



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

WEDNESDAY 5 AUGUST 2015

**Black Country Local Growth Deal – Specialist Equipment for Advanced Manufacturing
Technology Training**

Grant Agreement Approval

Key Decision:	Yes
Forward Plan:	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the recommendations of the City Deal and Growth Deal Advisory Board and request that the Joint Committee approve the contracting and subsequent award of Grant Agreement by the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) for the ‘Specialist Equipment for Advanced Manufacturing Technology Training’ project from within the Local Growth Fund (LGF) Programme. The project has been identified, evaluated and recommended to proceed by the Programme Office, endorsed by the City Deal and Growth Deal Working Group and received Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Board approval on the 14th July 2015.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Joint Committee grants approval for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to a Grant Agreement to the value of £30,000 with Sandwell Training Association to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) elements of the ‘Specialist Equipment for Advanced Manufacturing Technology Training’ project - with delivery to commence in the 2015/16 financial year.

3. REPORT DETAIL

- 3.1 There is recognised demand to raise employability skills within the manufacturing industry in the Black Country SME supply chain, re-skill and retrain employees to meet current demand from industry and increase competitiveness within key sectors of industry. Sandwell Training Association (STA) are looking to deliver bespoke training in high end

manufacturing to enable the local manufacturers to compete in a global market and support the next generation of engineers through additional training.

- 3.2 **Project Description:** Sandwell Training Association (STA) are working with these SME's, identifying skills gaps, multi-skilling existing workforce with new and enhanced technologies and now looking to move their manufacturing processes forward in key areas of engineering. This investment will allow Sandwell Training Association to buy in new equipment and software for a range of design, manufacturing and inspection software which provides complete, automated CAD/CAM solutions, CNC training, and product development. This new software and equipment will allow an increase of apprentice numbers on both the intermediate and advanced apprenticeship programme offered to member engineering companies. The advanced software and equipment will also help develop STA to offer higher apprenticeships to its students in 2016/2017 academic year. As part of the offering STA plan to deliver short bite size courses to local engineering companies, bringing their current manufacturing processes up to date, increasing competitiveness and outputs but more importantly re-skilling and up skilling the workforce in areas for improving efficiency and reducing skill shortages across the local area.
- 3.3 **Start date:** Purchase of software to be completed during the 2015/16 financial year.
- 3.4 **Headline Outputs Include:** 30 Jobs Created, 100 Business Assists, 240 Learner Assists, 180 Apprenticeships
- 3.5 **Funding Profile:** Total Project Investment - £60k, LGF requested - £30k, Match Funding - £30k applicants own funds.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The costs associated with this project will be covered by allocations from government associated with LGF 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.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The appropriate Grant Agreement will be prepared by the Accountable Body (Walsall Council) and will include all conditions passed onto the LEP by Government, together will 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 Consultation with relevant internal stakeholders i.e. Legal services and Finance in accordance with the Joint Committee Protocols.

Background Papers

Revised Process for Evaluation of Local Growth Fund bids - Joint Committee Paper 17th June 2015

The Black Country Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)

Attachments

Specialist Equipment for Advanced Manufacturing and Technology Training - Business Case

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