

## Cabinet

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**Date of Meeting:** 11 September 2018

**Report Title:** European Social Fund Sub-Regional Bid for Intensive Supported Employment Provision

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Jos Saunders/ Councillor Janet Clowes

**Senior Officer:** Mark Palethorpe - Acting Executive Director Peoples Services

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### 1. Report Summary

- 1.1. In 2017 the Cheshire & Warrington LEP informed the Sub-Regional Leaders Board that there was a substantial amount of funding £28.9m of structural investment money still to be allocated and spent. The remaining funding would be available up to 2021 with calls submitted for collaborative funding bids during June and July 2018.
- 1.2. There is a specific grant available of £5.4m from the Department of Work and Pensions and the Cheshire and Warrington LEP. This report asks permission for the Public Sector Transformation Team hosted by Cheshire East Council, to bid for the available resources on behalf of the three Councils and partners in the sub-region through a direct call from the LEP.
- 1.3. The report outlines the work that has taken place to date across the Cheshire and Warrington Sub Region to gain support for a sub regional bid, its co-design, target intensive supported employment services embedded with Leaving Care, SEND Transition teams, Mental Health and Troubled Families services to support the most complex individuals to get closer to work. This is also requiring each of the three Local Authorities to identify and confirm the availability of 50% in-kind matched that suits the needs of their local demands and pressures (Cheshire West and Chester, Cheshire East and Warrington).
- 1.4. Social Finance Ltd have been commissioned to support the sub regional partnership to develop and write the bid in line with the proposed timescales outlined below:

Direct call for bids via LEP & DWP	13 <sup>th</sup> July 18
Initial Applications to be submitted via Cheshire East Council as lead accountable body for the Public Sector Transformation Plan	w/c 13 September 18
Full bid applications to be worked up and submitted	December 2018
DWP approve successful bids for deliver	March 2019
Cheshire East Cabinet to accept the grant on behalf of the Sub-Region including delegation to authorise expenditure to the Executive Director for People's services as Chair of the Public Sector Transformation Board	April 2019
Delivery Board to be Established representing all match funding agencies	April 2019

- 1.5 The opportunity to bolster existing supported employment provision for those in greatest need, notably from those service users and clients who are open to Children and Adults services will be a one- off and unique opportunity to reduce pressure and demand on Council services by promoting routes to independence and self support.
- 1.6 There is a positive appetite across all three LAs to maximise resource in this area, learning the lessons from previous rounds of ESF funding which have often been defined nationally and delivered by external managing agencies or prime contractors who have not embedded services within existing provision where the need is and where the people are currently managed.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To agree the bid application for the funding and delegate authority to the Acting Director Executive Director Peoples Services to accept the grant and manage the programme should we be successful.
- 2.2 To support the sub-regional proposal for a bid submission via direct call under Lots 1.2 and 1.4. in line with the proposed timeline for bid submissions subject to appropriate Supplementary Revenue Estimate when required.

### **3. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1. The proposed bid, if successful, will be significant to enhance support services to Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington's most vulnerable customers bringing in much needed additional revenue to the region for targeted tailored support.

### **4. Other Options Considered**

- 4.1. Co-financing option with Education and Skills Funding Agency – this would require no match from Local Authorities but would limit the ability to shape the offer for customers to local priorities, resulting in a more national generic specification for the sub region and limited ability to influence local priorities. There is also concern amongst the partnership that the co-financing option will undermine work undertaken locally the direction that is supported strategically by Leaders Board.
- 4.2. To reject the opportunity to bid for the opportunity to bid for £5.4M additional resources – however in the climate of reducing revenue grant for LA's this opportunity offers a substantial opportunity to support and offer independence in a way that has not been afforded previously.

### **5. Background**

- 5.1. The Public Service Transformation Team started discussions across the sub region in autumn 2017 to test the appetite for a sub regional bid for resources from the ESF programme to enhance the employability skills and opportunities for the most vulnerable individuals across the Cheshire and Warrington sub region. Simultaneously, discussions started with the Cheshire and Warrington Into Work Board, whose purpose is to lead on the sub regional co-ordination of both existing programmes and new delivery routes which help people in Cheshire and Warrington to get jobs and employment, focusing on those who are furthest away from the job market. This approach was subsequently endorsed by the Board and they have continued to provide oversight and direction to the process.
- 5.2. In June 2018 Social Finance facilitated two workshops across Cheshire and Warrington with a broad range of local authority representatives to begin to co-design the application, exploring in detail: the background to the ESF guidance for Lots 1.2 and 1.4; identification of the target cohorts and; co-design of the service delivery model in each local authority.

5.3. The target cohorts agreed as part of the workshops include:

- Lot 1.2: Young people aged 15-25 years - specifically those Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs), Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), Looked After Children (LAC) and Care Leavers.
- Lot 1.4: Disadvantaged adults who face particular barriers to work – specifically complex individuals and families who do not meet the Troubled Families threshold, people with long term disabilities, mental health conditions and homelessness.

5.4. Feedback from the Into Work Board indicates there is a desire from both the LEP and DWP for local bids as they will have the ability to be shaped to local priorities, meet local demand and provide a strong co-ordinated approach that compliments existing programmes and priorities locally.

5.5. 1-2-1 sessions have taken place, facilitated by the Public Service Transformation Team across each authority to work up the specific detail around cohorts and the 50% in-kind match contribution and memorandums of understanding are currently being developed to firm up the in-kind commitment for the bid submission up to 2021.

## **6. Implications of the Recommendations**

### **6.1. Legal Implications**

6.1.1. The Council's Finance and Procedure Rules (FPRs 6.26) require that appropriate Member approval be sought prior to submitting a bid for funding.

6.1.2. Officers must ensure that they understand and are aware of the grant conditions attaching to any funding and consider whether the Council's processes and procedures are sufficient to comply with these conditions or whether more detailed processes need to be followed. Therefore where prior approval is obtained to submit a bid and the bid is then submitted and accepted, then at that stage a review of the legal implications of both the offered funding conditions and consideration of the terms of the proposed joint working shall be required, and any necessary approvals sought as appropriate for agreeing and entering into those arrangements.

6.1.3. The Council needs to be satisfied that appropriate performance management arrangements are in place to meet compliance standards of

the Technical ESF regulation and terms of funding. The eligibility of in-kind service contributions will need to be satisfied as the initial bid document is constructed.

## **6.2. Finance Implications**

6.2.1. The ESF programme creates an opportunity for the Cheshire and Warrington sub-region to lever in an additional £5.4m income over 3 years for support services for vulnerable people. This required identification of 50% match in-kind resource from the 3 local authorities. Approximately £1.7m per local authority spread across 3 years of in kind activity. A detailed breakdown will be developed for the bid, based on population size for each authority via the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding to describes the appropriate areas of in-kind service match funding across the Peoples Directorate Service budget areas. Notably this does not commit the Council to any additional expenditure or financial commitment, rather it offers a way to mitigate cost pressures specifically in adults and children's services.

6.2.2. Once the outcome of the bid is known the grant conditions will be assessed. The appropriate financial treatment will then be applied to the funds that will be received, for example a Supplementary Revenue Estimate may be completed.

## **6.3. Policy Implications**

6.3.1. The bidding process will fall in line with all corporate policies and processes as it effects Financial Management, Audit, Data Management and security controls in line with Cheshire East Corporate policy.

## **6.4. Equality Implications**

6.4.1. The development of this bid will put additional resources in to people who present the greatest vulnerability, this will include people with disabilities including those with Special Educational Needs, Mental Health, Young People, Women, BME people, LGBTQ people and those people who have complex and multiple challenges.

## **6.5. Human Resources Implications**

6.5.1. None at the stage of developing the bid for submission

## **6.6. Risk Management Implications**

6.6.1. A full risk assessment will be compiled against the bid as it transfers through the approval process.

## **6.7. Rural Communities Implications**

6.7.1. Rural communities will be specifically targeted.

## **6.8. Implications for Children & Young People**

6.8.1. Children and Young People will be specifically supported should the bid be successful as we will offer this as an entitlement to our Looked After Children as they transition in to adulthood with the intensive support service to offer them as part of their agreed care plan or Education, Health Care Plan.

## **6.9. Public Health Implications**

6.9.1. There are many positive implications for public health as the projects proposed seek to specifically address poor Mental Health and self esteem in the out of work population through an introduction to positive work and volunteering experiences.

## **7. Ward Members Affected**

7.1. All Wards should benefit from the bid should it be successful.

## **8. Consultation & Engagement**

8.1. At this bid development stage of the process, consultation and engagement has taken place across the three Local Authorities via the sub regional Into Work Board and Cheshire & Warrington Leaders Board. As the bid documents are developed in detail, further consultation will be undertaken with Officers and Lead members across partner organisations.

## **9. Access to Information**

9.1. Not applicable.

## **10. Contact Information**

10.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

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