

Emergency Approval in light of COVID-19 Contingency Planning

Business Case to Approve Greater Manchester Adult Education Budget Growth Allocations in 2019/2020.

Purpose of report:

In March 2020 prior to the COVID-19, the AEB growth process was opened up for its existing lead providers to submit growth cases – with up to £1.5m available.

The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the outcome of this AEB growth process and recommend the three of the growth submissions for approval.

Summary

The GMCA Skills and Work (SaW) Team identified an opportunity to distribute additional funding from the devolved Adult Education Budget in 2019/20 to existing contracted skills providers and this was carried out through a growth process (*Growth Approach document attached as Appendix 1*).

This commenced and closed during March 2020, with funding made available for proposals that support GM's ambition to drive up adult learning, linked to the Local Industrial Strategy sectors. In order to be eligible for growth, lead providers submitting growth cases had to demonstrate that the proposed activity:

- Responds to the needs of the growth and / or foundation sectors as set out in the GM LIS and links to specific occupations within these sectors;
- Delivers vocational legal entitlement provision for level 2 and 3;
- Supports in-work progression within the growth and / or foundation sectors as set out in the GM LIS; and
- Focuses on the GM AEB flexibilities as outlined in the Funding & Performance Management Rules 2019/20.

The SaW team received seven submissions from contracted skills providers. Of these five went through to the scoring and appraisal stage, with those not taken through to be scored due to not meeting the key requirements of the growth process as detailed in above. Growth cases were appraised by internal GMCA staff and local authority colleagues. Submissions were made up of 2 scored questions and an internally assessed performance score. To be considered for growth submissions had to score a minimum of 3 for each question. All submissions were scored and moderated, supported by STAR Procurement. This process led to two submissions not scoring the required minimum score for one or more question.

The remaining three submissions all scored above the requirements for each question, however appraisers felt that some clarification on some of the aspects of their requests before being recommended for approval. Clarification meetings were set up with all three of the providers in which they all provided the necessary information.

Following these clarification conversations, two of the providers revised the value of their growth case to reflect the changes discussed.

Recommendation for approval

It is recommended that the growth cases for the three successful providers are approved as per the information outlined in this report.