HORIZON SCANNING: KEY ISSUES FOR BUSINESS & SKILLS

The CPCA **Business Plan 2020-21** sets out the Combined Authority's delivery plans for the financial year. Our core focus over the next four months will be on delivering the project outcomes set out in that plan.

The CPCA Business Plan can be found here: CPCA Business Plan 2020-21.

The most significant external influences on the strategy development and programme delivery in the fields of business & skills that are likely to arise over the next six months are:

- **The economic scarring of the COVID 19 pandemic** and the restrictions placed on people and businesses, in particular a slower than currently forecast economic recovery. This is likely to create impacts that require addressing within a refreshed COVID 19 Local Economic Recovery Strategy due in March and a potential refresh of the full Local Industrial Strategy over the course of 2021.

- **The opportunities presented by the three-year comprehensive spending** review and in particular opportunities for new and increased funding for the CPCA to increase its economic and skills impacts through the:

    o Development of a portfolio of strategic business growth and skills development projects as candidates for funding under the planned Shared Prosperity Fund and newly announced Levelling-up Fund. The key determinates for the scale of funding the Business Board receives 2022/23 to 25/26, are likely to include:

        ▪ The local impact strengths of the portfolio of projects we create and their alignment to the levelling-up agenda.

        ▪ The strength and credibility of local participation in the five strategic innovation initiatives of the OxCam Arc in Life Science, Net Zero Aviation, Net Zero Energy Generation, Net Zero Mobility and Space Technology.

    o Development of the argument for devolution or more likely, delegation of the Lifetime Skills Guarantee funding, through the CPCA's Adult Education funding line. This will allow the CPCA to increase local funding for level 3 skills training and education for citizens over 19.