

# LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY

To: The Metro Mayor and Members of the Combined Authority

Meeting: 26 November 2021

Authority/Authorities Affected: All

EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL ITEM: No

KEY DECISION Yes

## REPORT OF THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING AND DELIVERY AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR EDUCATION, SKILLS, EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

### Liverpool City Region Priority Training Support Framework

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. This report seeks approval to tender for the LCR Priority Training Support Framework, and after the procurement process is complete, to appoint the successful training providers/suppliers to a framework through delegated decision.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority:
- a) note that grant funding has been secured for this project and that training will be delivered in accordance with the funds available; and
  - b) agree that the successful training providers be appointed to the LCR Priority Training Support Framework, and delegated authority shall be granted to the Interim Director of Strategic Commissioning and Delivery acting in conjunction with the Combined Authority Treasurer and Monitoring Officer.

#### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At its meeting on 6 October 2019, the Combined Authority approved the deployment of SIF funding to the Liverpool City Region Skills and Apprenticeship Hub (SAH) and then on 6 November 2020, the Combined Authority accepted European Social Fund (ESF) funding for the SAH.
- 3.2 The SAH project has operated since January 2020 and the project has worked through the operational challenges associated with the Covid 19 lockdowns. The concept of the SAH arose from the fact that the Liverpool City Region faced a

significant challenge in closing historic skills gaps with the rest of the country. The SAH's plan is to equip residents with the skills needed both now and in the future, to drive forward a productive economy. In the past, employers across the City Region were consistently reporting skills gaps, which prevented them from securing further growth.

- 3.3 The SAH SIF/ESF funded project aims to provide funding support for businesses who are looking to train their staff, promote apprenticeships as a choice for businesses and individuals, and promote sectors or roles which require additional support. Delivery of the business engagement is undertaken by the Growth Platform, with the Apprenticeship support delivered by Halton Council and training provider upskilling by the Greater Merseyside Learning Provider Federation. These three arrangements have underpinning legal agreements in place.
- 3.4 Through discussions with Liverpool City Region businesses, and through a survey undertaken by the Growth Platform in June 2021, a Priority Training Support Framework has been developed. Liverpool City Region employers will be able to access these courses for free, as they will be fully funded by SIF/ESF funding. The Priority Training Support Framework is being set up to help close the historic skills gaps and the framework is to be managed by the Combined Authority SAH team. The LCR Priority Training Support framework is a procurement for training providers to deliver fully funded priority training in the areas of Leadership & Management, Basic Business Skills, Soft Support Skills, and Hospitality. These themes were identified/developed from the aforementioned survey undertaken by the Growth Platform in June 2021. Training under the 4 themes have been divided into 19 lots in order to support locally based employers upskill their employees.

Lot no.	Course
	<b>Leadership &amp; Management</b>
1	Theory & Skills
2	Performance
3	Staffing
	<b>Business Skills</b>
4	Business Fundamentals
5	Marketing
6	Spanish/French/Italian/German for business
7	Import/Export Regulations & Tax
8	Basic/intermediate IT Skills
9	Visual Basics for Application Training
	<b>Soft Support Skills</b>
10	Being an Effective Team Member
11	Mental Health – Stress and Resilience
12	Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
	<b>Hospitality</b>
13	Visitor/Tourist Guide
14	Marketing specifically in hospitality industry
15	Management specifically in hospitality industry
16	Events Management
17	Customer Service Skills in hospitality industry
18	Digital Sales Platform for hospitality industry

- 3.5 Consultation has already taken place with our ESF/SIF funders and the priority training support, and associated funding has been agreed with them and is in place. Given that it is a framework, it is a local decision to determine expenditure of the funding as little or as much as required up to the earmarked funding (£2m). The framework is flexible, which allows courses to be run/commissioned according to the demand from LCR businesses. There is currently £2 million funding guaranteed towards the Priority Training Support Framework from the European Social Fund and Strategic Investment Fund.
- 3.6 The framework can be used for up to £4 million in training, if additional funding is found in the future. The Priority Training Support Framework is subject to OJEU and is to be advertised as such, as well as being advertised according to post Brexit British regulations on the 'Find a Tender Service'. This Priority Training Support Framework is essential to meet the outputs/results defined by grant funders and to meet targets in the Combined Authority Corporate Plan.

#### **4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

##### **4.1 Financial**

£2 million grant funding from the European Social Fund and Strategic Investment Fund is earmarked towards the 'Priority Training Support Framework'. Expenditure will be based on demand from LCR businesses and therefore spend could potentially be less than £2,000,000 but will be no greater than this amount.

##### **4.2 Human Resources**

No additional resources are required.

##### **4.3 Physical Assets**

There are no impacts on physical assets arising from this report.

##### **4.4 Information Technology**

There are no Information Technology impacts arising from this report.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Combined Authority has the legal powers to deliver this programme as set out in Establishment Order of 2013.

#### **6. RISKS AND MITIGATION**

- 6.1 There is a risk that the 'Priority Training Support Framework' will fail to deliver all the planned outputs/benefits within scope. This is being mitigated by having an experienced team in place and the flexibility of a framework which allows courses to be run/commissioned according to the demand from LCR businesses. The SAH Manager and team will continually monitor the project and its delivery. A Project Board is set up to monitor/co-ordinate SAH delivery and will monitor the 'Priority

Training Support Framework'. Therefore any issues can be identified early and prevented/mitigated.

## **7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There will be no negative impact. A full Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken. Part of the criteria of the procurement exercise is for training providers to demonstrate how they will ensure equality and diversity. Also in line with the projects ESF outputs, there will be targeted activity to narrow the skills gap and to encourage course participants specifically - females, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, those with disabilities and those over 50.

## **8. PRIVACY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Processing of personal data is already taking place as part of the SAH project. A full data protection Information Assessment has been undertaken and received by the Combined Authority Information Governance Lead and the identified appropriate measures are currently in place.

## **9. COMMUNICATION ISSUES**

- 9.1 A clear communication and marketing plan has been developed, and will be implemented.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

- 10.1 This report outlines the procurement structure for the LCR Priority Training Support Framework which is to be used to upskill businesses in the Liverpool City Region and requests approval that the successful training providers can be appointed to the framework by delegated decision.

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Mayor Joanne Anderson  
Portfolio Holder: Education, Skills, Equality and Diversity

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