

1. Summary of Intent for the Skills Brokerage Service Line

The CPCA is seeking to deliver a service able to create a dynamic Skills Marketplace across our economy and geography. This should take the form of a hybrid digital and face to face service that connects businesses, with skills providers, students and those retraining and upskilling talent. This will include access to funding for education and training, via the CPCA's Adult education budget and the use of a "virtual wallet" of Apprenticeship Levy funding facilitated by the bidders' and managed by the CPCA.

The CPCA is seeking a single sub-contractor for the delivery of the Skills Brokerage across the whole area, in order that accountability and performance is consistent and transparent. That the delivery team should include only full-time staff who between them covers all of the CPCA area, working as one single integrated and flexible team. That this team should include three full time staff dedicated to the CEC element of the Skills Brokerage

The service will target support to create pathways for young people and adults retraining for new or enhanced careers, into STEM, adult education, T-levels, technical degrees and Apprenticeships. It will include employer outreach, schools' careers advice and work readiness support to provide greater employer and skills provider visibility of talent to support businesses with recruitment and training. Social media and android Apps are envisaged as being critical 21st century components of the service to help attract young people into key sectors by connecting them into a Digital Talent Portal at the heart of the intended Skills Marketplace.

The Skills Marketplace will be used to better harness the Apprenticeship Levy and Adult Education Budget to connect SMEs into wider value chains. Spreading funding more effectively across local sector-clusters through the creation of a Levy Pooling Mechanism. Skills and Talent Brokers will connect to the levy virtual wallet to support small and micro businesses currently unable to take on an Apprentice due to lack of funding, their size or specialist nature. These advisors will also work with large employers to gain commitments from them to pledge up to 25% of their unused levy into the virtual wallet for re-distribution to small firms and supply chains.

We will focus on key defined sectors and places across the economy, with a specific effort to reduce the low skills and education deprivation in the north and east of the area, that causes low productivity (GVA per employee per hour worked) and slows economic growth across the wider economy. We expect bidders to deliver a minimum level of outcomes of:

- **1,800 additional apprenticeship enrolments** above and beyond the volume naturally occurring without the presence of the skills brokerage and measured as the number of apprenticeships occurring in the 2018/19 academic year.
- **1,000 additional learning outcomes** including T-Level Industry placements, traineeships, graduate placements, employee upskilling and career retraining enrolments.
- **350 new jobs** resulting from the above enrolments generating **£6m of GVA growth**.

These PROVISIONAL outcome targets are in part, based on existing, and much less sophisticated and smaller scale services already provided in the CPCA area, the staff for which will be subject to TUPE. However, given the higher critical mass of resource offered

(around 7 times the current contract values), the more sophisticated service design, the availability of the “virtual levy wallet” and the opportunity to engage more experienced and capable providers to complement local actors, it is expected consortia bidders will be able to offer significant improvements on these outcomes. A proportion of the total fee will be paid based on achievement of these outcomes. Based on a **CPCA contribution of £4,000,000** this procurement sets a MINIMUM benchmark of **£1,428 per additional enrolment** into the economy for bidders to compete to beat.

As part of the funding mix that the CPCA have created to finance this procurement, European Social Funding (ESF) has been used to part-finance the Skills Brokerage Service. Hence, as outputs from the contracted service, leading to the outcomes already defined, bidders are expected to deliver and evidence the following as part of the ESF project within the wider service, specifically; 276 SME's engaged, 207 learner participants and 207 SME's successfully completing projects.

Key features of the procured service will include:

1. **A Digital Talent Portal**, available through PCs, MACs, tablets and mobile phone apps, that will support independent training providers (ITPs), schools, colleges, higher education, parents and residents to navigate effectively through the complex skills landscape and facilitate a better match of potential talent to firms' skills needs and job vacancies. This will increase the number of people transitioning through the skills ecosystem into Apprenticeships, Adult Education, Higher Education and employment.
2. **Apprenticeship Standard & Levy System Specialists** trained to support levy paying employers to maximise the utilisation of their allocated levy funding by helping them design trailblazer apprenticeships to meet their needs or better exploit existing apprenticeship standards to meet their current and future training needs.
3. **Skills & Talent Brokers** to work by phone and face-to-face between firms, schools, talent and skills providers to create and enable T-Level Industry placements, traineeships, apprenticeships, graduate placements, employee upskilling and career retraining opportunities.
4. **A Levy Pooling Marketplace** working with Levy paying employers to pledge up to 25% of their levy funding allocations, matched and administered to SME's currently unwilling to take on a first, or more apprentices due to lack of funding.

The Skills Brokerage Service will retain the current roles of three **Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) Enterprise Coordinators**, all of which will be subject to TUPE. These Coordinators are available as a free service for schools and employers across the CPCA area. The CEC Enterprise Coordinator outcomes currently achieved, will in effect, be provided as a by-product of the new skills brokerage as part of its schools' engagement to identify talent for brokering into apprenticeship and other vocational pathways. The contracted CEC outcomes currently being achieved are as follows and it is expected that bidders will be able to meet these as part of the larger resource being applied. The CEC outcomes for the current Enterprise Coordinators are through the following hierarchy;

1. Inputs
 - a. Encounters with employers, with workplaces, with further and higher education
 - b. Information about local jobs, how the curriculum connects to work
 - c. A plan tailored to an individual's needs and supported by guidance
2. Outputs
 - a. Personal Effectiveness self-belief, persistence, purpose
 - b. Careers readiness and planning, information and help seeking work-readiness
 - c. Employability skills imagination, problem solving, listening skills, sharing ideas, team work and leadership
3. Outcomes: Destinations
 - a. NEETs Number of young people not in education, employment or training
 - b. Destinations Project launching: what is a 'good destination'

Contractual performance metrics to be reported on monthly include:

1. All schools in area using the Compass tool and encouraged to reuse it regularly
 2. All schools in area to have access to an Enterprise Adviser
 3. All schools in area to achieve Gatsby Benchmark 5 and 6 above
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4. Network Metrics
 - a. Total Institutions in Area (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough)
 - b. Total Institutions in each Enterprise Adviser Network (EAN)
 - c. Total Institutions in EAN Matched with an employer
 - d. Total Institutions in EAN Not Matched with an employer
 - e. Total Institutions in EAN Close to Engaging with the programme
 - f. Total Institutions not wanting to Engage with the programme
 - g. Total number of matched institutions that have completed compass tool
 - h. Total number of institutions that have completed compass tool
 5. Gatsby Benchmark Five Performance Metrics – Must be min 50%
 - a. Matched Institutions fully achieving Gatsby Benchmark Five
 - b. % Matched Institutions fully achieving Gatsby Benchmark Five
 - c. Target total institutions fully meeting Gatsby Benchmark Five
 - d. Target % of total institutions fully meeting Gatsby Benchmark Five
 - e. Variance of Institutions fully achieving Gatsby Benchmark Five
 6. Gatsby Benchmark Six Performance Metrics – Must be min 45%
 - a. Matched Institutions fully achieving Gatsby Benchmark Six
 - b. % Matched Institutions fully achieving Gatsby Benchmark Six
 - c. Target total institutions fully meeting Gatsby Benchmark Six
 - d. Target % of total institutions fully meeting Gatsby Benchmark Six
 - e. Variance of Institutions fully achieving Gatsby Benchmark Six

The Opportunity Area (Fenland and East Cambs) outcomes for the current Opportunity Area to be reported monthly include:

1. All schools¹ in area using the Compass tool and encouraged to reuse it regularly
2. All schools in area to have access to an Enterprise Adviser

¹¹ All schools to include SEND and Alternative Provision schools

3. All schools in area to achieve Gatsby Benchmark 5 and 6 above
4. Evidence of 16,000 employer encounters per year in schools in area
5. Recruitment of 10 Cornerstone Employers providing higher level support

The Skills Brokerage Service will also either sub-contract or deliver (involving TUPE transfer) the longer-term provision of the current pilot programme run by the Hampton Gardens School and Hampton College. This is a £100,000 per annum funded Careers Aspiration Pilot designed to increase the amount of young people entering Higher and Degree Apprenticeships who would not ordinarily take these routes.

For all learners aged 13-16 it is contracted to:

- Develop student confidence and resilience and personal skills
- Identify and support learners who could become NEET after 16
- Develop a supported and personalised learning pathway, with progression routes to local training/further study/local employment opportunities
- Optimise learners' progress from their starting points and support them to gain recognised qualifications at 16 and beyond

For all learners aged 13-19 it is contracted to:

- Raise the profile of Apprenticeships at all levels
- Promote STEM careers
- Develop cutting edge technical education provision, to complement the academic offer at the Trust's schools
- Build links with local employers, to further develop our work shadowing/ experience offer and establish progression routes to local traineeships / apprenticeships

Specific contractual outcomes and their transfer to the procured Skills Brokerage consortium will be the subject of negotiation with the designated preferred supplier(s) after completion of the procurement competition stage.

2. The Specification for the Skills Brokerage Service Line

- 2.1. Bidders will be expected to demonstrate by sub-economy, how they will use their own resources to proactively segment, target and filter prospective **business clients** into the brokerage pipeline. This should include reference to any credible data sources and/or networks used to acquire target firms and/or to analyse data to identify their needs for new staff, staff retraining or upskilling, STEM based adult education, T-level placements, technical degrees or apprenticeships. Bidders should clearly differentiate pathways and customer journeys for large firms and SMEs separately.
- 2.2. Direct links to **business client referral partners** that can act as a conduit of business clients into the service will be important. Hence, bidders should explain how they will engage and convince such partners to support them and the service. These might include training providers and colleges, landlords, accountants and recruitment/HR consultants.
- 2.3. Bidders will be expected to demonstrate by sub-economy, how they will use their own resources to proactively segment, target and filter **prospective learners** into the brokerage pipeline. This should include reference to any credible data sources and/or networks used to acquire target learners and/or to analyse data to identify their attraction to, or need for, retraining or upskilling, STEM, adult education, T-level placements, technical degrees or apprenticeships. Bidders should clearly differentiate pathways and learner journeys for 16-18, 19-24 and 24 and above individuals, relating to the various training and education funding streams.
- 2.4. Enrolling more learners into apprenticeships with firms is unlikely to be sufficient to realise the sustainable upskilling and careers we aim to achieve. To realise their potential, and ensure learners are retained and nurtured as valuable members of staff, we will need to engage and enlist the support from more established members of staff that are suitably skilled to support the individual. Mentoring is the foundation of Vocational Learning and Apprenticeships. To underpin the delivery of new talent programmes, formal development of the skills required to become a Learning Mentor can be achieved by undertaking the **Learning Mentor Training** via an Apprenticeship. The role of the Learning Mentor is to support the development of their learner's knowledge, skills and behaviours throughout their learning programme. Learning Mentors need to have both up-to-date knowledge and skills in a specialist subject area, together with the generic skills necessary to support their learners. By offering practical, technical and pastoral support, learners will be motivated, engaged and aspirational and more likely to achieve their learning programme, thus building a strong talent pipeline, supporting retention and reducing recruitment costs. The CPCA will support this through the Levy Pooling Service.
- 2.5. Bidders are expected to describe how they might work with the CPCA to explore ways of using the Apprenticeship Levy and Adult Education Budget to fund the training of Mentors either as short burst courses or as a level 3 mentoring apprenticeship. Bidders will also be expected to describe how they will promote mentoring to all the employers they place apprentices into, and to employers' staff as a route to professional development, career promotion and potential promotion.
- 2.6. Direct links to **learner referral partners** that can act as a conduit of prospective learners into the service will be important. Hence, bidders should explain how they will engage and convince such partners to support them and the service. These might include schools, training providers and colleges, job centres and recruitment consultants.

- 2.7. Bidders will also be expected to demonstrate their approach to **marketing and PR** campaigns to generate market interest from both firms and learners including how they will manage the quality of inward lead volumes and manage expectations and rejection from the pipeline in order to optimise resource allocation onto those most likely to generate outcomes from the service.
- 2.8. Bidders should demonstrate how large and SME firms will be managed through the complete **business client acquisition process** using a flow diagram and a table/chart of activities and sales process metrics/objectives. On the input side, this should include how bidders intend to use referral networks, and other alternative routes into the service. In process, it should include the filters applied to each route and clear pathways from target identification, through prospect qualification, and AIDA conversion into a business client of the service or being signposted to other external services.
- 2.9. The ultimate impact of a service such as this, is heavily related to the increase it can facilitate in firms' use of training and education, combined with the services success in convincing them that this is able to tangibly add value to their business through reduced training costs, increased productivity, improved staff motivation and improved customer satisfaction. Hence, bidders will be expected to put forward a convincing and credible **business client value proposition** for the key segments. This will include:
- 2.9.1. **Larger firms** paying the apprenticeship levy, looking to better utilise it and potentially willing to donate 25% as a Levy Pledge to SMEs within and outside of their supply chains as part of the CPCA Levy Pooling.
 - 2.9.2. **Growth firms** looking to expand their workforce and struggling to find and develop skills at a rate required to meet their needs. These could include firms willing to create individual or shared apprenticeship academies.
 - 2.9.3. **Smaller firms** that are "time-poor" and previously unwilling or unable to take on placements, traineeships or apprentices, but could if the barriers to this were better understood and lowered.
- 2.10. Whilst the brokerage service will engage learners that are not directly linked to a potential employer, the main focus will be on those that are. Hence, the value, business relevance and effectiveness of the training and education topics, modes of delivery and funding route to be selected for each firms' skills development programme (no matter how small). How these are combined, assembled and presented as a potential proposal for skills development from (potentially) multiple ITPs and FE colleges, will impact the speed and ease with which the brokerage service will achieve its targets. Hence bidders are expected to demonstrate their approach, tools and techniques within their **sales process** to achieve this.
- 2.11. A sales process and value proposition are only as good as the individual conveying it. Hence, bidders will be required to provide an example **business focused Skills Broker profile** in terms of business sales track record (credibility) training/education sector experience (capability) background and networks (capacity) and local knowledge (relevance).
- 2.12. It is important that firms are engaged into an intuitive, user friendly and value adding process to assess their skills development needs, staff growth potential, training/education purchasing potential. The barriers they currently and are likely to experience in expanding their use of training and education and the support and services most able to overcome them. However, this **needs diagnostic process** should not be overly complex, long or off-putting. Hence, bidders will be expected to

demonstrate how they will develop or apply a proven and existing diagnostics & scoping process. The ability to engage multiple managers within the firm simultaneously and at low cost with on-line tools will be an advantage. So too, a process whereby Skills Brokers might share and interpret data into insight with clients, giving them real added value in spotting previously unrecognised SWOT within their workforce's current capability and potential skills development.

- 2.13. Demand from businesses for increased skills has to be matched with the supply of learners into the market. Hence it is equally important that bidders should demonstrate how prospective learners will be managed through the complete **learner acquisition process** using a flow diagram and a table/chart of activities and engagement/sales process metrics/objectives. On the input side, this should include how bidders intend to use referral networks, and other alternative routes into the service. In process, it should include the filters applied to each route and clear pathways from identification of individuals prospectively interested in the service, through prospect qualification, and AIDA conversion into a learner being placed into employment or education and training.
- 2.14. Generating supply of learners to meet an increased demand for new and improved skills from business, will rely on the service's success in convincing individuals that the learning pathway on offer is right for them, now and for the future. Hence, bidders will be expected to put forward a convincing and credible **learner value proposition** for the key segments of potential learners by age group, sector and place. Bidders should bear in mind that for service success, learner volumes into vocational pathways will need to significantly increase, requiring a "blue ocean" approach to identifying, engaging and convincing individuals that would currently be considered "non-customers"². A proportion of the potential learners, currently denoted as "refusing customers" will be those in areas of deprivation, such as the Fens Opportunity area, with low educational attainment and generational aspiration. Hence, bidders will be expected to put forward specific solutions to increasing learner engagement in these places.
- 2.15. Success in enrolling large volumes of learners into vocational learning pathways, associated with employers or with FE colleges with progression to employment being deferred and/or indirect, will require informed, accurate, tailored and empathetic advice for the prospective learner. Hence bidders are expected to demonstrate their approach, tools and techniques within their **learner engagement and advisory process** to achieve this.
- 2.16. A learner engagement process is only as good as the individual delivering it. Hence, bidders will be required to provide an example **learner focused Skills Broker profile** in terms of careers advisory track record (credibility) training/education sector experience (capability) background and networks (capacity) and local knowledge (relevance).
- 2.17. The construct of the procured service is to:
- 2.17.1. Engage learners and businesses
 - 2.17.2. Diagnose needs and benefits for both
 - 2.17.3. Scope a pathway for learners, or
 - 2.17.4. Scope a skills development programme for employers
 - 2.17.5. Broker both to a training and education provider

As such, this is a classic EDB feeder service to a wider and independent market of provision, in this case education and training from FE colleges and ITPs. Hence, bidders will be expected to demonstrate how they will identify and acquire a relevant,

² <https://www.blueoceanstrategy.com/tools/three-tiers-of-noncustomers/>

capable and credible **partnership of Colleges and ITPs** of sufficient scale across a range of skills and educational subjects and delivery models. Such partnerships will need to include existing CPCA flagship skills provision programmes such as the Health and Care Sector Work Academy operated by City College Peterborough.

- 2.18. Bidders will also be expected to demonstrate the process by which they will **match learners, employers and skills/education providers** to give all the benefits they seek. This should include a reliable and proven method of databasing providers and an automated method of matching learners to employer needs, employers to learner needs and both to skills/education providers.
- 2.19. It is envisaged that the majority of skills development programme sales (no matter how small) to business clients will require **the use of a financial “nudge”** in the form of levy funding, grants or learner loans. Hence, bidders will be expected to demonstrate how they will;
- 2.19.1. Fill and administer, in partnership with the CPCA, a virtual wallet of Apprenticeship Levy Funding.
 - 2.19.2. Leverage and harness the CPCA’s Adult Education Budget contracted out into the local FE colleges and 5 regional/ national ITPs
 - 2.19.3. Provide advice on, and facilitate identification and access to learner loans
 - 2.19.4. Support the CPCA in facilitating and co-designing with employers a local Retraining Scheme as part of the DfE National Retraining Scheme.

Sub Economy Delivery Plans

Greater Peterborough; Skills Brokerage:

- The new service will need to have connectivity with the local networks and services which currently operate across the Greater Peterborough area such as Opportunity Peterborough,
- The Sector focus for the new skills brokerage in the Greater Peterborough geographic area would need to include as target priorities:
 - Food and Drink,
 - Logistics,
 - Engineering and Manufacturing
- Development of new Industry shared sector academies with the Launchpad concepts utilising LGF and potentially the new capital grants scheme
- A need to support the Levy marketplace becoming efficient and encouraging apprenticeships across the priority sector clusters and supply chains, using strategic FE and independent providers.
- The Skills needs which require strong focus in partnership with Providers, AEB and new University of Peterborough are:

- Sales,
- Business management,
Social media marketing,
- Digital

The Fens; Skills Brokerage:

- Development of apprenticeship courses to better meet business needs, both now and into the future, including STEM, which is critically required to retain and attract the higher value businesses.
- Develop stronger links with CITB and Construction businesses on modern methods of construction, which is a key opportunity
- The Growth Service provider will need to navigate and be able to support the business demand; current and future needs against the current lower level educational attainment. This will require stronger working between local partners, FE/HE Providers.
- A need to support the Levy marketplace becoming efficient and encouraging apprenticeships across the priority sector clusters and supply chains, using strategic FE and independent providers.

Greater Cambridge; Skills Brokerage:

- The new services will connect with existing local services such as the current GCP-contracted skills brokerage
- Continuous support for the development of apprenticeship courses, both new and existing based on the CPIER, Rand & Regeneris research plus business sector engagement.
- A need to support the Levy marketplace becoming efficient and encouraging apprenticeships across the priority sector clusters and supply chains, using strategic FE and independent providers.
- Focus on SMEs, especially those in Life Sciences in their second cycle of growth as this is usually where they struggle to find the talent and skills required to maximise that growth potential.