 2024-25 to 2025-26
5. Delegate authority to the Portfolio Lead for Skills and Employment, in consultation with the Section 73 and Monitoring Officer to develop and submit applications to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) for up to £29.1m to deliver the Universal Support programme across three financial years 2024/25 – 2026/27.
6. Delegate authority to the Head of Paid Service in consultation with the Section 73 and Monitoring Officer to accept grant, negotiate the terms and approve entering into legal agreements for the schemes above

## **Consideration by any other Board, Committee, Assurance or Advisory Panel**

Mayoral Combined Authority Board

12 March 2024

### **1. Background**

1.1 SYMCA has adopted a South Yorkshire Skills Strategy and a Plan for Good Growth. Implementation of the Strategy is underpinned by aligning the delivery of programmes across skills and Employment activity. Approvals are sought in relation to:

1.1.1. continued delivery of existing programmes for the coming academic year (ASF, FCFJ and Careers Hub).

1.1.2. expansion of the SYMCA employment and careers offer through adoption of two new programmes (Work Well and Universal Support).

### **2. Adult Skills Fund (ASF) and Free Courses for Jobs (FCFJ)**

2.1 ASF (formerly Adult Education Budget- AEB) has been devolved to SYMCA since August 2021 to deliver training and learning support to South Yorkshire residents aged 19+. The budget is c. £40m per year.

2.2 SYMCA also receives c. £3m per year of delegated funding from the Department for Education (DfE) for FCFJ to offer exclusively Level 3 provision.

2.3 ASF and FCFJ is delivered through a combination of grant funding to learning organisations and procured provision. In March 2024 MCA Board approved overall budget allocations for ASF and FCFT for academic year 2024/25 (August 2024 – July 2025). The MCA Board also approved indicative grant allocations for learning organisations.

2.4 A review of deliverability and strategic alignment of learning organisations' delivery plans has taken place based on indicative allocations This concluded that all learning organisations had reasonable expectations of delivering in line with indicative allocations. As such it is recommended final allocations are in line with indicative allocations.

2.5 Approval is sought to agree the final grant allocations for 2024/25 below:

<b>Grant Learning Organisation</b>	<b>ASF Final Allocation</b>	<b>FCFJ Final Allocation</b>	<b>Total Final Allocation</b>
Barnsley College	£2.60m	£0.30m	£2.90m
Barnsley MBC	£2.30m		£2.30m
Northern College	£2.75m	£0.15m	£2.90m
DN Colleges Group	£3.71m	£0.30m	£4.01m
Doncaster MBC	£0.81m		£0.81m
RNN Group	£5.05m	£0.10m	£5.15m
Longley Park SFC	£0.07m		£0.07m
Sheffield City Council	£2.27m		£2.27m
Sheffield College	£11.58m	£0.30m	£11.88m
WEA	£0.50m	£0.10m	£0.60m
Chesterfield College	£0.15m	£0.03m	£0.18m
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£31.80m</b>	<b>£1.28m</b>	<b>£33.08m</b>

### 3. Adult Skills Fund Pre-Apprenticeship Fund

3.1 In 2023/4 DfE made the decision to devolve funding for 19-24 Traineeships and to withdraw the national traineeship programme. As a result, SYMCA's ASF increased by £0.23m, Traineeships were a skills development programme that included a work experience placement – often used to prepare young people for employment or an apprenticeship.

- 3.2 With the removal of the programme and a continued decline in Level 2 apprenticeship starts it is proposed that SYMCA use this funding to pilot a new pre apprenticeship programme, based on the traineeship model.
- 3.3 This Fund would act as a one year pilot with no recurrent funding currently identified, ongoing review of benefits will determine if recommendation should be made to the MCA Board to include a dedicated allocation in future academic years. Grant awards to individual Learning Organisations would be proportional to previous levels of successful traineeship delivery.
- 3.4 Approval is sought to allocate £0.5m of carried forward Adult Skills Fund to create a one year Pre-Apprenticeship Fund for academic year 2024/25, and to delegate authority to award grants to learning organisations to the Portfolio Lead for Skills and Employment, in consultation with the Section 73 and Monitoring Officer.**

#### 4. Careers Hub

- 4.1 The Careers and Enterprise Company funds Careers Hubs nationwide. SYMCA utilises funding to deliver strategic and operational leadership for the South Yorkshire Careers Hub; and provides grants to Local Authorities to part fund enterprise coordinators in each local authority area and specific interventions using a Hub Delivery Fund.
- 4.2 Funding is awarded annually for academic years September – August. Base funding is c. £0.4m, and this fully and part funds roles at SYMCA and the 4 South Yorkshire local authorities, and other interventions.
- 4.3 During academic year 2023/24 the Careers and Enterprise Company has made additional grant funding available for specific pilots and projects (including creation of a Primary Hub and increasing digital apprenticeship take up).
- 4.4 **Approval is sought to delegate authority to the Head of Paid Service in consultation with the Section 73 and Monitoring Officer to:**
- 4.4.1. **accept the base grant of c. £0.4m from Careers and Enterprise Company for academic year 2024/25; and**
  - 4.4.2. **submit proposals for, and accept grant for additional pilots and programmes, up to a maximum value of £0.3m in total.**

#### 5. WorkWell

- 5.1 WorkWell is a Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) led initiative that will act as an early-intervention work and health support and assessment service, and a single, joined-up gateway to other support services. It will offer low-intensity holistic support to people in work who are struggling due to a health condition or disability, to overcome health related barriers to employment.

5.2 DHSC has sought competitive bid submission exclusively from Integrated Care Boards in England to become a WorkWell pilot site. For South Yorkshire, a bid has been submitted by South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (SYICB). SYMCA would act as managing agent for the procurement and contract management of the delivery of the programme.

**5.3 Approval is sought to accept £3.57m of grant from South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board for financial years 2024-25 to 2025-26 subject to the Finance Director being satisfied with all the terms and conditions of the grant.**

## 6. Universal Support

6.1 Universal Support is a new Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) supported employment programme, that is part of the Government's Back to Work Plan. It provides intensive intervention and is aimed at the economically inactive and those that have a disability or health condition, who are outside the labour market, and who wish to be in employment to find a suitable job and sustain work.

6.2 Universal Support builds on the existing DWP funded Supported Employment programmes, including Individual Placement and Support in Primary Care (Working Win), of which SYMCA commission and manage for the region and the Local Supported Employment programme delivered through Local Authorities. These programmes will transition into a new single Universal Support service.

6.3 DWP is planning for areas to go live on a phased basis (i.e., not all at the same time), in recognition of different stages of readiness. SYMCA anticipates being in the early roll out phase due to the existing local structures and experience in this space.

6.4 SYMCA has been identified as the accountable body for the region, and has engaged with Local Authority partners and Job Centre Plus to commence work on shaping the offer of Universal Support locally, putting South Yorkshire in the best position to mobilise and respond, once DWP release the full prospectus, expected in Summer 2024.

6.5 Anticipated funding is c. £29.1m over 3 financial years 2024/25 – 2027/28. It is anticipated that the deadline for submission of proposed delivery plans for MCAs may conclude prior to the next MCA Board.

**6.6 Approval is sought to delegate authority to the Head of Paid Service in consultation with the Section 73 and Monitoring Officer to develop and submit proposed delivery plan for the Universal Support Programme for up to £29.1m from DWP for financial years 2025/26-2027/28.**

## 7. Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

### 7.1 Option 1

Approve all recommendations

### 7.2 **Option 1 Risks and Mitigations**

The proposals seek delegation of authority for development and submission of proposals to funders. To align activity to strategic priorities, and to ensure value for money and deliverability, all proposals for bid submissions will require review and endorsement by the Portfolio Lead for Skills and Employment, the Corporate Director of Growth, Business and Skills and SYMCA Programme Board.

### 7.3 **Option 2**

Reject some or all of the recommendations

### 7.4 **Option 2 Risks and Mitigations**

The recommendations in this paper are complementary and designed to enable successful implementation of the Skills Strategy for South Yorkshire through continued delivery of existing provision, and expansion of the employment and careers offer in the region. Rejecting some, or all of the proposals would limit the capability to align delivery and outcomes to the mission areas and objectives set out in the skills strategy.

### 7.5 **Recommended Option**

Option 1

## 8. **Consultation on Proposal**

8.1 Consultation on all activity with Portfolio Leads Skills and Employment, and South Yorkshire local authorities, additional consultation on ASF and FCFJ proposals with colleges and provider networks, and for WorkWell and Universal Support with SYICB, South Yorkshire Integrated Care Partnership (SYICP), Job Centre Plus and Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) through Local Integration Boards at place level.

## 9. **Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

9.1 For ASF, FCFJ and Careers Hub, funding decisions will be implemented as part of delivery during academic year 2024/25, and for Work Well and Universal Support implementation and delivery is anticipated to commence during late financial year 2024/25.

## 10. **Financial and Procurement Implications and Advice**

10.1 All recommendations in this report are fully funded from respective grant awards. For ASF and FCFJ this includes funding from DfE and carried forward funding from previous AEB grant awards. All funding awards will be included in SYMCA's budget for 2024/25 and future financial years.

10.2 Any procurements will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and Procurement Act 2023.

## 11. **Legal Implications and Advice**

- 11.1 The legal implications of the projects have been fully considered by a representative of the Monitoring Officer
- 11.2 For devolved ASF activity the recommendations are consistent with the MCA's education, skills and training functions under the Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield Combined Authority (Functions and Amendment) Order 2020 and the funding Memorandum of Understanding between the MCA and the Department for Education

**12. Human Resources Implications and Advice**

12.1 N/A

**13. Equality and Diversity Implications and Advice**

- 13.1 An equalities impact assessment screening has been completed and equality and diversity considerations are taken into account as part of the development of the Skills Strategy and associated implementation actions for ASF and FCFJ.
- 13.2 Screening will be completed for Careers Hub, Work Well and Universal Support as part of scheme development with Equality Impact Assessments to be completed where required.

**14. Climate Change Implications and Advice**

14.1 Appropriate climate change considerations are taken into account as part of the development of programmes.

**15. Information and Communication Technology Implications and Advice**

15.1 N/A

**16. Communications and Marketing Implications and Advice**

16.1 Communications and Marketing are included in business planning for ASF, FCFJ and Careers Hub. Implications for marketing for successful delivery of Work Well and Universal Support will be duly considered and implemented with the support of the Communications team.

**List of Appendices Included:**

N/A

**Background Papers:**

N/A