



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
& PETERBOROUGH**  
COMBINED AUTHORITY

<b>SKILLS COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM No: 2.1</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING: 10 JULY 2019</b>	<b>PUBLIC REPORT</b> Appendix (B) to this report is exempt from publication as it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act. It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

## **UNIVERSITY OF PETERBOROUGH (UoP) – TRANSITION FUNDING**

### **1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 Following the meeting of the Combined Authority Board on the 29th May 2019, a University Action Plan has been agreed and approved to deliver the University on time on the embankment site, opening its doors to 2,000 students by September 2022 in an iconic building. The UoP Action Plan will be delivered by expert Project Management Consultants working alongside the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) Programme team to allow the delivery of a curriculum that meets the needs of both students and employers, with new and progressive delivery models, such as degree apprenticeships and two-year degree programmes. The Plan also includes strategies to potentially raise the amount of revenue and capital funding currently available for the project (£13.83m from the CPCA) to as much as £20m.
- 1.2 To achieve these goals the Plan includes a market comparison of potential academic partners to work with the CPCA and Peterborough City Council (PCC) to deliver the University, between now, September 2022 and beyond to 2030. To that end, University Centre Peterborough (UCP) cannot continue to be considered the preferred or exclusive Academic Partner without challenge and comparison with the market. UCP as a wholly owned subsidiary have expressed an interest to tender to be part of the mini-competition to select the Higher Education (HE) Partner through a procurement process that starts on 1st August 2019.

- 1.3 This report provides the Board with the information required to support the transitional funding of UCP to continue working on the University project until the bidding process begins on 1st August 2019.

<b><u>DECISION REQUIRED</u></b>	
<b>Portfolio Holder for Skills:</b>	<b>Councillor John Holdich</b>
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	<b>John T Hill – Director of Business &amp; Skills</b>
<b>Forward Plan Ref: N/A</b>	<b>Key Decision: No</b>
<p>The Skills Committee are recommended to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Note the findings of the request from University Centre Peterborough (UCP) to continue to fund the activity for the University of Peterborough up until the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019.</li> <li>2. Recommend that the Combined Authority Board :               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Approve the release of £148,304 from the Skills Strategy Implementation budget for 2019/20 to support University Centre Peterborough through the transitional phase.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<p><b>Voting arrangements</b></p> <p>All members are required to be present for this item.</p> <p>Two thirds of the constituent council members must vote in favour to include Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council.</p>

## **2.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT TO DATE**

- 2.1 The CPCA has invested a significant amount of funding in UCP developing the University of Peterborough, and progress to date includes:

- An independent Council to govern UCP will be in place from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2019:
- An application for degree awarding powers that is ready for submission, currently on hold awaiting IT investment from Peterborough Regional College PRC/UCP.
- New degree awarding powers is fully funded by the CPCA and on hold awaiting the submission of the application.
- Over 20 new degrees have been validated with Anglia Ruskin University (ARU).

PRC are wishing to see the progress achieved to date taken forward and built upon for the benefit of the new University and to enable them to do so, the

CPCA has agreed to support this activity by sustaining the minimum viable product to:

- Maintain the quality of the student experience which could be impacted by the removal of the project staff.
- Maximise recruitment of students onto the newly validated programmes.
- Continue to promote UCP to retain the confidence of their current and prospective students and the wider community.

Therefore, this paper is to seek the funding required to support PRC/UCP over 4 months until 31.7.19 to maintain a minimum viable product.

2.2 It has been recognised that because of the challenges of the Further Education Sector (FE), which have deepened in recent years, putting a strain on any FE partner, and PRC in particular, their need to invest to strengthen their recent FE performance, means significant investment in the development of the Higher Education (HE) offer and associated IT in the University of Peterborough project which will be required between now and 2025 may detract from their core business.

2.3 To that end and due to the issues highlighted above and taking on board the recommendations of the reviews, it is necessary to go to market to procure the HE partner who will deliver the UoP. The selection criteria will be agreed with the expert project management consultants June/July for procurement from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2019. Therefore, to support UCP through the transition period of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019, UCP have requested that the CPCA continue to fund them for the work they are doing within this transition stage. UCP as a wholly-owned subsidiary of PRC will be eligible to bid to become the HE Partner or bid to work in partnership with another HE Partner through a consortium.

### **3.0 FINANCIAL AND INVESTMENT IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 The CPCA has paid £1,053,465.00 to complete the work identified in the UCP project plans as defined in the Funding Agreement to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019. As UCP are continuing to work on the programme through this transition stage, they have requested £148,304 from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019.

3.2 The CPCA has paid £391,690 for new degree awarding powers (NDAPS). Work which is currently on hold awaiting the application to the Office for Students.

3.3 The CPCA will use the Skills Strategy Implementation budget to release £148,304 of that funding in 2019/20 to pay UCP to maintain the minimum viable product as transitional funding. Appendix A – refers. This figure is in full and final settlement to UCP and is annotated within the Funding Agreement at Appendix B.

## **4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The current Funding Agreement between CPCA and UCP has now expired on the terms set out within the contract. There is now no legal requirement for CPCA to offer UCP further funding. However, UCP have requested further financial assistance and CPCA officers have acknowledged that request.
- 4.2 Officers have confirmed that any offer of further financial assistance is a decision to be made at Board level and it was made it clear to UCP that, in acknowledging their request for further funding, any decision was subject to due process within CPCA governance processes.
- 4.3 It is recommended that a Settlement Agreement is entered into between CPCA, PRC and UCP which will confirm any additional payment is made in the full and final settlement of all and any, past present or future liability between CPCA, PRC and UCP. Appendix B refers.
- 4.4 CPCA cannot fund a bidder through the competitive bidding stage of any procurement process therefore this paper relates to proposed transitional funding up until 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019 and not beyond.
- 4.5 This paper envisages that after due process further reports will be prepared which will be taken back to the relevant Committees/Boards. At this point, therefore, there are no specific legal implications to be reported upon.

## **5.0 SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATONS**

- 5.1 There are no other statutory matters to bring to the Board's attention.

## **6.0 APPENDICIES**

- 6.1 **APPENDIX A** – Letters from CPCA/UCP/PRC requesting transitional funding.

**APPENDIX B** – Settlement Agreement between CPCA/UCP/PRC –  
CONFIDENTIAL APPENDICES