



<b>Skills &amp; Employment Committee</b>	Agenda Item
<b>4 September 2023</b>	<b>8</b>

Title:	Skills Bootcamps 2024-25 FY
Report of:	Melissa Gresswell
Lead Member:	Cllr Lucy Nethsingha, Chair of the Skills & Employment Committee
Public Report:	No
Key Decision:	Yes – KD2023/035
Voting Arrangements:	A simple majority of those present and voting.

<b>Recommendations:</b>	
A	To recommend that The Combined Authority Board approves the submission of the grant proposal to Department for Education (DfE) for Skills Bootcamp funding for the 2024-25 Financial Year (FY)
B	Subject to confirmation of grant funding approval from Department for Education (DfE) to recommend that The Combined Authority Board delegates authority to the Executive Director for Economy and Growth to procure, enter into, award and extend contracts.

<b>Strategic Objective(s):</b>	
The proposals within this report fit under the following strategic objective(s):	
x	Achieving ambitious skills and employment opportunities
x	Achieving good growth
	Increased connectivity
	Enabling resilient communities
	Achieving best value and high performance

<b>1. Purpose</b>	
1.1	The purpose of this paper is to seek recommendation from the Committee to recommend that The Combined Authority Board approves the submission of a grant proposal to DfE by the 30 September 2023 to secure Skills Bootcamp funding for the 2024-25 Financial Year (FY).

## 2. Proposal

2.1	This paper proposes the Combined Authority submits a grant proposal to the DfE by the deadline of 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2023 to secure funding for the 2024-25 FY to deliver Skills Bootcamp provision, which would be of a similar value to the funding secured for the 2023-24 FY £2,878,150.00.
2.2	<p>Securing funding for the 2024-25 FY will enable the Combined Authority to continue to contract with existing Training Providers where suitable, plus commission new provision in line with up-to-date job vacancy data, employer skills gaps and demands.</p> <p>This will allow continuity of Skills Bootcamp courses from Level 2 – Level 5, providing local residents and businesses with access to flexible courses lasting up to 16 weeks in sectors such as Construction, Green Skills, Digital and Technical. The DfE allows 30% of funding to be allocated to courses outside of their national core sector remit, providing the Combined Authority area with the flexibility to commission courses in line with local skills demands and sector priorities.</p>
2.3	Additionally, securing funding for the 2024-25 FY will provide The Combined Authority with continuity of service by enabling four existing fixed-term staff contracts within the Economy and Growth Directorate Skills Team to be extended passed 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024
2.4	Skills Bootcamps are aligned to the Employment and Skills Strategy and the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP). Skills Bootcamps provides Cambridgeshire and Peterborough residents with lifelong learning and training opportunities by enabling upskilling or reskilling through short and flexible courses whilst matching skills provision to local job opportunities to support businesses and business growth, in line with the Employment and Skills strategy.

## 3. Background

3.1	The Department for Education via the National Skills Fund has invested in the delivery of Skills Bootcamps across the country to meet the skills needs of local areas. Skills Bootcamps formed part of the Lifetime Skills Guarantee and as part of the commitments made in the Conservative manifesto (2019). Since then, the Skills for Life campaign was announced by government and significant investment has been committed by the government to scale up Skills Bootcamps from 2022 to 2025.
3.2	<p>The Combined Authority began delivering Wave Two Skills Bootcamps in Level 3 Digital sector provision in September 2021, such as Data Analysis, Digital Marketing and Cloud Computing for the 2021-22 FY, following a successful competitive bid to the DfE for delivery across the East of England.</p> <p>The Combined Authority secured grant funding to deliver Wave Three Skills Bootcamps during the FY 2022-23 which is an ongoing project until January 2024 where the Level of provision expanded across Level 2 – Level 5, as well as the expansion of the types of courses in several industry sectors, including Electric Vehicle Maintenance and Repair, Games Technologies, Welding Inspection Pathways and Project Management. The latter course was funded through using the 30% flexibility of funding for local areas provided by DfE, enabling local areas to commission provision aligned to local needs which may not necessarily be listed on the DfE's National core sector needs.</p> <p>Additionally, The Combined Authority secured grant funding to deliver Wave Four 2023-24 FY, this is an ongoing project until September 2025.</p>
3.3	<p>Skills Bootcamps rely on local knowledge of skills shortages and employer needs, and the ability to attract and train local learners and to help them achieve better job outcomes.</p> <p>The overall aims of the Skills Bootcamps are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>to deliver flexible training programmes lasting up to 16 weeks, based on employer / sector 'in-demand' skills needs which may be either regulated (i.e. qualification based) or non-regulated (e.g. based on alignment with industry standards) enabling adults to do training around work and other commitments, looking to gain work, additional responsibilities, or access new opportunities and will offer a guaranteed job interview (in the case of a new job) to individual participants on completion of the course.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to address the needs of adults (19+) who are full-time and part-time employed, unemployed, returning to work after a break or self-employed, and provide individuals with wider access to opportunities to retrain, update or formalise their skills or acquire specialist skills.</li> <li>• to address the needs of employers and the wider economy, to deliver targeted interventions to meet short-medium term demand to fill vacancies and drive productivity. They will help fill medium-higher level vacancies and bring individuals closer to better jobs, by linking them with line of sight to a job/ different role, additional responsibilities, or new opportunities/contracts</li> <li>• to help fill vacancies and bring individuals closer to better jobs (including those currently in employment), by linking them with line of sight to a job / different role, additional responsibilities, or new opportunities / contracts.</li> </ul>
3.4	<p>Skills Bootcamps are fully funded by the Government for those that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-employed, or</li> <li>• Career changers/returners/ serving prisoners due to be released within 6 months of completion of a Skills Bootcamp and those on Temporary Release, or</li> <li>• Unemployed</li> </ul> <p>Where an employer requests for an employee to attend a Skills Bootcamp, it is co-funded: the employer's cash contribution is 30% of the Skills Bootcamp cost and the Combined Authority- through the grant funding - pays 70% of the cost of the Bootcamp. However, if the employer is an SME their cash contribution is 10% of the Skills Bootcamp cost and the grant funding pays 90%.</p>
3.5	<p>The Combined Authority has the freedom to decide, acting reasonably, how best to ensure that the funded Activities are delivered in accordance with the relevant aims and objectives of the Grant Funding Agreement. The Combined Authority can therefore decide to engage with providers to deliver Bootcamps in four ways; extend contracts with existing Skills Bootcamp providers where appropriate, issue grant awards, issue direct awards and/or undertake a competitive tendering process, provided that, where applicable, it complies in full with its duties as a contracting authority under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and internal governance rules and duly selects and awards contracts to providers in accordance with those Regulations and such rules.</p>
3.6	<p><b>Performance</b></p> <p>The Skills Programme Board includes Skills Bootcamps as a standing agenda item to monitor quality of delivery and contract performance.</p> <p>DfE has recently introduced a Wave Three Performance Table* (funding for the 2022-23 FY) and issued the first table to areas in the last month. This provides Mayoral Combined Authority's and Local Enterprise Partnerships with an indication of their performance against each grant funded area. DfE provide only Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's name in the 'Grant Area' column when issuing this information to The Combined Authority.</p> <p>The table shows The Combined Authority in 8<sup>th</sup> place out of 21 grant funded areas for its performance, measured through the number of positive job outcomes achieved for our learners who have successfully completed their Skills Bootcamp course, at 47% as of data received in the month of May.</p> <p>To note, it had previously been agreed between the DfE and The Combined Authority that the learner 'Target Starts' would decrease from 1780 to 835. The Combined Authority has requested that DfE reflect this on next month's Performance Table.</p> <p><b>See Table overleaf</b></p>

GRANT AREA	Target Starts	Actual vs Original Planned Starts	Dropout Rate	Completions vs Starts	Outcomes vs Completions	Outcomes vs Starts
1	310	84%	2%	74%	100%	74%
2	607	48%	9%	46%	85%	39%
3	3450	73%	8%	46%	63%	29%
4	363	92%	8%	64%	57%	37%
5	629	125%	2%	77%	55%	43%
6	1189	28%	3%	34%	55%	19%
7	1000	14%	1%	28%	55%	15%
8 -CPCA	1780	31%	14%	34%	47%	16%
9	2122	63%	11%	56%	45%	25%
10	695	67%	22%	50%	43%	21%
11	2350	52%	10%	49%	41%	20%
12	1072	15%	18%	28%	40%	11%
13	1465	55%	0%	57%	39%	23%
14	2500	48%	16%	51%	37%	19%
15	240	129%	7%	49%	26%	13%
16	350	107%	17%	54%	23%	12%
17	1120	91%	9%	37%	23%	8%
18	5000	66%	8%	47%	22%	10%
19	396	32%	21%	48%	21%	10%
20	252	39%	20%	77%	8%	6%
21	264	82%	8%	58%	7%	4%

**\*Please note that the above table is based on data shared to DfE by grant areas for May 2023**

3.7 The DfE has called for grant proposals from Mayoral Combined Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships by the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

The Combined Authority is required to submit grant proposals to the DfE on an annual basis to secure funding for Skills Bootcamps. Unlike the Adult Education Budget, this funding is not currently devolved to the Combined Authority, however, Skills Bootcamps are currently being explored as part of the future devolution discussions to enable Skills Bootcamps to be fully devolved to areas. This will be on the premise that The Combined Authority can evidence its ability to deliver on this project and meet the readiness conditions.

	<p>The Combined Authority's proposal is to bid for a similar value to that of the 2023-24 FY (£2,878,150.00). During August and September, The Combined Authority will complete local data analysis and market research by engaging with local stakeholders, including but not limited to; Colleges and Independent Training Providers, Growth Works with Skills, Employers, JCP and our constituent authorities. The Combined Authority will analyse local data via LightCast to align to current and upcoming job vacancy data and trends. Additionally, the Employment and Skills Strategy and LSIP will be aligned to this delivery. Through this, The Combined Authority will develop a grant proposal outlining the type of course provision to be commissioned and offered under this project.</p> <p>DfE expect to update The Combined Authority in November of the outcome of the grant proposal submission.</p>
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## 4. Appendices

4.1	No appendices
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## 5. Implications

### Financial Implications

5.1	If The Combined Authority does not submit a grant proposal to the DfE by the 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2023, the Combined Authority will not be able to offer Skills Bootcamps provision for local residents and businesses to benefit from through reskilling or upskilling to progress their employment opportunities and careers outcomes, and support business growth.
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### Legal Implications

6.1	No legal implications
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### Public Health Implications

7.1	The report recommendations have positive implications for public health. Participation in adult learning improves the health and wellbeing of participants and wider society. In addition, some of the bootcamps are for professionals in the health and care sector. Skills Bootcamp funding aims to support individuals into positive job outcomes, either through securing new work (such as in the case for the unemployed or those seeking a career change); or by working with their employer to progress in their existing workplace (such as the case for those already in work); or by working with the self-employed to develop an action plan to secure new work / contract based on the new skills and knowledge they have acquired by completing the course.
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### Environmental & Climate Change Implications

8.1	Skills Bootcamp funding allows the Combined Authority to offer courses which supports positive implications for the environment and climate change. For example, as part of our Skills Bootcamp course offer, residents and businesses can access Green Skills courses such as Electric Vehicle Maintenance and Repair across Levels 2 – 4, enabling those working in the motor industry to gain skills in servicing and repairing electric vehicles in our region.
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### Other Significant Implications

9.1	If The Combined Authority does not submit a grant proposal to the DfE by 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2023, there is a risk that The Combined Authority may cannot provide an extension to existing fixed-term contracts for four staff members within the Economy and Growth directorate.
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### Background Papers

10.1	Part 6: Recommendations from Skills Committee – 9 January 2023 <a href="#">Recommendations</a> Report to the Skills Committee meeting on 4 January 2023 -Wave Four Skills Bootcamps <a href="#">Wave 4 Skills Bootcamps</a>
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