



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

REPORT OF THE CITY DEAL AND GROWTH DEAL ADVISORY BOARD

TO

BLACK COUNTRY EXECUTIVE JOINT COMMITTEE

ON

23 NOVEMBER 2016

**Black Country Local Growth Fund - WALSALL COLLEGE, ADDITIONAL
ENGINEERING EQUIPMENT**

Grant Agreement Approval

Key Decision:	Yes
Forward Plan:	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To request that the Joint Committee approve for contracting and subsequent award of Grant Agreement for the Walsall College, Additional Engineering Equipment project, from within the Local Growth Fund (LGF) Programme - with delivery to commence in the 2016/17 financial year.
- 1.2 This project was approved by the LEP Board at the 19th September 2016 Board meeting (ref 116/16/3 LEP Board minutes), at the Working Group on 7th October 2016 and Advisory Board via email on the 11th November 2016.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Joint Committee approves for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to a Grant Agreement with **Walsall College for £149,000** to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) funded elements of the Additional Engineering Equipment project – with delivery to commence in the 2016-17 financial year.

3. REPORT DETAIL

- 3.1 A summary of the request for endorsement, contracting and subsequent award of Grant Agreement by the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) is below.

Walsall College – Additional Engineering Equipment, £149,000 in 2016/17

3.2 This scheme will enable Walsall College to purchase new equipment and provide facilities within its Engineering & Construction Department, further offering high specification facilities to service the gap between supply and demand for engineering, plastering and plumbing skills for the benefit of young people, unemployed adults and employers in Walsall and the wider Black Country. It will also allow the College to offer increased amounts of block release delivery models to employers which were currently in high demand.

3.3 Specifically the College would be able to provide:

- C&G Level 3 Engineering;
- BTEC Level 3 Engineering (additional units);
- Plastering apprenticeship framework (2 years); and
- Plumbing apprenticeship (block release).

The proposal is in alignment with the findings of the Area Review which encouraged Walsall College to continue to grow and meet the needs of engineering and construction employers, especially with a focus on apprenticeships.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 All the costs associated with this proposal form part of the LGF programme and 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. As this grant award is under £150,000, in line with the agreed terms of Growth Deal grants the Accountable Body does not propose to seek security or underwriting against the Grant.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The LGF conditions of grant which are contained within the standard form of Grant Agreement will be utilised by the Accountable Body (Walsall Council), and 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 monitoring 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 and the Joint Committee.

7. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None at the time of drafting.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 This investment will help to address feedback from the Area Review team for Black Country colleges which has encouraged Walsall College to continue to grow and meet the needs of Engineering and Construction employers, especially with a focus on apprenticeships.
- 8.2 John Adams, Director at Walsall College is proactively working with Roland Meredith, Curriculum Development Manager for the National High Speed Rail College linked to HS2, to focus on feeder routes into the higher-level training to be provided by the National College.
- 8.3 The College is already working with a number of local businesses including Homeserve, WHG, Kier Group, CLC, INTU, Starrant Plumbing, ESP Energy, Hankinsons and Shaylor Group who have advised that they would welcome the opportunity to be able to use the College to address their skills shortages and employment requirements.
- 8.4 Legal and financial services at Walsall MBC have been consulted as part of the development of this report, and given the opportunity to review the report contents.

Back Ground papers

None.

Contact Officer & Author

Simon Neilson

Executive Director, Regeneration
Walsall Council
Civic Centre, Darwall Street, Walsall
WS1 1TP
Email: simon.neilson@walsall.gov.uk
Telephone: 01922 652004

Mark Lavender

Joint Committee Programme Manager
Walsall Council
Civic Centre, Darwall Street, Walsall.
WS1 1TP
Email: mark.lavender@walsall.gov.uk
Telephone: 01922 654772