



Black Country Executive Joint Committee
Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton

**REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE CITY DEAL AND GROWTH DEAL WORKING GROUP
TO
BLACK COUNTRY EXECUTIVE JOINT COMMITTEE
ON
9 MARCH 2016**

DELEGATED AUTHORITY DECISION FOR NOTING

Black Country Local Growth Deal – PTP IT ACADEMY
Grant Agreement Approval

Key Decision:	Yes
Forward Plan:	No

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Executive Director for Economy and Environment (Walsall Council) has been awarded Delegated Authority under the Local Growth Deal Programme in order to approve, contract and subsequently award grant agreements by the Accountable Body (Walsall Council) for a series of smaller schemes where the total LGF investment (per scheme) does not exceed £240k, and whereby delivery is to commence in the 2015/16 financial year. This will enable an agile response to exploiting Investment in Regeneration opportunities for a series of smaller, low risk schemes that have been identified and recommended to proceed by the Programme Office.
- 1.2 The delegation is subject to consultation with the Chief Executive of the Black Country Consortium, the Accountable Body's Section 151 Officer, the Chair of the Joint Committee and the appropriate Working Group Member. This report sets a scheme which has been approved by the Executive Director to under his delegated authority.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Joint Committee notes that the Executive Director for Economy and Environment within Walsall Council in his role of Chair of the City Deal and Growth Deal Working Group has used his Delegated Authority to approve for the Accountable Body (Walsall Council) to proceed to a Grant Agreement to the value of £40,000 with Performance Through People (PTP) to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) elements of the 'PTP IT Academy' project -

with delivery to commence in the 2015/16 financial year. Approval of this approach was achieved at the January 2016 LEP Board meeting.

- 2.2 The need to use delegated authority was identified as the project was time critical and waiting for approval by the Black Country Joint Committee in March would have impacted on deliverability and was not suitable for approval using existing Special Urgency or General Exemption mechanisms.

3. REPORT DETAIL

- 3.1 The Joint Committee approved on the 17th June 2015 the delegation of authority to the Executive Director for Economy and Environment within Walsall Council in his role as Chair of the City Deal and Growth Deal Working Group. It was agreed that the delegation would be in consultation with the Chief Executive of the Black Country Consortium, the Section 151 officer from the Accountable Body, the Head of Regeneration for the appropriate geographical area/s and the Chair of the Joint Committee. The delegations approved were:

3.1.1 to deploy a Change Control process and

3.1.2 bring forward new smaller projects up to 10% total value of in year grant (i.e. £2.4m).

- 3.2 Provided below is a summary of the 'PTP IT Academy' project following approval under delegated authority:

IT Academy, PTP Training Walsall, £40k top up to previous Engineering award 2015/16

This bid is seeking to build upon the success of the FAB KIT Project within the PTP Engineering Training Centre in Walsall. It would develop a further learning offer to deliver engineering ICT based qualifications and courses. The basis of this bid is focused consultation with local employers to establish their ICT Training requirements, which has revealed that local businesses need additional skills to those currently offered by PTP in the Engineering and manufacturing sector:

The PTP offer in terms of Apprenticeships and short courses will be extended to include:

- ICT based Estimating and quotation systems, to increase the speed of response from Businesses.
- Stock control/MRP systems
- Additional CNC modules for the sheet metal and fabrication industry to improve speed of programming, efficiency of material usage, improved cutting times. Press-brake forming modules to check viability of tooling and press set ups.

This bid would fund the additional software and hardware required to train on these systems & applications.

The project will target outputs of 150 Business assists, 150 Learner Assists and 80 Apprenticeship starts predominantly at Level 3 by 20/21.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The costs associated with this development work and the delivery of projects that form part of the LGF will be covered by allocations from government associated with this programme. This includes the use of any interest accrued by the Accountable Body to cover costs associated with the delivery of Accountable Body functions, as approved by its (Walsall Council) Cabinet on the 29th October 2014.
- 4.2 The use of Delegated Authority by the Chair of the Working Group is designed to reduce potential underspend of 2015/16 LGF grant and provide an agile response to under-utilisation of grant.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The appropriate Grant Agreements are being prepared by the Accountable Body (Walsall Council) following the exercising of Delegated Authority and will include all conditions passed onto the LEP by Government, together with all terms, conditions, performance measures and sanctions as required by the approvals/conditions received from Government or approved by the LEP Board or the Joint Committee.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 Risk is being managed through the on-going assessment of individual projects and their ability to deliver the required spending profiles and outcomes for the programme as required or agreed with Government and set into place by the LEP Board or the Joint Committee.

7. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None at the time of drafting

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The LEP Board have approved this project for LGF allocation.
- 8.2 The Chair of the BCJC, Chief Executive at the Consortium, the appropriate Working Group member and the Section 151 Officer at the Accountable Body have all been consulted in line with the agreed process for use of delegated authority.

Background Papers

Delegation of Authority to the Chair of the City Deal and Growth Deal Working Group – *Joint Committee Paper 17th June 2015*

The Black Country Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)

Attachments

PTP IT Academy - Business Case

Request for Use of Delegated Authority – PTP IT Academy

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