

EDUCATION, SKILLS & EMPLOYMENT BOARD

30th October 2020

AEB Update

Purpose of Report

This report provides an update on recent activity undertaken to prepare for the devolution of the Adult Education Budget.

Freedom of Information

Thematic Board Papers and any appendices will be made available under the Combined Authority Publication Scheme. This scheme commits the Authority to make information about how decisions are made available to the public as part of its normal business activities.

Recommendations

Board members are asked to note the update.

1. Introduction

1.1 This paper is to provide an update on recent activity around preparation for the devolution of the Adult Education Budget since the last Employment and Skills Board meeting.

Specific updates include:

- Implementation Funding
- Communications Strategy
- Market Engagement / Soft Market Testing Event
- Procurement

2. Key Updates

2.1 Implementation Funding

The Board were advised, previously that the Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) had expected to receive confirmation of AEB Implementation Funding before the Summer Parliamentary recess but that had not been possible. In early October DfE have written to the MCA to provide confirmation of the Implementation Funding. The grant will provide additional resource to support AEB development. DfE are progressing the Section 31 Grant internally before it is submitted to HM Treasury. The MCA needs to provide DfE first claim documentation by the 22nd October 2020. The MCA have been told to expect the first payment will be made on the 12th November.

2.2 Communications Strategy

The Board were advised that an AEB communications strategy was in development and would be circulated to Members to review by written procedures in advance of Market Engagement. This is still in development. The Strategy will detail how the MCA will communicate about AEB to residents, potential providers, employers and other critical

stakeholders. It is important that this Strategy is fully developed to ensure the MCA maximises the value of devolving this budget.

2.3 Market Engagement /Soft Market Testing

The first formal meetings with all Colleges and Local Authorities who are based in Sheffield City Region has taken place. These meetings have considered the data and what this is showing and how the mix and balance of AEB provision that sits under the Grants could through the agreement of three-year delivery plans, better align to the skills needs of employers and residents

The meetings have provided an opportunity to explore the impact Covid19 is having on how young people and adults access skills training.

In the coming weeks, the MCA will be providing access to a Market Engagement Event presentation on AEB. The purpose of this event is to share our thinking on AEB and how it fits within wider strategies such as the Strategic Economic Plan and the Renewal Action Plan. The Webinar presentation also includes potential options for how AEB might be shaped in the future. Most importantly through this Market Engagement Event we are seeking to engage and seek market input into the AEB strategy. The presentation is complete, we are currently completing the technical and communication requirements for the Webinar.

2.4 Procurement

The documentation to support the Procurement process is in development. The lack of a dedicated Procurement expert to lead the procurement activity, continues to present a risk for the launch date of the Procurement process.

3. Consideration of alternative approaches

3.1 Not Relevant – this is an update on previously agreed work.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial

No new Financial Implications

4.2 Legal

No new Legal Implications

4.3 Risk Management

Procurement Expertise in the MCA Executive to lead the exercise – a role is currently out for recruitment for a Procurement Manager to join the MCA Executive

4.4 Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion

There are no equality, diversity and social inclusion issues arising from this report.

5. Appendices/Annexes

5.1 None.

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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:

- [Skills and Employment Board \(Sept 2020\)](#)