



**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

**7 September 2016**

### **Black Country Local Growth Deal** **HALESOWEN COLLEGE, CREATION OF ACCESS CENTRE FOR HE**

#### **Grant Agreement Approval**

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<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	<b>Yes</b>

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#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To request that the Joint Committee approves for contracting and subsequent award of Grant Agreement for the Halesowen College, Creation of Access Centre for HE 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 on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2016, endorsed by Working Group on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2016 and Advisory Board on the 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2016.

#### **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 with **Halesowen College to the value of £700,000** to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) funded elements of Halesowen College, Creation of Access Centre for HE project – with delivery to commence in the 2016/17 financial year.

#### **3. REPORT DETAIL**

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

**Halesowen College, Creation of Access Centre bid, £700,000 in 2016/17**

- 3.2 The proposed scheme creates an Access Centre to replace out-dated art and design studios that would otherwise be mothballed and brings them in to use for adult students aimed at increasing level 4+ progression and adult literacy/numeracy needs. This project contributes to the targets in the Strategic Economic Plan also addresses the outcomes of the current area based review. In particular reducing the number of adult students with no qualifications; raising the number and levels of Black country people in apprenticeships; increase the number of adults with a NVQ level4 or higher and increasing the achievement of grade A\* to C in GCSE Maths and English.
- 3.3 The establishment of an Access Centre, aligned with building capacity, to address adult higher skills and adult literacy & numeracy, allows the College to directly create outputs up to 20/21:
- 895 Additional Learner Assists in “access to HE” GCSE Maths and GCSE English.
  - 40 new Apprenticeships
  - 3 business assists

Confirmation has been obtained from the College on the geographic and sector destinations of both the 40 Apprenticeships and the 895 Adult Learner assists.

**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.

**5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The appropriate Grant Agreements are in place and 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 by BCC Programme Office and their ability to deliver the required spend profiles and outputs for the programme as agreed with LEP Board and the Joint Committee.

## 7. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None at the time of drafting.

## 8. CONSULTATION

8.1 The first phase of the development funded by the LEP (Advanced Science & Technology Centre) gave the College an opportunity to comprehensively consult with employers and carry out market research. In addition to published market research and personal consultations already referred to in this document, a range of local employers and organisations have been contacted with regard to the proposed developments in Access to HE and English and Maths. Employers in all sectors have stated that it is imperative for candidates to have employability skills and the GCSE at grade C or above in English and maths.

8.2 The College has also focused on SMEs and has discussed training options with a number of employers.

8.3 In addition there has also consulted with the NHS on several health care pathways designed to allow students to find employment in the care sector.

8.4 Legal and financial services at Dudley MBC have been consulted as part of the development of this report.

### Back Ground papers

*Initial Proposal from Halesowen College – Creation of an Access to HE Centre*

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