

Approval of Deed of Variation to deliver the Employment West Yorkshire Programme

Date: 14th March 2024

Report of: Acting Head of Employment & Skills

Report to: Chief Officer Culture & Economy

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

In February 2023 the Director of City Development authorised the Council through a key decision to accept up to £3.8m of funding from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) to deliver the Gainshare 2 (Employment West Yorkshire) Programme in Leeds.

Since the key decision was approved WYCA have proposed to amend the funding for Employment West Yorkshire from Gainshare 2 to a combination of Gainshare and UK Share Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). In order to accept this change in funding WYCA are asking for the Council to sign a Deed of Variation to the original Funding Agreement and reduce the gainshare element of the programme from £3.65m to £2.38m and sign a new Funding Agreement for £1.27m for UKSPF. There is proposed no change to the total value of the Funding Agreements to the Council and no significant change in funding obligations associated with this Deed of Variation.

Recommendations

- a) Authorise the Council to sign the Deed of Variation to reduce the original Funding Agreement from £3.65m to £2.38m.
- b) Authorise the Council to sign, seal & return a new UKSPF Funding Agreement for £1.27m to WYCA.
- c) Note that the Acting Head of Employment & Skills will be responsible for the implementation and delivery of the programme from April 2024 to March 2025.

What is this report about?

- 1 The West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA), through the Economic Recovery Framework, approved funding in excess of £12m in 2022/23 to extend and enhance the Employment Hub (Ehub) Programme across West Yorkshire. The Council as a key delivery partner received a Funding Agreement worth £3.65m for the Gainshare 2 Employment West Yorkshire (EWY) programme over the period April 2023 to March 2025.
- 2 The West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) are seeking to amend this EWY Funding Agreement to utilise UK Shared Prosperity Funds (UKSPF). It is proposed that approximately one third of the existing Funding Agreement is funded through UKSPF.
- 3 This report seeks approval to amend the existing Funding Agreement via a Deed of Variation and for the Council to authorise the signing of a new UKSPF Funding Agreement. There is no proposed change in funding related to this proposal.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 4 There is limited impact from this proposal other than agreeing to standard UKSPF terms and conditions which are similar to the obligations under the existing Gainshare Funding Agreement.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 5 As per the original key decision the support to residents will contribute to the achievement of Best City Ambition outcomes to ensure that all residents can do well at all levels of learning, have the skills they need for life and to earn enough to support themselves and their families. The programmes will contribute to our inclusive growth ambitions and will support the city's economic recovery.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 6 The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Economy, Culture and Education has been consulted on the issues in this report.

What are the resource implications?

- 7 The programme is 100% grant funded and no costs to the Council will be incurred outside of the delivery of the programme. All costs (staff, marketing, operating costs and promotional materials etc.) have been factored into the delivery.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 8 The Employment and Skills Service will lead on the delivery arrangements on behalf of the Council. The service has extensive experience and sufficient existing resources in place to

successfully deliver a project of this nature. The service has rigorous and robust contract management and performance procedures in place to reduce and mitigate these risks.

What are the legal implications?

- 9 The Council has the power under the Localism Act 2011 to do anything an individual can do provided that it is not otherwise prohibited from doing so. Compliance with any restrictions that the Council is subject to in relation to the proposals outlined in this report will be monitored as matters progress.
- 10 The Council has a Funding agreement in place with WYCA setting out the conditions within which the programme must be delivered. As such LCC must ensure compliance with the funding agreement to be in a position to draw down Gainshare and UKSPF funding.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 11 If the Council does not accept the proposed changes then there is no guarantee the remaining funds due from Gainshare will be paid, there will also be a negative impact on future funding opportunities as previously underspent programmes have jeopardised future opportunities for the region.

How will success be measured?

- 12 The original contract aimed to deliver support to up to 2,500 Leeds residents to gain skills or employment that enables them to be active citizens in their community. This proposal is no material change to this ambition. The success of this decision will be measured by successfully delivering the EWY programme.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

- 13 This programme has been running from April 2023 and is due to complete by end March 2025. The Deed of Variation and the new UKSPF Funding Agreement will need to be signed by the end of March 2024 to allow funds to be drawn down from the new Funding Agreement from the 1st April 2024. The Acting Head of Employment & Skills will be responsible for implementation.

Appendices

- None

Background papers

- [Council and democracy \(leeds.gov.uk\)](https://leeds.gov.uk)