

Investment Board

Date	19 th June 2023
Report title	Jobs & Skills and Wellbeing Business Justification Case (BJC)
Portfolio Lead	Councillor Ian Brookfield (CWG Pillar Lead) & Councillor George Duggins (Skills)
Accountable Chief Executive	Clare Hatton Director – Employment, Skills and Health and Communities
Accountable Employee	Lisa Hamilton – Senior Delivery Manager, Projects & Programmes
Report has been considered by	Investment Panel – 22 nd May 2023

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Investment Panel is recommended:

- (1) To approve £5.75m funding to deliver the Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund - Jobs and Skills Programme as set out in the attached Business Justification Case.
- (2) To approve the delegation of contracting and payments (through back-to-back grant funding awards to local authority partners) to the Director of Employment, Skills, Health and Communities in consultation with the WMCA S.151 Officer and the Director of Law and Governance.
- (3) To note Skills PBC Change Request to increase value of PBC by £5.75m, subject to approval of this BJC.

1. Purpose

The BJC attached sets out the Jobs and Skills activity that will be delivered through Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Funds (CWGLEF).

This brings together 2 CWGLEF funding streams: £0.9m Wellbeing and Sustainability and £4.85m Jobs and Skills, enabling LA partners to deliver employment support projects locally that include mental health and wellbeing as an integral part of their activity.

This funding will be grant funded to our 7 Local Authority Partners over the 2-year delivery period on an equal basis.

2. Background

The WMCA submitted a business case to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) seeking approval from DCMS to the release of c.£70m to WMCA from the unallocated contingency within DCMS's Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games budget.

Subject to approval by DCMS, WMCA will deliver a portfolio of legacy programmes with the CWGLEF across the West Midlands, against a set of high-level objectives. The attached Business Justification Case sets out the detail of the Jobs, Skills and Wellbeing £5.75m Programme, which forms part of the Economy, Trade and Tourism and Wellbeing and Sustainability Pillars (£4.85m Jobs and Skills and the £0.9m Mental Health Commission).

This funding will be grant funded via back-to-back funding agreements to our 7 Local Authority Partners over the 2-year period on an equal basis.

The announcement of the additional CWGLEF will provide further funding focused on Employment Support activity across our region, including delivery of activity in response to the Mental Health Commission's recommendations. Critically, employment support is a key area that receives limited funding, this has been further exacerbated by the end of EU funding across the region in 2023. Whilst UKSPF can be utilised for employment support programmes, the value of this is significantly reduced compared to previous EU funding, which will have a major impact on our local authority partners ability to deliver employment support programmes going forward.

The additional funding secured as part of the CWGLEF will enable us to maximise UKSPF spend and benefits through an employment support offer that will utilise CWG legacy funding to support delivery of specific projects (which are not deemed as eligible activity under other funding streams) and will form part of a blended offer of jobs, skills and wellbeing support to inc. UKSPF projects, Multiply and AEB.

The 2022 CWG included extended support for youth and learning, including a Jobs and Skills Academy project which was aimed at supporting priority groups to access volunteer opportunities created by the Birmingham Organising Committee for the 2022 Commonwealth Games. With an overall aim of establishing volunteering habits, improving workforce skills and preparedness for work, increasing levels of community volunteering and improving levels of cohesion by bringing together different groups. Critically, these activities, outcomes and impacts spanned a number of CWG Mission Pillars, and the activities had specific linkages to the Bring People Together Mission Pillar.

The CWG Jobs and Skills Academy was designed to help the region grow and succeed through increasing the skills, opportunities and employment preparedness of residents in the West Midlands. By providing training in Games-related skills, supporting access to Games-related opportunities, and supporting access to future employment pathways for West Midlands residents.

As with the Jobs and Skills Academy, the Volunteering Programme aimed to support regional growth and success by providing high quality work experience, volunteering and skills development opportunities for people living in the region. The Programme objective was to improve the employment prospects of priority groups leading to an increase in the number of employed people in the region in the medium to long term.

The [Interim evaluation of the CWG](#) stated “A survey of OC volunteers conducted pre- and post-Games also provides evidence of outcomes for Games volunteers of participation in the programme. For example, the survey evidence identified a positive impact on volunteer respondents’ level of confidence in seeking new employment or training/education opportunities, with the proportion of respondents rating themselves at least 8 out of 10 in relation to this increasing from 64% prior to being involved in the volunteering programme to 73% after their volunteering experience.”

The CWGLEF – Jobs, Skills & and Wellbeing, will build on the projects delivered in 2022. It will address barriers identified for those residents that do not benefit from the economic prosperity in the region and the opportunities that major events like the CWG bring to region.

Despite improved skills provision and strong local offers of employment support there are many people who need more tailored and localised support to help them on their journey towards the labour market. Many are outside JCP services currently but would like to and are able to work and need support to prepare them for labour market opportunities. Our inactivity rates have increased, and we will only meet the needs of business if we are able to increase participation by these groups of people.

Equally too many young people experience poor life chances based on their circumstances alone. Many are not able to access the jobs and opportunities through lack of knowledge, awareness and social capital to do so and too many, especially post pandemic are experiencing mental health challenges that further hamper their ability to move into the careers they want.

Initial discussions have progressed with LA leads and a short-list of 6 projects have been identified for Jobs, Skills & Wellbeing activity. A summary of these short-listed activities is set out below:

Summary
Local targeted jobs support (youth/older unemployment etc)
Regional Careers Programme for 14-19 year olds (NEET Prevention and outreach gap not covered by NCS)
Jobs & skills hubs in deprived localities with multi service ethos (1 per LA), run by community boards/resident governance – builds on JSA and connecting communities
Paid work placement model
Bursary support for young adults undertaking pre-apprenticeship pathway into good apprenticeships across 7 LA's. Focused on hotspots area/demographic
mentoring programme, aimed at providing targeted training, volunteering and employment opportunities to disadvantaged young people across the region, which amongst other things, supports their mental health and wellbeing through the provision of 'wrap around' support.

Recognising the different challenges and need within local areas, LA's have been able to choose which of these activities they will deliver locally through CWGLEF, ensuring they meet and deliver against local needs and priorities.

LA partners, through the regional Skills Officers Group, have been involved and engaged in the development of the short list of activities set out, and during March/April have provided returns setting out the activities, outputs and outcomes they would be looking to deliver locally.

The outputs and outcomes confirmed to date by our LA partners against the 6 projects are as follows:

Delivery Projects	Outputs	Yr1	Yr2	Outcomes	Yr1	Yr2
		No.	No.		No.	No.
Local targeted jobs support (youth/older unemployment etc)	# people receiving locally based jobs support. (<i>target groups to be included i.e 50+, wards</i>)	738	1300	# people engaged in job searching following support	574	969
Regional Careers Programme for 14-19 year olds (NEET Prevention and outreach gap not covered by NCS)	# young people supported through careers interventions via targeted programmes outside education & enhancement of in school provision	1808	1983	# young people in education or training following support	342	546
Jobs and skills hubs in deprived localities with multi service ethos (1 per LA), run by community boards and resident governance – builds on JSA and connecting communities	# people supported to engage in job searching. # people supported to participate in education.	123	321	#people into employment. #people in education/training.	85	180
Paid work placement model	# people undertaking paid work placements # businesses participating in paid work placements	90	100	# people securing employment following placements	27	29
Bursary support for young adults undertaking pre-apprenticeship pathway into good apprenticeships across seven LA's. Focused on hotspots area/demographic e.g. Wolverhampton tackling high level of young adult unemployment.	# young people supported through bursary support (up to £1,000 pp) to complete pre-apprenticeship training and access apprenticeships	0	0	#People gaining a qualification following support #People progressing to apprenticeships	0	0
Mentoring programme, targeted at disadvantaged young people, inc. wraparound mental health and wellbeing support	# young people supported (Inc. breakdown of target groups/wards)	116	281	# young people into employment / education / training # young people positive effect on mental wellbeing	111	254
TOTALS PER YEAR		2875	3985		1139	1978
TOTALS FULL PROGRAMME		6860			3117	

The WMCA Employment and Skills Team are working with LAs to ensure benefits and impacts of the CWGLEF are maximised, including identifying opportunities for alignment with existing local funding such as UKSPF, Multiply or AEB.

An indicative start date of August/September has been set for activity to go live across the region, subject to the WMCA receiving and approving the funding agreement from DCMS and back-to-back funding agreements being issued to LA partners.

The costs set out in the attached BJC seek to ensure maximum funding is awarded via grant funding to LAs, minus 2.4% (£138k) retained by the WMCA to appoint a dedicated Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (M&E) and Project Manager, noting these resources will also support the Economy Pillar High Growth programme and will work closely with the WMCA SPF team to ensure we are able to embed/align reporting with SPF in order to simplify and streamline this activity for our LAs.

Funding for end of programme evaluation has not been directly incorporated into the programme as the WMCA Employment, Skills, Health and Wellbeing Directorate will be undertaking this as in kind/match activity, with support from the 2 WMCA CWG officers. This evaluation will cover a 5 year period and will provide robust evidence of programme level impacts beyond that of the CWG LEF programme life.

3. Strategic Aims and Objectives

The Jobs, Skills and Wellbeing Programme, as set out in the BJC will align with WMCA aims and objectives including: ensuring everyone has the opportunity to benefit and promote inclusive economic growth in every corner of the region.

As part of the wider Trade, Tourism and Investment Pillar which will support our “Plan for Growth” we will seek to identify opportunities to join up the skills programme with other streams. For example, identifying volunteering opportunities as part of the Major Events or through Careers Support raise awareness of our key competitive clusters and encourage more young people into these sectors. Pre-apprenticeship programmes will enable our residents to re-skill and up-skill in new areas, providing a seamless learner journey from early intervention stage through the CWGLEF programme onto AEB or other funded programmes. Working with regional organisations such as DWP and our voluntary sector, we will identify new opportunities and ways to engage with those who to date have been harder to reach.

4. Financial Implications

The budget of £5.75m was approved at WMCA Board on 17th March 2023, through the combination of £4.85m for Jobs and Skills and £0.9m of Mental Health Commission.

This is to be all revenue expenditure and includes a % contribution for 2 WMCA staffing resources. These WMCA resources will provide project level monitoring and performance support, and development of programme performance and delivery reports as required centrally. The posts will support both the Economy High Growth Programme and the Employment, Skills and Wellbeing Programme, in order to keep resource costs to a minimum.

All remaining funding will be grant funded (back-to-back funding awards) to Local Authority partners, this will be equally awarded totalling £801,714k each.

The table below sets out the indicative spend breakdown, noting the % for year 1 and year 2 is currently based on LA preferences, but will be subject to confirmation from WMCA Finance Team, based on overall allocation and commitments (noting CWGLEF to be awarded to WMCA on a 30/70 basis).

Funding	Year 1.	Year 2	Total
Birmingham	£306,050.25	£495,663.02	£801,713.27
Coventry	£240,514.29	£561,200.00	£801,714.29
Dudley	£247,126.60	£554,587.33	£801,713.93
Sandwell	£320,685.71	£481,028.57	£801,714.28
Solihull	£279,666.00	£522,048.00	£801,714.00
Walsall	£320,685.71	£481,028.57	£801,714.28
Wolverhampton	£274,646.00	£527,068.00	£801,714.00
WMCA (resource support for M&E)	£69,000.00	£69,000.00	£138,000.00
	£2,058,374.56	£3,691,623.49	£5,749,998.05

Through the back-to-back funding agreement, DCMS grant conditions to be fully flowed down, with all agreements including appropriate clauses to protect WMCA finances and mitigate risk, such as evidence of spend, clawback and payment quarterly in arrears.

5. Legal Implications

Legal will provide ongoing advice in relation to the delivery of the project.

Legal will advise in relation to the grant funding agreement between WMCA and Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, particularly assessing any conditions and obligations imposed on WMCA and the risks associated with entering into the funding agreement.

Legal will determine whether any conditions and obligations imposed on WMCA by virtue of the DCMS funding agreement will need to be passed on to Local Authority grant recipients in the subsequent back-to-back funding agreements.

Legal will assess the application of any subsidy control considerations in relation to the use of the grant funding to deliver the programme.

6. Single Assurance Framework Implications

The CWGLEF will be managed in line with the SAF. Following Board approval of the pillar programme allocations and agreement of the final funding agreement with DCMS, delivery bodies will be able to spend at risk in advance of business case approval by the Investment Board to support mobilisation of programmes given the short timeframe for delivery. The decision to spend at risk will be taken by the Finance Director/S151 Officer.

7. Equalities Implications

A key objective of the CWG Legacy Fund is to create an inclusive legacy for CWG across the West Midlands. We anticipate that the fund will have positive equalities implications and will conduct more detailed assessments for each programme as they are developed and delivered.

8. Inclusive Growth Implications

The programme will support Inclusive Growth with a focus on those residents who are outside JCP services currently but would like to and are able to work and need support to prepare them for the labour market opportunities. Equally the programme will support those residents who have experienced poor life chances based on their circumstances alone, those who are not able to access the jobs and opportunities through lack of knowledge, awareness and social capital to do so and too many, especially post pandemic are experiencing mental health challenges that further hamper their ability to move into the careers they want.

9. Geographical Area of Report's Implications

The programme will be delivered across the whole WMCA geography.

10. Other Implications

11. Schedule of Background Papers

CWGLEF – Jobs, Skills and Wellbeing Business Justification Case
[WMCA Regional Skills Plan](#)
[WMCA CWG LEF Board Report 17th March 2023](#)