



CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY BOARD	AGENDA ITEM No: 3.5
25 SEPTEMBER 2019	PUBLIC REPORT

EUROPEAN UNION EXIT CAPABILITY PROGRAMME

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1. To draw to the Combined Authority's attention the European Union Exit Capability Funding provided to the Combined Authority by HM Government, for the purpose of supporting business resilience in the CPCA region in the light of a deal or no deal Brexit.
- 1.2. To seek approval from the Board for the proposed application of the Funding and procurement of the work.

<u>DECISION REQUIRED</u>	
Lead Member:	Cllr John Holdich
Lead Officer:	John T Hill, Director of Business and Skills
Forward Plan Ref: 2019/066	Key Decision: Yes
The Combined Authority Board is recommended to: (a) Approve the schemes to provide support to businesses for the Brexit Basics import and export documentation and associated challenges workshops; and the retention and recruitment of EU workers programmes of support: (b) Delegate authority to Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Lead Member for Economic Growth, to confirm the	Voting arrangements Simple majority of all Members

approved tender(s) and award contracts.	
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2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Earlier this year the Secretary of State announced a funding package of £58m to support local authorities in their preparations for the UK leaving the EU. This included an allocation of £40m to be distributed between all local authorities in England, split across 2018/19 and 2019/20. CPCA received the first payment in the week commencing 4th March 2019 in respect of the 2018-19 financial year. The second and final payment in respect of the 2019-20 financial year was made in the week commencing 29th April 2019. The funding is being paid to councils under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003. Whilst this funding is not ring-fenced, the expectation is that the funding will be used to enhance capacity and capability within local authorities in preparing for exiting the European Union.
- 2.2. There followed an extra £20 million boost for councils announced in August 2019 to ramp-up preparations for leaving the EU by appointing a designated Brexit lead. This brings the total funding allocated by the government to help local areas prepare for Brexit to £77 million to date when including the additional amounts made available to Ports of Entry.
- 2.3. As this funding is provided to the Combined Authority rather than the Business Board, a recommendation will also be made by officers to the Business Board. The recommendation is to allocate the £272,727 already received by CPCA, across the activities designed to improve business resilience across the region and partially address the concerns raised by all businesses.
- 2.4. The first scheme, entitled Brexit Basics, will be contracted services to provide marketing and delivery of Brexit Basics workshops covering aspects of Brexit that businesses are finding challenging, for example import and export documentation knowledge. It is anticipated that 500+ businesses will benefit from this activity over a 12 month period. The programme will be designed to be flexible and be able to change in line with changes that will occur over the Brexit period. Improving business capability and resilience during these challenging times will ensure the wider plans of the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) remain on track.
- 2.5. The second scheme will address the retention and recruitment of EU workers to curtail the current drain of that valuable workforce and will seek to encourage the take up of settled status whilst promoting the recruitment and better use of skilled and qualified labour amongst that group of individuals. This contracted service will support business growth and productivity in the region, supporting the priorities in the LIS.

2.6. The remaining funds are to finance support for the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO or designated Brexit Lead) to further increase the level of resilience support available to businesses with the appointment of staff for a one year contract fixed term with the option to extend subject to EU Exit negotiations outcomes.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. The entire funding for these schemes has been received from government.
- 3.2. All contracts awarded to provide these services will have been procured using the Framework system as advised by Cambridgeshire CC Procurement Services and conducted using OJEU equivalent procedures and in line with our assurance framework

4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1. There are no direct legal implications

5.0 SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no further significant implications.

6.0 APPENDICES

6.1. Appendix 1 – Supporting Information

<u>Background Papers</u>	<u>Location</u>