



WMCA Investment Board

Date	19 th June 2023
Report title	Change Request Skills Programme Business Case
Portfolio Lead	Councillor Duggins (Skills)
Accountable Chief Executive	Clare Hatton Director – Employment, Skills, Health and Communities
Accountable Employee	Lisa Hamilton – Senior Delivery Manager, Projects & Programmes
Report has been considered by	Investment Panel - 22 May 2023

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Investment Board is recommended to:

- (1) Approve a change request to the Skills Programme Business Case (PBC), subject to approval of the CWG LEF – Jobs and Skills Business Justification Case (BJC), in order to receive additional funding for employment and skills activity awarded as part of the Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund (CWGLEF).
- (2) Agree to delegate authority for the development and onward issuing of the LA Grant Funding Agreements to the Director of Employment and Skills in consultation with the WMCA S. 151 Executive Director and Director of Law and Governance.

1. Purpose

To secure approval to a change request to the Skills Programme Business Case for receipt of additional funding for Employment and Skills provision, secured from the CWGLEF as set out in the [WMCA March 2023 Board Report](#).

2. Background

The Skills PBC was approved by Statutory Officer Board on the 1st February 2023 (appendix 3). The PBC sought approval for receipt and commissioning of regional skills funding to the value of £274,757,735.

Following the announcement of the Commonwealth Games LEF a further £4.85m Jobs and Skills and £0.9m Mental Health, totalling £5.75m is to be allocated to support Employment, Skills & Health projects across our region.

The change request submitted seeks approval to increase the Skills PBC to a total amount of £280,507,735 whilst also seeking agreement that the CWG LEF for jobs, skills and wellbeing can progress to delivery aligned to the approach approved in the original PBC. For CWGLEF activity this will be through issuing back-to-back grant funding agreements to our local authority partners, on an equal basis of £801,714).

The CWGLEF will provide additional 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 regional funding, this has been further exacerbated by the end of EU funding across the region. Whilst UKSPF does provide some funding support in this area, the value of this is significantly less, which will have a major impact on our local authority partners ability to deliver employment support programmes going forward. The CWG LEF will enable us to maximise UKSPF spend by utilising CWG legacy funding in specific projects which will form part of a blended offer of employment support inc. UKSPF projects, Multiply and AEB. *(Table 1. on p3 sets out a summary of existing Employment and Skills regional offers).*

We will build on the good practice of the 2022 CWG, which 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 2022 CWG Bring People Together Mission Pillar.

The 2022 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. The Academy sought to increase the employment, productivity and GVA of Games-related sectors in the region. 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.

A separate Business Justification Case has been developed to provide details of the CWG LEF – Jobs, Skills and Wellbeing Programme.

Table 1. Summary of WMCA Employment and Skills Provision:

**WMCA Skills Programmes Summary
£280m**

<p>Multiply £16,767,132 (2022-2025) Funder: DfE Level: Basic Numeracy Age: 19+</p>	<p>England Construction Opportunities £352,050 (2022-2025) Funder: CITB Level: employment support - construction focused only Age: 18+</p>	<p>CWG LEF – Jobs & Skills £5,750 Funder: DCMS (2023-2025) Level: Employment Support – inc. Mental Health/Wellbeing Age: 14+</p>	<p>Devolved: National Skills Fund 'Free Courses for Jobs' £10,954 Funder: DfE Level: 3 qualification Age: 19+</p>	<p>Devolved Adult Education Budget (AEB) £131,875 PA Funder: DfE Level: Basic through to L5 Age: 16+</p>	<p>UK Shared Prosperity Fund £19,800 for People & Skills (Total £88,408m) (2022 – 2025) Funder: DLHUC Level: employment & basic level skills upto L2 Age: 16+</p>	<p>Technical Skills Bootcamp Wave 3 £11,25 (22-23) Funder: DfE Level: 3/4 Technical Age: 19+</p>
<p>Key: DfE: Dept. For Education CITB: Construction Industry Training Board HE: Higher Education DCMS: Dept. Culture, Media & Sport DLUHC: Dept. Levelling Up, Homes and Communities</p>						<p>Technical Skills Bootcamp Wave 4 £14,550m (23-24) Funder: DfE Level: 3/4 Technical Age: 19+</p>

3. Strategic Aims and Objectives

The changes requested will continue to deliver on the strategic aims and objectives as set out in the original PBC, this includes:

- a. Promote inclusive economic growth in every corner of the region.
 - We will invest in training and skills programmes that help businesses grow and our citizens secure good jobs
- b. Ensure everyone has the opportunity to benefit.
 - We will work with partners to give our communities access to training and employment support to secure and succeed in new opportunities
 - We will work with partners to identify and address the different barriers faced by our diverse communities

As part of the wider CWG Legacy Economy, trade and tourism pillar delivery activity will align with the WM Plan for Growth priorities and provide support for mental health and wellbeing.

4. Financial Implications

This change request is to add £5.75m to the Skills Programme Business Case, subject to DCMS approval. The procurement of services or issuing of grants will be subject to the agreed Financial Due Diligence, with all contracts including appropriate clauses to protect WMCA finances and mitigate risk, such as payment on performance, clawback, payment in arrears, etc.

As outlined in the December paper, WMCA will be the accountable body for this fund with delegated authority to manage the overall CWGLEF programme, and all funding needs will need to be spent over the next two financial years (2023/24 and 2024/25)

5. Legal Implications

Subject to all internal approvals being obtained and, the WMCA's policy aims and objectives in relation to the skills programmes aligning with the principles set out under the Subsidy Control Act 2022, together with full audit trails being maintained and all necessary legal agreements (grant funding agreements) are signed by the parties at the appropriate time, there are no objections to the proposal.

6. Single Assurance Framework Implications

WMCA Appraisal Notes: This Change Request (CR) has been appraised and is SAF compliant.

The change to the Programme Business Case is required to add in additional CWG Legacy funds of £5.75m to which a Business Justification Case has been submitted – please note that this is currently in the approvals process.

Based on review by appraisal this CR is recommended for approval.

Project Notes: 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 prioritisation for the CWG Legacy Fund around the four pillars will contribute to the region's inclusive growth framework fundamentals in the following ways:

- **Economy, trade and tourism pillar:** in line with our inclusive economy priority to ensure economic prosperity reaches into the homes across the WMCA area, and improving training and skills in line the education and learning fundamental.

- **Inclusive communities pillar:** development of an inclusive communities strategy and community-led activities will help achieve our power, influence, and participation fundamental;

- **Culture and heritage pillar:** strengthen investments in our cultural and heritage infrastructure will increase pride in place, in line with our power, influence and participation fundamental; and

- **Wellbeing and sustainability pillar:** physical activity programme and green grants will help reduce health inequalities in line with the health and wellbeing fundamental.

Whilst Jobs and skills delivery activity is focused on the economy, trade and tourism and wellbeing and sustainability pillar priorities, it should be noted that the new projects to be delivered through the CWG Legacy Fund and the existing wider skills programmes fundamentally underpin all four pillars.

9. **Geographical Area of Report's Implications**

This report relates to the seven constituent authorities of the WMCA.

10. **Other Implications**

N/A

11. **Schedule of Background Papers**

Appendix 1. Skills PBC Change Request Form

Appendix 2. Skills Risk Register

Appendix 3. Skills PBC

Also see CWG LEF – Jobs & Skills - Business Justification Case (IP 22 May 2023 & IB 19 June 2023)