



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY**  
**SKILLS COMMITTEE: MINUTES**

**Date:** Monday 14 September 2020

**Time:** 10:00 am to 12:10 pm

**Present:** Councillors John Holdich (Chairman), David Ambrose-Smith, Mike Davey, Lis Every, Jon Neish, Chris Seaton and Eileen Wilson.

**Apologies:** None

**86. APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

No apologies received.

Councillor Chris Seaton declared an interest as his wife worked at the College for West Anglia in the Apprenticeships Division.

Councillor Wilson declared an interest in agenda item 2.4 as in her previous job she had been involved in designing and implementing Sector Based Work Academies.

Cllr Davey joined the meeting at 10.10am.

**87. MINUTES – 6 JULY 2020**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 July 2020 were agreed as a correct record and will be signed by the Chairman when next possible.

**88. ACTIONS**

The action log was noted.

**89. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

Four questions were received from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Chairman explained that the questions would be addressed at the relevant item on the agenda.

**90. SKILLS COMMITTEE AGENDA PLAN**

The agenda plan was noted.

**91. COMBINED AUTHORITY FORWARD PLAN**

The Combined Authority Forward Plan was noted.

**92. BUSINESS GROWTH SERVICE – FULL BUSINESS CASE**

The Committee received a report that provided the information required to make recommendations to the Combined Authority Board to approve the Full Business



Case for the Business Growth Service including delegation to award the contract to deliver it.

The Committee received three questions from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on this report and the written response was read out and can be found at appendix 1 of the minutes.

Introducing the report the Director of Business and Skills gave a presentation that can be found at appendix 2 of the minutes.

Discussing the report Members;

- Queried how value for money for the service would be calculated on an ongoing basis. The Director of Business and Skills explained that there would be an annual review of performance against all of the deliverables and that the deliverables had been set based on measures to other programmes both nationally and internationally. He clarified that officers were also considering a random control test.
- Highlighted concern that there was no mention of East Cambridgeshire and that Members would expect synergies throughout the Business Case in relation to all of the constituent authorities. The Director of Business and Skills explained that the business case focused on and referred to the sub economies, as opposed to each constituent authorities and there were delivery plans linked to each of the sub economies.
- Queried the level and support and engagement in some authorities from the CPCA. The Director of Business and Skills stated that officers had regular engagement with Economic Development officers in all authorities and that some authorities had more resources in this area than others. He explained that a tailored solution to each authority was needed which would include ensuring that relevant data could be shared.
- Questioned how flexible the Combined Authority would be in the commissioning process. The Director of Business and Skills explained that procurement had stopped in June 2020 due to COVID. He clarified that officers would not know what the conditions were going to be between now and next October. He explained therefore that officers had to re-issue the tender process and add criteria in relation to adapting to COVID and flexibility of service.

It was resolved unanimously to recommend the Combined Authority Board:

- (a) Approve and adopt the Full Business Case to mobilise the delivery of the Business Growth Service
- (b) Agree that the conditions for FBC approval set at OBC have been met, specifically:



- i. Confirmation of EU funding, and the conditions set out in item 4.2 for contracting only upon further correspondence from MHCLG.
  - ii. Appointment of delivery partner
  - iii. Submission of 3-year cash flow forecast; monthly for year 1 and annual thereafter.
  - iv. Contact / Involvement of HMRC to upskill Growth Hub staff
  - v. Discussions with local authority partners on availability of in-kind support via use of L/A office space, provisional of secretariat, and officer time
  - vi. Submission of an independent state aid report covering:
    - i. ESF and ERDF application and utilisation;
    - ii. allocation of £2.335m of the authority's revenue budget to Growth Service Management Company Ltd;
    - iii. Management of Capital Growth Fund
  - vii. Submission of Sustainability and Environmental policy for the Growth Service Management Company Ltd
  - viii. Submission of evidence to support the claim of delivering 2.8 new jobs per firm receiving supported in-depth coaching
- (c) Agree that additional conditions, to be considered post-COVID 19, have been met, specifically:
- i. That the Service has been appropriately adapted to support the Local COVID 19 Economic Recovery Strategy
  - ii. That the impacts of COVID 19 on contributing funding from Enterprise Zone, business rates receipts, have been appropriately considered.
- (d) Delegate authority to the Director of Business and Skills, in consultation with the Lead Member for Economic Growth, the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Financial Officer (Section 73), to contract the preferred bidder to commence the Service during October 2020.

### **93. COVID-19 EVIDENCE & INSIGHT REPORT**

The Committee considered a report that outlined the ongoing Integrated Economic, Business and Skills Insight work which was currently being researched, reporting back on phase 1 of the work, the COVID 19 impact.



The Committee received a question from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on this report and the written response was read out and can be found at appendix 1 of the minutes.

Introducing the report officers explained that the work by Metro Dynamics would complement work carried out by Hatch Regeneris, commissioned and led by the Greater Cambridge Partnership back in late May 2020 and ongoing work by Cambridge Insight for CPCA Business & Skills into workforce, skills and Adult Education Officers explained that in summary the metro dynamics report would cover:

- A) Emerging findings in the economy and labour market
- B) Emerging trends e.g. could lead to the creation for new interventions and possibilities for policy
- C) Implications of highest relevance to CPCA
- D) Meaning in practice for the CPCA e.g. relevant CPCA strategies including the LIS

Officer explained that the report would be going to the Combined Authority Board on 30 September 2020. Officers clarified that from October 2020 to March 2021, Metro Dynamics would provide a monthly COVID 19 performance dashboard, which would be shared with the Skills Committee, Business Board, Combined Authority Board and other committees and partners and stakeholders. The content would follow the content of the report but would have the agility to accommodate other metrics if required. The report and the monthly dashboards would feed into and support the Local Economic Recovery Strategy. Officers highlighted that Metro Dynamics would provide the CPCA with a COVID 19 Impact framework and will work with the authors of strategies to update them, if required. This work would be completed by mid-October 20. Officers sought volunteers from the Committee to test the dashboard design. Councillor Davey volunteered his support.

It was resolved unanimously to:

1. Note the Metro Dynamics Report and provide any necessary feedback as applicable for an updated version of that report.

#### **94. COVID-19 LOCAL ECONOMIC RECOVERY STRATEGY**

The Committee considered a report presenting the first draft of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Covid-19 Local Economic Recovery Strategy.

The Committee received a question from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on this report and the written response was read out and can be found at appendix 1 of the minutes.

Introducing the report the Director of Business and Skills explained that this was the first draft of the report and that the intention was to bring a final draft to Committee in November and for final approval and recommended to the committee that additional wording be added to the report recommendations to reflect this. He explained that



officers had been working closely with partners including the Greater Cambridge Partnership and Public Health England on the Strategy.

Discussing the report Members;

- Queried the use of the word 'Unicorns' in the Strategy. The Director of Business and Skills explained that they were tech start-ups that hit \$ 1 billion valuation or more.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Recommend the Combined Authority Board approve the first draft of the Local Economic Recovery Strategy (LERS) for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough.
- b) Note that the final draft of the Economic Recovery Strategy (LERS) for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough will be brought to Committee in November 2020 for final approval.

## **95. SECTOR-BASED WORK ACADEMIES AND HIGH VALUE COURSES**

The Committee received a report that sought approval for the creation of sector-based work academies and high value courses via a procurement with local Providers.

Introducing the report officers explained that new funding had been received from the Department for Education (DfE) via the Adult Education Budget (AEB) funding line for two new programmes as part of the Government Skills Recovery Package totalling £486,297 for the 20/21 academic year which included:

- Funding for the creation of sector-based work academies of £241,361 for the 20/21 academic year to work with local employers in growth sectors with jobs creation. The academies would also work with local providers to deliver the training element of the sector based academy. Officers clarified that potential Sector Based Work Academies would be created in sectors such as Construction and Manufacturing. Officers highlighted that early discussions had highlighted a demand in new jobs being created in these sectors. Also a new sector that was emerging with potential jobs creation was the Energy sector.
- Additional funding of £244,936 for the 20/21 academic year was also available to offer an enhanced one year classroom based course for those students who had left school or college with no job, apprenticeship, placement, university or course to go to.

Officers explained that the CPCA Talent Portal would be the mechanism used to direct individuals onto these new programmes, with a particular focus on those who



had been made redundant or facing redundancy as a result of COVID-19 and who had registered on the Redundancy Register on the Talent Portal.

- Highlighted the need to ensure that the appropriate checks and balances were done for quality assurance. The Director of Business and Skills assured Members that the appropriate mechanisms were in place to ensure quality and value for money.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) To recommend that the Combined Authority Board allocate the £486,297, once received, from the DfE to the AEB Budget.
- b) To delegate authority to the Skills Committee for the spend allocation of the £486.297 including:
  - the spend of the funding of £241,361 across the 20/21 and 21/22 financial years for the creation of sector-based work academies
  - the spend of funding of £244,936 to offer an enhanced one-year classroom based course for those students who have left school or college with no job, apprenticeship, placement, university or course to go to across the 20/21 and 21/22 financial years
  - the spend on Sector – based work academies and High Value Courses.

## **96. SKILLS STRATEGY DELIVERY PLANS UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report that gave an update on the delivery plans of the three key interventions within the Strategy, namely; the New University of Peterborough – Phase 1, the Adult Education Budget and the Skills Talent Apprenticeship and Recruitment Hub (STAR Hub).

Introducing the report the Director of Business and Skills explained that there were a number of delivery plans attached to the Skills Strategy due to the governance arrangements and funding criteria attached to each of the interventions. He clarified that it was necessary to highlight that all three key projects had their own structures and processes underpinned by the devolution deal agreed with the CPCA on inception and ESFA funding aligned to the Growth Service in the case of the STAR Hub. He explained that it was anticipated that these interventions would become part of the Business and Skills Integrated Service offer currently under review which would see a refresh of the Local Industrial Strategy with the Skills Strategy embedded therein to reflect post COVID-19 activity as part of the CPCA's Economic Recovery programme.

It was resolved unanimously to:



Note the delivery plans attached to the key interventions annotated within the Skills Strategy of June 2019 - Appendix A.

## **97. UNIVERSITY OF PETERBOROUGH PHASE 2 UPDATE**

The Committee received a report on the progress made to date with Phase 2 of the University of Peterborough campus buildings proposals.

Introducing the report the Director of Business and Skills explained that the Phase 2 project was to complement the 2020-22 investment of £30.47m from the CPCA, Peterborough City Council and private sector into a Phase 1 Academic Teaching Building for a new University of Peterborough, to produce 3,000 p.a. graduates. He clarified that this was a Mayoral Decision on the 15 July 2020 following recommendation from an Extraordinary Business Board on the 9 July 2020. He explained that decisions on how to progress the Phase 2 project proposal and appraisal would be made following the Local Growth Fund assurance process which would include the development of a Full Application and associated business support documentation. He clarified that Phase 1 planning had been submitted for approval in October 2020 and Phase 2 planning, based on the agreed City Master Plan and related University Campus Master Plan, would be submitted in December 2020 for approval in March 2021. The timescales for Phase 2 planning permissions were expected to benefit from the already agreed Master Plans and the common building designs for both Phase 1 and Phase 2. The Manufacturing and Materials Research Centre would open its doors at the end of January 2022.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- (a) Note the progress made to date on the University of Peterborough Phase 2 building.

## **98. ADULT EDUCATION BUDGET – INNOVATION FUND AND THE TOP SLICE**

The Committee considered a report that provided a progress update on the establishment and distribution of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) Innovation Fund and the £170,000 available from the reduction in the AEB administration budget from 4.9% to 3.4%.

In discussing the report Members;

- Queried whether the money coming directly from the Department for Education (DfE) would affect the AEB in the future. The Director of Business and Skills stated that colleges had highlighted that they were worried that the CPCA would claw back unused funding. He clarified that the DfE had issued an agreement to leave the allocations with the colleges. He stated that in quarter 4 a review would quantify how much funding providers had and what they were sitting on that had simply not been spent.



It was resolved unanimously to:

note the recommended approach of how the Innovation Fund will be managed

## **99. BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Committee received a report that provided the July budget and performance monitoring for the Business and Skills Directorate.

Introducing the report officers drew Members attention the reduction in spend on the Health and Social Care Work Academy budget line this year due to a low uptake. Officers explained that the funding had now been rephased over a longer period. Officers also highlighted the annual budget setting process and asked Members to look at the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTF) at appendix 2 of the report and feedback to officers in relation to anything that should be focused on

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note the July budget and performance monitoring update
- b) Note the current Medium Term Financial Plan and consider whether there are any recommendations they wish to make to the Combined Authority Board in November.

## **100. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Councillor Davies raised an item under any other business around awareness that Booking.Com in Cambridge had announced 500 redundancies and queried whether there was any support the CPCA could provide to individuals being made redundant as the CPCA had given support to those who were made redundant by Thomas Cook last year. The Director of Business and Skills explained that the taskforce that helped Thomas Cook employees was led by Peterborough City Council and Opportunity Peterborough and offered financial guidance and counselling to individuals helping individuals with career pathways and qualifications. He explained that the CPCA played a supportive role connecting individuals with advisors and start up grants. Councillor Davies agreed to speak to Tom Hennesey at Peterborough City Council who headed up the task force for advice. **ACTION**

## **101. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was noted as 9 November 2020.

**Chairman**