



Skills & Employment Committee	Agenda Item
15 January 2024	7

Title:	Skills Bootcamps 2024-25 FY (Wave Five)
Report of:	Melissa Gresswell
Lead Member:	Cllr Lucy Nethsingha
Public Report:	Yes
Key Decision:	Yes
Voting Arrangements:	A simple majority of voting Members

Recommendations:

The Skills and Employment Committee is invited to recommend the following to the Combined Authority Board:

- 1) To note the Combined Authority's Grant Proposal to the Department for Education (DfE) in September 2023 for £2,899,390 to deliver (Wave Five) Skills Bootcamp provision during the 2024-25 Financial Year – and to note that we received confirmation from the DfE on 12 December 2023 that our Grant Proposal has been successful.
- 2) To accept the full grant funding offer from the DfE of £2,899,390 and approve corresponding expenditure across two budgets; one for the training funding allocation totalling £2,635,800 and one for the management funding allocation totalling £263,580 of the Wave Five Skills Bootcamps in the 2024-25 budget.
- 3) To delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Skills, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer to:
 - a. Arrange for the awards and enter into grant funding agreements or service contracts with training providers to deliver Wave Five Skills Bootcamps. This can either be with existing providers, or where the Combined Authority follows a procurement exercise compliant with the Combined Authority's Constitution and procurement legislation.
 - b. Extend and/or vary contracts with existing providers where appropriate.

Strategic Objective(s):

The proposals within this report fit under the following strategic objective(s):

x	Achieving ambitious skills and employment opportunities
x	Achieving good growth

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To update the Skills and Employment Committee on the progress of the proposal submitted to the Department of Education in September 2023 for the delivery of the Wave Five Skills Bootcamps in the Combined Authority's area. This paper outlines the key considerations and actions required for taking this forward.
- 1.2 To enable the Combined Authority to accept the grant award, create a new budget line and to delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Skills to enter into and/or arrange for the entering into grant funding agreements and/or service contracts to training providers to delivery on Wave Five Skills Bootcamps following an appropriate procurement exercise.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 Subject to the Skills and Employment Committee's approval, the Combined Authority will contract with training providers to offer Skills Bootcamp courses to local residents and businesses during the 2024-25 FY.

3. Background

- 3.1 Skills Bootcamps are flexible training courses for adults aged 19+, lasting up to 16 weeks. They are part of the government's commitment for individuals to be able to access lifelong learning and they align with the Combined Authority's Employment and Skills Strategy and the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).
- 3.2 The courses are free for learners who are self-employed, unemployed, or looking for a career change. For those in work, employers can access up to 90% of the cost of Skills Bootcamps to upskill their staff. Training is delivered across England via nationally commissioned and regionally commissioned contracts.
- 3.3 To date, the DfE has determined which sectors can benefit from Skills Bootcamps. In the future, subject to the Combined Authority being eligible for Level 4 Devolution, we will have full control over which sectors we choose to work with using our devolved funding.

3.4 **To date, we have been awarded:**

Wave / Financial Year	Funding Value
Wave Two / 2021-22 FY	£1.8m
Wave Three / 2022-23 FY	£2.1m
Wave Four / 2023-24 FY	£2.8m
Pending Approval: Wave Five / 2024-25 FY	Pending Approval: £2.9m

3.5 **Summary of what we have delivered with this money:**

When we first started delivering Skills Bootcamps, we contracted with 2 Independent Training Providers (ITP's) and 1 College and delivered Level 3 Digital sector Skills Bootcamps. We have expanded the provision to address wider skills gaps and priorities. We now contract with 12 ITP's and 2 Colleges, deliver across Digital, Construction, Technical and Green Skills and include Levels 2 – Level 5 (or equivalent) have taken advantage of being able to spend up to 30% of our funding on 'other' courses to align to employer feedback and job vacancy demand, for example Leadership and Management. NB DfE has, to date, determined the sectors that attract Boot Camp funding.

3.6	<p>Job Outcomes secured by learners:</p> <p>In Wave Three, CPCA is currently ranked 5th out of 21 areas in the DfE’s performance league table, based on the number of positive job outcomes secured by learners who have completed a Skills Bootcamp. Wave Three runs until 31st January 2024 Wave Four performance data has not yet been published by the DfE. Wave Four and runs until 31st January 2025.</p>
3.7	<p>We are working closely with regional employers.</p> <p>For example, two key Engineering employers in Peterborough contributed to the recent curriculum development and launch of the Level 3 Introduction to Engineering Skills Bootcamp course. Baker Perkins and Howden Turbo are committed to interviewing individuals from the Skills Bootcamp cohort as part of their 2024 Level 3 Engineering apprenticeship recruitment.</p>
3.8	<p>Case Study</p> <p>Skills Bootcamp funding has supported an individual who worked at a large supermarket but aspired to move into a technical career. Career guidance discussions led to his enrolment on to the Level 2 Electric Vehicle Maintenance Repair Skills Bootcamp, in partnership with ITP Duplex Business Services.</p> <p>Since completing the Skills Bootcamp course, the individual said:</p> <p><i>“I completed the Electric Vehicle Level 2 course in January 2023. This course gave me the confidence to apply for jobs in the motor trade which is where my passion is...I was interviewed at Pronto Bodyshop in January 2023 and given a week trial starting from 30/01/23. I am pleased to let you know that I was successful and now in a full time, permanent position as a car paint sprayer with this company which is my dream job.”</i></p>
3.9	<p>One of our challenges has been that the funding is awarded on an annual cycle rather than a multi-year contract, which makes it difficult financially for providers to engage. This, in turn, has contributed to the Combined Authority underspending. The Combined Authority is exploring new ways to attract Training Providers and Learning Organisations to engage with delivering Skills Bootcamp provision. We introduced the Skills Provider Forum in 2023, with the next Forum taking place in January 2024. Skills Bootcamp market engagement forms part of this agenda.</p>
3.10	<p>This is what we plan to do with money in 24/25 FY</p> <p>The Combined Authority plans to commission Skills Bootcamp courses based on local labour market information, job vacancy data, employer feedback and training provider market engagement data. We plan to continue with the expansion of courses across Levels 2 – 5 (or equivalent), whilst ensuring alignment to other provision such as the Adult Education Budget.</p>

4. Appendices

4.1	No appendices
-----	---------------

5. Implications

Financial Implications	
5.1	This project will require two new budget lines; one for the training provision funding and one for the management costings All CPCA resourcing costs incurred by this project will be covered by the 10% management fee, resulting in a nil impact on the wider Combined Authority budgets.

Legal Implications	
6.1	There are no significant legal implications
Public Health Implications	
7.1	Participation in adult learning improves the health and wellbeing of participants and wider society. In addition, some of the bootcamps are to support professionals in the health and care sector to reskill or upskill.
Environmental & Climate Change Implications	
8.1	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.
Other Significant Implications	
9.1	No other implications
Background Papers	
10.1	<u>N/A</u>