



SKILLS COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No: 3.4
17 JANUARY 2020	PUBLIC REPORT

BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1. This report requests that the Skills Committee considers and approves the proposal for a proactive promotional campaign for 2020-2021 to:
- (a) raise the profile of all Business & Skills services to our target audiences across the Business and Educational Communities.
 - (b) create a strategy which attracts an increased level of engagement from our target clients and end users.
- 1.2. This report will also be presented to Business Board for their approval at the forthcoming Business Board Meeting on 27 January 2020.

<u>DECISION REQUIRED</u>	
Lead Member:	Councillor John Holdich
Lead Director:	John T Hill - Director, Business and Skills
Forward Plan Ref: N/A	Key Decision: No
The Skills Committee is recommended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Note the requirement to improve the profile of the full range of Skills and Adult Education Services in the external network.b) Approve the planned activities detailed within the Promotional Campaign (Appendix 2).c) Note the revised budget re-allocations as detailed in Section 6.2d) Note the subsequent benefits of mobilising this campaign alongside the launch of the Business Growth Service	Voting arrangements Simple Majority of all Members

and its new STAR Hub (Skills, Training, Apprenticeship, Recruitment).	
---	--

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The external profile of the Business Board and its Business & Skills services requires improvement in the marketplace, including those services relating to Adult Education, Skills Brokerage and Apprenticeships. Anecdotal feedback from Business Board members, colleagues, clients and partners supports this.
- 2.2. This low profile is further demonstrated in Appendix 1 which shows the Combined Authority's LinkedIn Following compared with (a) other Local Business Networks and (b) other Mayoral Combined Authorities.
- 2.3. This means that a basic awareness and knowledge of each of our services are not on the radar of our target clients. Therefore, our target clients are not engaging with us proactively.
- 2.4. Major changes are planned for the delivery of Business & Skills services under the new Business Growth Service in Spring 2020. As described in its Outline Business Case, this includes the requirement to engage high volumes of Businesses in and outside our region on a variety of matters such as:
 - (a) enrolling onto our new growth coaching service
 - (b) accessing our grants for capital investment, innovation and relocation
 - (c) relocating into all of our three sub-economies and five Enterprise Zones
 - (d) implementing apprenticeships programmes
 - (e) developing their workforce through Adult Education Budget
 - (f) partnering with local schools to promote vocational pathways
 - (g) participation in the new University of Peterborough eg. course development, student sponsorship, R&D venturing
- 2.5. With the requirement to improve our profile, coupled with the future challenges (and opportunities) to achieve our goals for the Business Growth Service, it is now appropriate to proactively engage our target audiences.

3.0 PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN 2020/2021

- 3.1 We have therefore devised a 12-month Promotional Campaign during which we will use a variety of methods to find, engage, educate and assist our target clients.
- 3.2 We are proposing that the campaign will be divided into two themes:
- (a) The first theme is a comprehensive set of Pan-Directorate Promotional Activities which will benefit the entire Directorate and include:
 - i. Procuring or/and Recruiting Expert Resource
 - ii. Website Review & Overhaul
 - iii. Event Strategy
 - iv. Social Media Campaign
 - v. Promotional Webinars, Podcasts and Videos
 - vi. Partnership Collaboration
 - vii. Marketing Collateral
 - viii. Advertising & Optimising PR opportunities
 - (b) The second theme of the campaign is a set of specific promotional plans for each service line within Business and Skills. These plans will be coordinated with the pan-team activities and will zone in on the specific target client groups for each service line. Examples of these plans for AEB & Skills are in Appendix 3.
 - (c) We envisage that both themes will commence in April 2020 in the new financial year to coincide with the launch of the Business Growth Service.

4.0 IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 To achieve the desired outcomes and optimum value for money, it is imperative that all activities are conducted with high levels of precision, organisation and professionalism.
- 4.2 This will also avoid there being any potential damage to the external reputation and image of the services available. Conversely, this campaign has the potential to greatly enhance the external profile of these services – if executed well.
- 4.3 Therefore, it is important to commit dedicated and specialist resource to this campaign.
- 4.4 Taking no action is a risk as it is vital that our Business Community utilise the support services that we have available – which can only happen if they are aware of them.

5.0 BENEFITS OF THE 2020/21 PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN

5.1 This Promotional Campaign will bring the following key benefits:

- (a) The profile of the Business Board and the various offerings from within the Business & Skills team will be raised to higher, more appropriate levels across our Business and Learner communities.
- (b) This strengthened profile across our diverse group of target clients will provide a strong foundation from which to launch the new Business Growth Service in July 2020.
- (c) This campaign will aid the early construction of the client pipeline for our respective services within the new Business Growth Service.
- (d) The service-line specific plans will focus on defined target partner and client groups where greater detail can be imparted with the audiences – raising knowledge and awareness levels even further.
- (e) A significantly stronger profile across the region will also ensure that all future promotional activity from the Business Board and wider Combined Authority will have greater impact because the audience will be better educated on our role, responsibilities and goals.
- (f) Ultimately, the most significant benefit of this campaign is that we will help more Businesses to locate here and grow as well as upskill their workforces and raise productivity across our region. This is directly in line with our Local Industrial Strategy.

6.0 ANTICIPATED BUDGET REQUIREMENTS

6.1 To deliver this plan, a budget of £125,000 is required to cover anticipated costs as outlined in Appendix 2 to cover items such as:

- (a) Recruitment/Procurement of specialist Marketing Resource
- (b) Recruitment of Partnership Co-ordinator
- (c) Website rebuild/overhaul
- (d) Events & Trade Shows costs
- (e) Memberships and Sponsorships

6.2 This has been factored into the 2020/21 budget being proposed to the Combined Authority Board at its January meeting and has been built from the following sources:

- (a) Three virements of £25,000, from each of the Local Industrial Strategy Implementation, Skills Strategy Programme Delivery, and Market Towns revenue budgets.

- (b) The remaining £50,000 will be met from two £25,000 recharges to the Adult Education Budget programme costs, for the AEB elements of the promotion (for links between AEB delivery through our Grant Providers and ITPs and the skills brokerage service), and the Local Growth Fund Costs, for the promotion of small grant and innovation grant schemes.

7.0 FUTURE REPORTING

- 7.1 Given the scale and intended pace of this campaign, we propose providing regular updates at future Business Board and Skills Committee meetings or quarterly briefings.
- 7.2 Future feedback can include progress against our plans, activities conducted, events attended and/or initiated along with an overview of the businesses and partners engaged.

8.0 SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 This proposal includes the possible recruitment on a fixed term (12 month) of a Marketing & Communications Specialist and also a Partnership Co-ordinator.

9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The costs of this workstream has been included in the budget proposed to the CA Board, there are thus no broader financial implications should the budget be adopted.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no direct legal implications.

11.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR NATURE

- 11.1 See Appendix 2 for guidance.

12.0 OTHER SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 There are no other significant implications

13.0 APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 – CPCA LinkedIn and Twitter Statistics
- Appendix 2 – Pan-Team Promotional Activities

- Appendix 3 – Skills and AEB Detailed Promotional Plans

<u>Source Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	