



BUSINESS BOARD	AGENDA ITEM NO: 4.6
23 SEPTEMBER 2019	PUBLIC REPORT

EUROPEAN UNION EXIT CAPABILITY PROGRAMME

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1. To draw to the Business Board's attention the EU 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.

<u>DECISION REQUIRED</u>	
Lead Member:	Austen Adams Interim Chair of Business Board
Lead Officer:	John T Hill Director Business & Skills
Forward Plan Ref: 2019/066	Key Decision: Yes
<p>The Business Board is recommended to:</p> <p>Note the two 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 and to comment on them.</p>	

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. 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 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. After researching what was currently available to support Brexit preparations, consulting the Business Advisory Panel and collating the Local Authorities responses, two distinct interventions were identified as being the most significant to pursue.
- 2.3 As this funding is provided to the Combined Authority rather than the Business Board, a recommendation will be made by officers to the Combined Authority Board to allocate £210,000 of the £272,727 received by CPCA, across two schemes 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, e.g. 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 LIS remain on future 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 fund 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 with the option to extend subject to EU Exit negotiations outcomes.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. The entire funding for these two schemes will come from the CPCA funds allocated to it by HMG and MCHLG thus have no impact on wider CPCA budgets.

4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1. There are no direct legal implications.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR NATURE

5.1 None

6.0 OTHER SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None

7.0 APPENDICES

7.1 **Appendix 1** – Supporting documents

<u>Background Papers</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	N/A