

**ITEM: 7**

**REPORT TO: WECA SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**DATE: 6 DECEMBER 2017**

**REPORT TITLE: EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT INNOVATION PILOT – AN INTRODUCTION**

**AUTHOR: ADAM POWELL AND SUE DOBSON, WECA**

## **1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with an introduction - and update on current position – to the Employment Support Innovation Pilot, a DWP-funded pilot programme secured through the West of England Devolution Deal.
- 1.2 To seek the Committee's support in informing an Evaluation Strategy for the programme.
- 1.3 To ask Committee members to advocate for the project within their wards and local authorities given the potential positive impact on residents participating.

## **2 Background**

2.1 The WECA Employment Support Innovation Pilot (ESIP) is a £4m initiative funded by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Resulting from a commitment in the West of England Devolution deal, the programme will work with 3,000 individuals resident in Bath and North East Somerset, City of Bristol and South Gloucestershire who are in employment, claiming in-work benefits and are (or will become) social housing tenants. The pilot will provide support to these individuals, helping them to raise their own skills levels and gain more secure and higher quality employment. Overall the project will seek to maximise participation of the workforce in the economy and support our residents to benefit from the prosperity and opportunities in the region.

2.2 The comprehensive business case submitted to DWP which secured the funding – and provides a robust evidence based and rationale – is attached at Appendix 1.

2.3 Operational project delivery will start in early 2018 and last for a two-year period up to and including December 2019. Preparatory work has been underway throughout 2017, significantly accelerating following the appointment of a dedicated Project Manager in October 2017.

2.4 The ESIP delivery model is as follows:

- WECA is accountable to DWP for the funding and will employ the overall project manager who is tasked with monitoring delivery. They will work with Local Authority partners to develop detailed delivery models and also ensure that the project delivery is both on time and to budget. Where applicable this will include reallocation of funding between delivery partners.
- The majority of the funding will be granted from WECA to the constituent local authorities who will be responsible for operational delivery in their local area. The

decision to approve grant funding Councils was taken at a WECA Committee meeting on 30 October 2017. This WECA Committee paper – along with an amended (approved) recommendation – is attached at Appendix 2.

- A team of people will work directly with the pilot beneficiaries. As delivery partners, local authorities will choose whether to directly employ these team members and deliver the client facing work themselves or undertake this through local partners.
- Given the requirement for a robust and extensive evaluation, and given the innovative and specialist nature of this pilot programme, an external organisation will be procured to conduct an overall evaluation of the pilot.
- An ESIP Project Steering Group met for the first time on 6 September 2017 comprising local authority and DWP partners and will meet fortnightly to progress pre-delivery programme.
- The WECA Skills Advisory Board receives regular updates and provides advice and oversight on behalf of the WECA Committee which will provide governance for the project.

**3 Current Position**

3.1 The current state of progress is as follows:

- A project manager was appointed on a fixed term from 7 October 2017 and is working full-time on the project.
- DWP have agreed the project and associated budget and have issued a draft offer letter to WECA. WECA officers are now working with DWP colleagues to ensure the contract, MoU and related documentation (including data sharing agreement, customer journey, customer impact assessment) are completed, agreed and signed off.
- Engagement with social housing association partners from local authorities and WECA is underway to raise awareness and prepare for delivery.
- Delivery partners are preparing for delivery and progressing pre-recruitment work, prior to the grant agreements being received and financial process being agreed.
- WECA is working with the What Works Centre and a DWP researcher to scope a monitoring and evaluation strategy – one focus of a strategic planning day on 7 December 2017 and future paper for WECA Scrutiny paper, subject to the agreement of the Committee.

3.2 Whilst still in early pre-delivery stage of the project, a small number of areas of work have been identified as potential project risks. These, along with mitigating actions, are highlighted below:

Potential risk	Mitigation
1. Delay in agreeing project documentation with DWP would impact onto project start date	This is being mitigated against through frequent contact with senior DWP colleagues
2. The number of residents eligible to benefit from the programme may reduce unless we are able to include those receiving Universal Credit.	Ongoing discussion with DWP testing rationale, given changing policy landscape.
3. Lack of engagement from housing associations and other local partners may lead to lack of referrals for potential residents to benefit.	Early engagement with partners and stakeholders underway and communications plan being developed, supported by Delivery Partners and others to raise awareness of the

	programme
--	-----------

**Consultation:**

- 4 The overall programme and financial profile of the project was developed by – and in consultation with – officers in the constituent councils and WECA officers. A progress update on the programme was discussed at the Skills Advisory Board. This paper has not been subject to further consultation.

**Other Options Considered:**

- 5 *The Committee is not being asked to take any decisions and there are no options to consider.*

**Risk Management/Assessment:**

- 6 *Please identify the key risks the recommendations will address, and any risks associated with implementation of the recommendations of this report.*

**Public Sector Equality Duties:**

- 7 There are no equalities implications in relation to this report.

**Economic Impact Assessment:**

- 8 Whilst it is hoped that by providing additional support to the identified cohort of residents there will be a positive impact both for the individuals and for the wider economy, no specific economic impacts arise as a direct result of this report.

**Finance Implications:**

- 9 There are no financial implications in relation to this report.

**Legal Implications:**

- 10 In securing funds to manage the ESIP programme, the Combined Authority is relying on its general power of competence and the education powers contained in the Order. Following the transfer of funds to the Mayoral budget the Mayor will use the power to pay grants contained in Article 7 of the Order to allocate the funds to the constituent councils.

**Land/Property Implications;**

- 11 There are no land/property implications in relation to this report.

**Human Resources Implications:**

- 12 There are no human resources implications in relation to this report.

**Chief Executive Comments:**

- 13 The ESIP programme is progressing as planned with WECA officers working closely with DWP colleagues. The ongoing partnership with local authority partners is positive and officer contributions are welcome.

**Recommendation:**

- 14 That the Committee:
- receive the report
  - agree to receive a future paper focussed on monitoring and evaluation;
  - advocate for the project within their wards and local authorities given the potential positive impact on residents participating.

**Report Author:** Adam Powell, West of England Combined Authority  
[adam.powell@westofengland-ca.gov.uk](mailto:adam.powell@westofengland-ca.gov.uk)

**West of England Combined Authority Contact:** Sue Dobson, West of England Combined Authority [sue.dobson@westofengland-ca.gov.uk](mailto:sue.dobson@westofengland-ca.gov.uk)

**Background Papers**

Any person wishing to inspect the Background Papers, used in the preparation of this Report, should seek the assistance of the Contact Officer for the meeting, Adam Powell  
[adam.powell@westofengland-ca.gov.uk](mailto:adam.powell@westofengland-ca.gov.uk)

**APPENDIX 1: WECA Innovation Pilot**  
**APPENDIX 2: COMPRISES ITEMS 13 AND 14 WHICH WENT TO THE WECA COMMITTEE ON THE 30<sup>TH</sup> OF OCTOBER 2017**

**WEST OF ENGLAND**

Combined Authority

BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET

BRISTOL

SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE

# Employment Support Innovation Pilot

## Business Case

February 24<sup>th</sup> 2017

---

## Introduction

This business case is being submitted on behalf of the West of England Combined Authority. It has been developed and produced by lead partner agencies, including Bath and North East Somerset Council, Bristol City Council; South Gloucestershire Council, the Local Enterprise Partnership and Jobcentre Plus (Avon, Severn and Thames District).

Our Innovation Pilot will obtain fresh and critical insight into people in work and in receipt of Working Tax Credit/Universal Credit who are also social housing tenants. The intended outcome of our pilot is to maximise participation of our local workforce in the economy and also provide robust evidence demonstrating how individual in-work progression into more sustainable and higher paid careers can be best supported.

This document outlines our business case including our rationale, the strategic fit with the ambitions of the West of England, our proposed innovation, and our value for money and deliverability considerations.

## Rationale

### Pilot Target Group

This pilot is targeted at residents of the West of England Devolved Area who are in employment, claiming in-work benefits and are social housing tenants. Whilst there are currently 25,000 benefitting families in receipt of WTC across our locality, the key focus is on residents living in social housing (60,000 households) who have become entrenched in low-income insecure employment and who are most at risk of homelessness.

Our target group includes social housing tenants on low incomes often struggling to meet their rent payments, and also those tenants who are eligible for social housing who are in temporary accommodation. Our target group also includes many single parents with young children. It also includes individuals at risk of unemployment through health conditions, including mental health issues. For these individuals, better paid employment is often the only and best way that they can make their lives more resilient.

Our pilot intervention will utilise fresh and personable approaches, working through and alongside trusted intermediaries such as housing associations and housing teams who know their clients well and are in the best position to motivate and support voluntary engagement to improve their skills and career prospects.

We will undertake an action-research approach, finding out and recording perspectives from all key stakeholders – in particular – those experiencing ‘in-work poverty’; local employers; partner agencies such as housing services, learning and advice providers. We will combine highly personalised approaches, including both ‘light touch’ and more intensive and focused support to help alleviate specific barriers to in-work progression.

## Market failure

In relation to our proposal, the market failure is where people have become entrenched on low income and insecure employment, and government funded interventions have not currently helped them to move on from these circumstances.

For our target group this entrenchment (in general) arises from:

- A lack of self-belief and/or motivation to take action and invest in skills development which would increase their employability and which could then lead to higher earnings;
- The higher incidence of barriers which occur in low income families and neighbourhoods which can diminish employability and incur additional costs for government, such as: lack of adequate housing supply; health inequalities, including higher levels of long term illness and disability; lower educational attainment and qualifications, including lower levels of literacy, numeracy and IT skills;
- Imperfect information about and access to a range of services, entitlements, and support which they could receive or purchase which will help them to move out of low income insecure employment;
- Employer practices and behaviour which do not sufficiently encourage staff training and development and/or where individuals are in employment which is less likely to benefit from progression support, such as zero hours contracts, temporary contracts, and self-employment.

There is a constant flow of households into and out of poverty and a wide range of circumstances will determine the ability of a household to sustain their move out of poverty. The pilot will be testing whether by minimising the impact of the above failures the flows out of poverty can be increased, claims of WTC have decreased and that individuals can sustain this progression.

The changing nature of the UK labour market has led to increased insecure employment and self-employment. The pilot will be addressing the problems when individuals are, or feel, trapped in this part of the labour market. The nature of employer demand will also be addressed through interventions to encourage HR practices which can: increase security of employment and working hours; encourage staff progression; more flexible working for parents and those with caring responsibilities.

## Impact

The overall aim of the pilot for individuals who receive the service is to increase household income through additional hours and/or a higher paid job either with the existing employer or by moving jobs.

The aim in working with employers is to increase the supply of jobs in our area which have support for progression (advice, mentoring, training, etc.) and which have flexible working practices for those that need it.

Consequently, the anticipated impacts (recognising that not all can be measured) are:

- 3,000 people will engage in the process and approximately 1200 individuals (40%) will achieve a sustained reduction in their benefit claims for WTC, Universal Credit, Housing Benefit and Child Tax Credits;
- Reduced likelihood of a return to unemployment;
- Lower demand for services as a result of reduced levels of poverty and increased wellbeing – for example through reduced take up of advice, debt, housing support and health-related services;
- A possible reduction in financial debt and rent arrears by participants.

### **Generating robust evidence on ‘what works’**

Our learning aims for the project are:

1. Which services are needed and which are the most effective in engaging and supporting targeted individuals to progress – including the best mix of digital and face-to-face support?
2. How is the motivation and ambition to progress in employment best promoted and encouraged?
3. What are the characteristics of those who progress and those who do not?
4. Which services and communication channels best provide employers with an increased understanding of the benefits of employee progression and retention?
5. What mechanisms work best when co-ordinating and/or integrating different support services provided by the public sector and community partners?

Robust evidence will be generated by testing different activities within the target cohort, such as: different locations and length of advice sessions; a range of personalised (through face-to-face, e-mail, and telephone) and online advice contacts; effectiveness of different organisations to provide advice; whether the use of client responsive budgets makes a difference to their personal circumstances.

Evidence on what works with employers will be generated by testing findings from previous pilots (e.g. DWP, In-work progression: supporting information for Work Coaches (IWP0044) that worked with employers to improve progression. Ultimately, in supporting priority individuals ‘bottom up’ to benefit from progression opportunities in our locality, this could involve: testing different ways of communicating with employers of different sizes, across all local sectors; testing the benefits of our targeted approach when working with employers across different sectors; trialling links and activities with recruitment and temporary worker agencies.

Our pilot is based on integrating support which already exists and improving access to this support for the target group. We will trial new systems and test different mechanisms for how relevant public agencies and community partners align funding and services. We

also aim to demonstrate that by aligning and focusing existing support services we can achieve increased outcomes for this group within the same envelope of funding.

In developing this business case, we are aware that Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Combined Authority are proposing a related innovation pilot which focuses on in-work progression through a specific sector focus. We are committed to working together with this and other relevant successful pilots to obtain additional evidence, including: a comparison of our pilot models (i.e. engaging target individuals vs engaging a key sector), collaborative product development – including evaluation methodologies – and sharing of good practice.

## **Evaluation**

The evaluation will be designed to deliver robust evidence on the quantifiable impacts and the effectiveness of the services which are thought to have a causal link with the impacts on this particular target group.

For targeted individuals our intention is to identify a control group where individuals can be matched with those in the intervention group. However, a full 'randomised controlled trial' (RCT) may not be possible nor desirable. Given the complexities of an impact evaluation for an in-work population we intend to initially commission a feasibility study to determine the most effective methodology. This will be done in sufficient time to build evaluation into programme design and commission external evaluators for the beginning of the pilot.

The key issues to be resolved are:

1. the ability to manage any random allocation given the target group;
2. the method by which interventions can be isolated from other activities and wider economic and societal influences;
3. the availability of HMRC data on WTC and CTC and DWP data for those on UC;
4. the possible long-term maturity of effects of interventions eg. the gains of additional training is recognised of having an increasing impact over time; the stimulus to move to a higher paid job may only be realised in the medium to long-term.

Particularly the latter may mean that a full RCT would not identify the true extent of impact unless conducted over a timescale considerably longer than the pilot. However, we intend the evaluation to have a methodology which gives a thorough understanding of the intervention group. Pending the feasibility study, our current approach is to carry out in-depth focus groups with beneficiaries during project set up and then to conduct detailed questionnaires of participants at commencement, mid-point, exit and post-exit (number of months to be determined).

We anticipate that all evaluation costs, even where falling outside the financial year 2019/20, will be contained within this spending review period as part of a project set up procurement process.

From our initial focus groups and all project questionnaires we will want to understand:

1. The extent to which individual attitudes and behaviour has changed;
2. Whether there has been a change in project participant circumstances and whether they ascribe change to the pilot's activities;
3. Their views on the services delivered and how they were delivered.

There are similar methodological issues in identifying and isolating impact on employers. There are unlikely to be a critical mass of employees with one employer where increased productivity could be identified, and productivity gains through human capital interventions can take time to be realised. However, the evaluation will be geared to exploring what works best with employers in terms of modifying their employment practices through a detailed understanding of their experience and views of the interventions.

We will commission an evaluation which will assist and inform us at every stage: pilot design; implementation and delivery; 'what works' guides; and a final impact assessment with a CBA.

## **Strategic Fit**

### **Local Area Ambition for Sustainable Growth**

Our innovation pilot is designed to have a positive impact on the West of England labour market by supporting and accelerating the development of employee skills and enabling employers to develop more effective recruitment practices to benefit from diverse talent and increased productivity.

Combined Authority Leaders regard this pilot as one of the first major 'People' strands of activity to drive forward inclusive growth and prosperity. Government support will give us a welcome opportunity to inform and develop our West of England employment and skills integrated model and strategy, including important gaps such as in-work progression for future service transformation and development.

### **Local Labour Market**

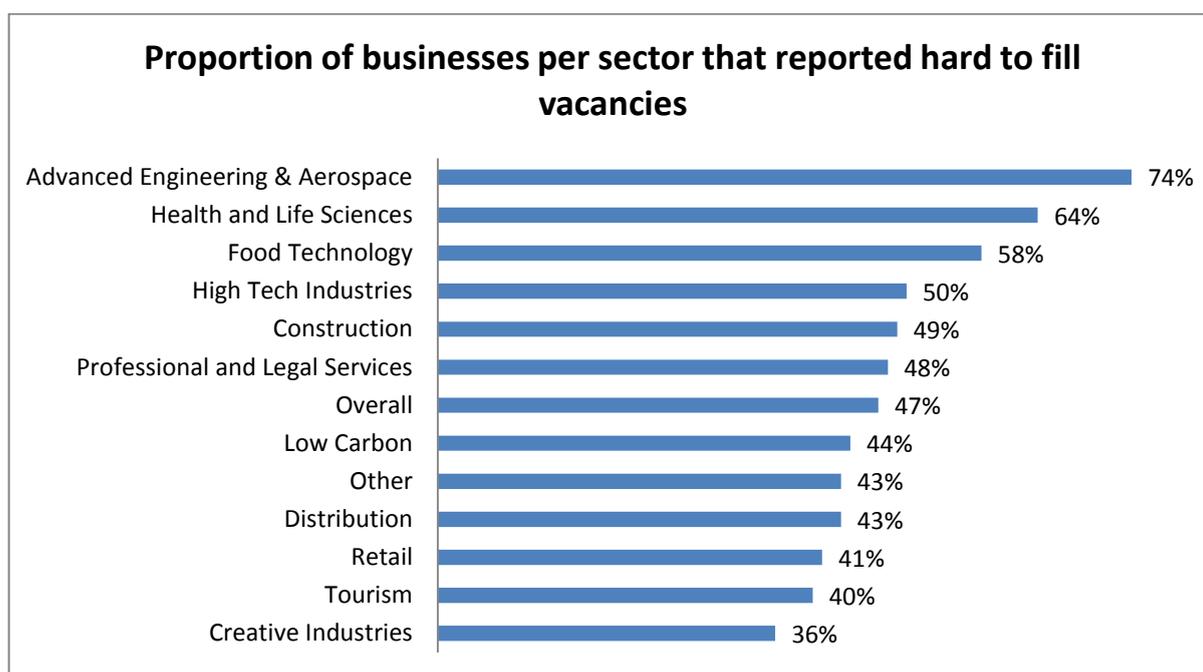
The Resolution Foundation local area profile for the West of England (December 2016) presents a picture of 'high employment, sluggish jobs growth'. This increases the urgency for establishing and embedding successful routes to progression, since those in uncertain or low wage work are less likely to be able to access jobs outside the region.

In devising this innovation pilot, the West of England Combined Authority intends to test ways to support economic growth through improved progression and targeted recruitment, focusing on The West of England LEP key sectors with the highest levels of projected jobs growth by 2022:

	2015	2022	Jobs Growth	% Change
<b>Health &amp; Social Care</b>	79,735	88,175	8,440	10.6%
<b>Professional &amp; Legal Services</b>	62,461	68,424	5,963	9.5%
<b>Visitor Economy</b>	55,982	59,768	3,786	6.8%
<b>Retail</b>	83,325	87,036	3,711	4.5%
<b>Construction Sector</b>	22,802	25,642	2,840	12.5%
<b>Food Tech</b>	61,847	64,493	2,646	4.3%
<b>Distribution</b>	9,476	10,938	1,462	15.4%
<b>Creative &amp; Digital Sector</b>	17,008	18,104	1,096	6.4%
<b>High Tech</b>	18,752	19,554	802	4.3%
<b>Low Carbon</b>	6,116	6,612	496	8.1%
<b>Advanced Engineering</b>	29,688	29,773	85	0.3%

Source: EMSI Analyst

According to the latest LEP Employer Survey (January 2017), 47% of employers who responded reported on going difficulties with recruiting skilled staff into hard to fill vacancies.



Source: West of England Employer Skills Survey 2016

In the same survey, 64% of employers identified 'low number of applicants with the required skills' as the main reason for their hard to fill vacancies. 24% identified the low number of applicants with the required attitude, motivation or personality for their particular vacancies.

## Existing Service Integration and Provision

Evidence from studies working with individuals to enable a return to work highlights that there is little awareness of what support is available. The Timewise Foundation report *Jobs Not Careers* finds that, amongst the individuals that they evaluated, there was no awareness of the National Careers Service.

Furthermore, criteria determining eligibility for financial support for training is confusing and potentially represents a barrier. Equally, individuals may require further support before accessing loan based finance such as budgeting. The West of England Devolution Deal provides us with an opportunity to influence Advanced Learner Loans which we can test and develop through this pilot.

In the West of England there are positive examples of joint working on the delivery of different funded services through a wide network of employment and skills providers. However, whilst there is a strong track record of collaborative working and successful programme management, this does not extend across all related service areas, and has to date excluded 'in-work' progression activities.

In relation to our proposed in-work progression pilot, whilst there are currently no similar targeted programmes in place, there are some services that can be built on, aligned and 'add value', including:

- i) **HYPE West (Cabinet Office)** is an award winning youth employment programme managed by local authorities and the DWP that has combined engagement, job coaching and in work support. As a result of the success of this project, 600 unemployed young people were engaged, of which 384 (64%) obtained sustainable employment. Some elements of the HYPE model can be built on and extended through this pilot, particularly employer engagement, in work support and use of personalised budgets to overcome individual barriers to work progression. HYPE has built a legacy network of local providers who share a culture of collaboration which is evident in their continued joint working on existing into-work programmes in the area.
- ii) **Tenant Support and Homeless Prevention Services** are provided through a number of registered social landlords, in partnership with the DWP and local authorities – including engagement, IAG, pre-employment support, training, work placements and apprenticeships. Existing data sharing arrangements have been achieved, making joint working for this project deliverable.

Bristol City Council is one of 28 **DCLG Homelessness Prevention 'Trailblazer'** areas aimed at preventing people from becoming homeless. The Bristol 'trailblazer' programme will focus on households most at risk of homelessness if their private rented sector tenancy comes to an end. An example of how we will align this programme is by working closely with the intervention team so that eligible tenants can access personalised in-work progression support. Housing link workers will be in a good position to engage with tenants and carry out proactive referrals, but will not have the resources or expertise to provide employment progression support.

- iii) **Targeted Adult Education and Apprenticeship Provision** (SFA) is currently planned and delivered through a local partnership across FE colleges, local authorities, independent training providers and DWP. Bristol City Council has been successfully piloting the customised 'A Roof over My Head' short course with tenants who are at risk of homelessness which can be linked in and adapted through this pilot. In the second year of delivery, we can consider options for improving in-work progression outcomes through our AEB commissioning framework and outcome agreement.
- iv) **ERDF West of England Business Support Services** is a new intervention that includes business support workshops and 1-1 sessions and centralised intensive support to achieve high growth. Currently early in the commissioning process, project contacts have offered support for integrating high performance work practices into the programme.
- v) **Skills West: Connecting for Success** (ESF/SFA) is a new intervention designed to increase the responsiveness of the skills and training system in the West of England to meet the needs of local employers. The provision is currently at planning stage and includes a number of related elements. An example of how we will align this programme is by linking into the 3200 opportunities for individuals. Skills West will create the opportunities but not broker them. We can therefore make links to our cohort directly and through the legacy register of employers willing to offer on-going opportunities.
- vi) **West of England Enhanced CEIAG service** (ESF/SFA) is a new contract that includes an offer of face to face, in depth advice and guidance to 630 employed residents, including progression.

### **DWP Evidence Strategy**

The DWP have provided strategic evidence to ensure that our innovation pilot has maximum impact on local labour market and employment priorities:

### **Contribution to Jobcentre Plus Future Priorities**

Jobcentre Plus (Avon, Severn and Thames District) has been actively involved in the development of this business case and are keen to support this initiative going forwards. This pilot potentially serves JCP in a number of ways, it will:

- provide valuable insight into what works in engaging in-work benefit customers and supporting them to progress within the local labour market;
- 'warm-up' potential Universal Credit customers to the conversation about in-work progression, in preparation for their eventual migration;
- provide for customers, whose earnings progress beyond the upper threshold, an exit route from benefit.

By focussing on Tax Credit customers as the primary target group and using social housing providers as the main reference source, the pilot places minimal demand on JCP resource and avoids contamination of DWP trials. There will be opportunity for suitable JCP customers to participate in the pilot (those that naturally migrate to UC during the period of trial, for example) and we will work collaboratively to optimise those opportunities within the wider JCP provision offer.

In terms of employer engagement, JCP will again derive benefit from the insight provided into what works in engaging and influencing local employers to adopt and embrace flexible working practices that accommodate a progressive workforce. The pilot is fully in harmony with the DWP and Universal Credit aims of making work pay through the ABC - "A job; A Better job, A Career".

JCP at a local level will look to collaborate with the pilot to co-ordinate employer engagement activity to optimise resource and minimise duplicate contacts to employers.

### **Labour Market issues and opportunities**

- A significant number of major projects are likely to impact on the local labour market, providing a range of new job opportunities by 2022, including: Hinkley Point; Bristol Arena site; Rail electrification; Redevelopment projects (Bath Riverside and new hotel developments; significant housing developments at the Keynsham Urban Extension, Mulberry Park and Enfield sites; Dolphin Square; Somerdale - (former Cadbury factory, Keynsham); airport developments; Oldbury Power Station; Cribbs Causeway expansion.
- In addition to the projected jobs growth, it is anticipated that there will be continued jobs vacancies through normal job 'churn', particularly in retail, low carbon, visitor economy, logistics, construction and health care sectors.
- In supporting targeted in-work progression, the project will need to take account of the local sectors, occupations and vacancies that are appropriate for the target group and where there are progression opportunities.

### **Universal Credit (UC)**

The local DWP strategic management team have highlighted the positive opportunities presented by this project to help prepare for the full service roll out of Universal Credit by March 2018 and beyond. In the West of England we have the advantage of UC full service in Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) since May 2016, including collaborative working with all social landlords.

The DWP now have a live service in Bristol and South Gloucestershire, and are planning for implementation for UC full roll out through a local stakeholder analysis and communications plan.

As the gateway to all other benefits closes, it is anticipated that caseloads will build up as all existing DWP customers are migrated to UC until 2021. This means that the DWP will have contact with a much larger number of customers, either to encourage them to get

back into the labour market or to increase their earnings. Through our in-work progression pilot, we will be able to identify and work with WTC/HB claimants in preparation for this transition.

The DWP is currently running an In Work Progression Randomised Control Trial across the Jobcentre Plus network which involves four job centres in the West of England. Interim results will be available in early 2017 to inform our final pilot design to ensure our activities are aligned and results optimised. Local DWP Managers are confident that our innovation pilot can add value to this control trial, in particular by finding new ways of engaging and igniting aspiration amongst priority customers so that they can become independent of government work related benefits.

## **Innovation**

### **In-Work Progression Model - Outline**

Based on our project rationale and proposed impacts (see section 1), our innovation proposal includes core elements to achieve a supported customer journey to successful in-work progression (for a more detailed logic chain please see Appendix 1.)

#### **Step 1: Engagement and Referral**

We are aiming to engage 3000 beneficiaries who are in receipt of WTC and in low paid and insecure employment by working with and through trusted housing intermediaries with their established close contacts and positive working relationships with tenants. Housing associations, registered social landlords, local authority housing and housing benefits teams are already working closely with our target group to ensure that their accommodation is made more secure. We will support this objective by providing more specialist employment advice and hands on support for in-work progression. Beneficiaries will be selected to participate in the project on a 'first come first served' basis – this will enable us to manage demand and also ensure that we do not skew evaluation results through the introduction of different recruitment filters.

This will be achieved by creating and funding a team of 'Navigators' who will be matrix managed across partnership agencies. This will involve the employment of new staff and investment in current staff through secondments and extended contracts so that existing staff can be focus on new clients and carry out different activities. Navigators will draw on their existing knowledge and trusting working relationships with tenants, as well as carrying out new outreach and marketing activities to generate interest in and referrals to our progression support service. As part of our initial project set up, we will hold tenant events where we carry out focus group and "vox pops" interviews to ensure the project co-design is built 'bottom up' to ensure maximum engagement and success, and to provide robust baseline evidence in building our programme evaluation and evidence from the start.

*This step provides innovation through the focus on and co-design with social housing tenants and joint working with social housing and homeless prevention providers.*

## **Step 2: Diagnostic Assessment and Action Planning**

All engaged tenants will undergo a diagnostic assessment of their in-work progression situation – including their assets, barriers, commitment to progression, and development opportunities. This process will build an in-depth baseline picture of project beneficiaries providing rich evidence for the project evaluation and future service design. Through our diagnostic assessments, we will better understand how an interactive web based portal could intelligently assess and direct similar groups of individuals to relevant packages of support as part of a more cost effective system in the future. Depending on the circumstances and support requirements of each engaged tenant, Navigators will be able to action immediate support or to refer individuals for more intensive and specialist assistance from our network of providers. All beneficiaries will have a personal action plan which will be reviewed on a regular basis and used to inform our project evaluation.

*This step provides innovation through the use of digital assessments and the testing of different assessment methodologies, including nationally recognised and robust evidence tools (such as Outcome Stars; Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale; WellWorth etc).*

## **Step 3: Supporting Personalised Solutions**

A range of personalised support can be actioned immediately through our team of Navigators, for example, this may involve preparing a CV or job application, scanning for job vacancies, supporting individuals to investigate progression opportunities with their current employer or new employers, supporting research into formal training opportunities or helping individuals work through strategies to overcome more practical barriers to in-work progression e.g. travel and childcare. Our pilot will build on previous in-work progression support programmes so that participant information and support materials are made available, through face-to-face sessions and also through self-help web based employee toolkits. Where individuals require more complex assistance, the Navigator can procure support through a specialist commissioned provider, where more intensive, targeted and specialised approaches are required. A customer responsive budget will be held by Navigators to cover progression related costs, for example, this will be used to cover the cost of items that will support in-work progression, for example: DBS check; course fees or materials; interview clothes; specialist career coaching; counselling sessions etc.

*This step provides innovation through the testing of what support works best – through better integration or through the development of new provision.*

## **Step 4: Progression Support and Tracking**

Whether providing direct support and/or procuring more specialist intervention, Navigators maintain close and regular contact with their housing tenant beneficiaries for a minimum of 13 weeks. This is to ensure that there is a consistent level of support for progression in-

work to ensure that commitments and identified actions are followed through and momentum is sustained. This follow up support will also enable the project team to collect vital evaluation data. Due to capacity constraints, it is anticipated that the maximum period of support will be 26 weeks – after which time project beneficiaries will have been supported to draw on support from a range of independent sources, e.g. in the workplace, through their trade union, through tenant support, through peer support.

In addition to these core project elements, our innovation project team will be developing and implementing a number of other critical progression support tools and activities, e.g.: organising peer support sessions; enabling employer/individual networking through jobs fairs and events; influencing existing skills and IAG provision; clarifying career pathways in locally important key sectors; implementing evidence from previous studies on sector interventions into packages for business growth.

*This step provides innovation through testing the most effective methods to secure progression 'retention' and to track intervention outcomes.*

## **Employer Engagement**

Previous pilots on in-work progression have generally focused on employer-led sector based activity which informed our approach of a person-led pilot. We recognise, however that employer engagement will be necessary to support the individuals with whom we work into appropriate opportunities, whether they be with their current employer or through moving employer.

Looking at previous sector-specific work, particularly the UKCES Futures Programme and the work they did with hospitality and retail we know that:

- Engaging with employers through face-to-face contact, intermediaries and workshops are most effective
- Messages tailored to be relevant to the employer and their needs work best
- Employers are interested in soft skills as well as technical qualifications
- The opportunity to make the tools and toolkits developed during the programme accessible to other employers in sector is worth testing
- Developing and testing software in the timeframe of the pilot is unlikely to be feasible.

Based on this knowledge, our pilot will:

Work with the existing employer support and engagement programmes to embed key messages which align to the aims of our pilot in the work being delivered. This will principally entail the production of information and materials on High Performance Work Practices which we will roll out in advance of the interventions for individuals. The information produced will highlight the business benefits of High Performance Workplace Practices and draw on case studies which demonstrate return on investment in their sector.

Guidance will include a 'how to' toolkit for businesses and the advisors / engagement officers working on the identified programmes. We hope to access toolkits developed

through previous pilots such as the UKCES Futures project. Examples of behaviours to be promoted will include developing flexible job roles particularly at progression levels, staff development and training to enable wider job roles, developing performance management processes to support staff and recognize good work.

We will use employer support and engagement programmes to gather feedback from businesses which will support the identification of employers who promote 'good' jobs and on the tools we intend to provide prior to our work with individuals.

Closer to the pilot start date we will then begin to publicise the activity with employers so they are aware of the pilot and what it seeks to achieve, plus the benefits the work will offer to the West of England economy. We will also ensure that this project and the employer 'offer' forms part of an integrated package of support with seamless alignment with other core services, for example through JCP.

### **The value of recruitment**

For employers who gain suitable new recruits for their job roles, we are keen to recognise the commercial value of this service. A recruitment advertisement in a local paper can cost around £1000; an employee found via a recruitment agent costs around 15% of the salary.

We don't expect all of the individuals that we work with to change jobs in order to progress but some of them will. We are currently exploring the use of an existing digital solution which is up and running but new to the marketplace and unproven.

When we identified these activities we looked at the existing evidence and how we could apply it to the resources we will have available in the area. We also considered roll out and sustainability. We will build this activity into the impact evaluation looking at the effectiveness of the tools, the effectiveness of different types of activities and the sustainability of these solutions. By working across sectors we can identify commonalities and also where sector specific information is required.

### **What is new?**

Our proposed model will provide government with exciting innovations through our unique approach to improving in-work progression. This will in turn provide new evidence to inform future policy development and investments to bring about future cost efficiencies and positive impacts for the economy, businesses, families and individuals. A review of existing evidence shows that the majority of in-work progression pilots, with the exception of the DWP's own pilot, have focused on sectoral interventions such as the UKCES Futures Programme.

Our model will respond to calls at the House Of Commons Work & Pensions Committee report on In-Work Progression in Universal Credit (2015-16), including proposals that different approaches to personalised support are evaluated and that structural barriers are addressed. The project will also evaluate the effectiveness of some of the proposals submitted to the DWP in 2013 under the 'Extending labour market interventions to in-work claimants' call for ideas. New evidence will include:

- The targeting of progression support on tenants in low paid, insecure and low skilled employment – an opportunity for all partners to get to know more about the ‘working poor’ who are increasingly at risk of homelessness due to welfare reform and the increased emphasis through the UC regime on taking and evidencing proactive steps towards financial independence. As part of our project we want to engage both tenants and employers in an area wide discussion about the future of work and the issues and possible solutions for them and the West of England – we will record their views through film and digital media to share with other key stakeholders at a local, regional and national level;
- Developing and trialling ambitious new approaches to encourage career progression through more responsive IAG and skills development opportunities, including direct outreach with people who are juggling busy and sometimes stressed working lives, trialling the use of ‘contact moments’ people have with housing providers and housing benefit providers to promote opportunities to retrain and to progress. Through this pilot we are aiming to trial a range of motivational engagement strategies – through using trusted intermediaries and through directly recruited and trained navigators targeting specific WTC geographic ‘hot spots’.
- Providing personalised and specialist support to address the unique barriers to progression that are experienced by individuals – for example: low literacy, numeracy and language skills; childcare; travel; workplace support; attitudinal barriers, including perceived and actual experiences of prejudice and discrimination in the workplace based on postcode or protected characteristics; improving confidence and work place competencies; provision of careers guidance; skills development etc.
- Engaging employers differently – aligning resources with local employer engagement agencies, employer representative bodies (e.g. Business West) and Trade Unions; linking up with innovative place-based leadership business engagement (e.g. Bristol Learning City Partnership WORKS), adopting new approaches to sectoral business engagement; working across diverse sectors, including micro and SME employers – supporting individuals to progress across organisations as well as with their existing employer.
- Testing a more integrated and comprehensive approach in the West of England – working across lead employment and skills strategic leaders, commissioners and providers, and also working across funding silos to establish a more sustainable integrated model of working in the future. Using this pilot to better align mainstream skills and IAG resources in order to test how best to increase the positive outcomes for this target group – this will include better development, signposting and take up of more flexible and accessible online advice and training.

## Scalability

With government support, the West of England Combined Authority will develop and test a strong in-work progression model and framework that can be scaled up and replicated in other similar localities.

The West of England area includes diverse localities within our wider sub-regional footprint, incorporating a large and small city and towns, urban, rural and coastal areas. This enables us to ‘test out’ different approaches and to gather, collate and report evidence of what works, and what doesn’t, to inform other places.

To help achieve future scalability and potential roll-out, we will:

- Evaluate outcomes across the complete West of England area which includes urban, rural and coastal communities;
- Include consideration of sectors in the evaluation looking for a relationship between existing and progression job types;
- Review relevant evidence at programme design phase and implement relevant findings (such as improving service integration to ensure individuals are aware of the available support);
- Implement evidence on working with sectors to test application within our geography;
- Produce accessible best practice ‘what works’ guides as part of the evaluation;
- Undertake to share findings through learning forums.

### Target cohorts

For our two year pilot we intend to target 3000 adults aged 19+ who are in work and who are in receipt of WTC or UC, and who are also social housing tenants.

Based on the latest available UA level data, we have identified that the total numbers benefitting families in the West of England who were in work and receipt of WTC as of August 2014 is approximately:

	In-work families		
	All families		
	WTC and CTC	WTC only	Total in-work
<b>Bath and North East Somerset UA</b>	3,400	900	4,300
<b>Bristol, City of UA</b>	10,900	3,200	14,100
<b>South Gloucestershire UA</b>	5,500	1,100	6,600
	19,800	5,200	25,000

Local DWP colleagues have agreed to carry out further work with us to establish the cohort on UC and on WTC currently. Even if we are unable to include Universal Credit customers in this pilot, we are not dependent on this cohort for this innovation pilot to

proceed. We have sufficient numbers of potential beneficiaries across our wider cohort – i.e. people in work on low pay who live in social housing and are at risk of homelessness.

Within this broad cohort, we will be aiming to identify and work with individuals within our target cohort who also have the following characteristics:

- People who are currently presenting high level risk factors in relation to their housing situation – for example, those eligible for social housing living in temporary accommodation; social housing tenants in rent arrears who are being contacted through rent management teams;
- People with low motivation to increase their earnings as a result of entrenched cultural expectations, e.g. those who have obtained paid work for 16 hours and have satisfied the current DWP benefits regime, 'happy' to stay in this position, continuing to receive work related benefit;
- People with family commitments who feel there are insurmountable barriers to retraining and gaining higher qualifications e.g. perceptions of affordability and attitudinal factors (such as a lack of confidence) are key inhibitors;
- People with protected characteristics in relation to equalities legislation: women, BME people (including refugees with legal status to remain), Disabled people, LGBT people and older people;
- People living in geographic areas that face specific challenges in relation to employment progression e.g. rural isolation; areas of multiple deprivation etc.;
- Single parents/carers and others with caring responsibilities;
- People with few or no formal qualifications, including people with low levels of literacy, numeracy and English language skills;
- People with low level digital skills who are unable to adapt to the accelerating pace of technological change in the workplace;
- People with insecure employment contracts, including zero hours contracts;
- People living with a range of health conditions, including mental health, which is impacting on their in-work progression;
- People who work for small employers who are not planning to expand;
- People whose jobs are at risk due to restructuring, downsizing, merger or closure.

Across all these priority groups, we will utilise in-depth knowledge of housing officers and link workers to identify and support these individuals to get involved in the project, including through a range of engagement and motivational activities. Navigators will use their in-depth diagnostic assessment tools to obtain baseline information which will enable us to understand the distance travelled as a result of the project interventions and the particular support packages that work, and those that are less successful.

## Value for money considerations

### Affordability

We are asking for £3,951,371 DWP over the two years of the pilot. A provisional budget is included in Appendix 2.

It is planned to give a service to 3,000 people giving a gross unit cost of £1,317 per participant. This includes the higher costs that are associated with an innovative pilot, such as the full evaluation costs.

The anticipated split over the financial years is planned to be:

2017/18 = £529,993

2018/19 = £2,330,096

2019/20= £1,091,283

We will commence delivery of services nine months after the award decision is notified to us. On the current timetable we anticipate this will be January 2018.

Therefore a maximum of three months' worth of delivery costs have been included in 2017/18 and in addition we have included approximately £32,750 of start-up costs, giving the total of £529,993 for this financial year. This remains dependant on a cautious profile of referrals and starters, and it may be possible to increase this with a timely Award decision by DWP. See Appendix 2 for a provisional profile.

We propose that DWP agrees with the Combined Authority to pay a proportion as a 'service fee' and the remainder against agreed indicators. However, given this is an innovative pilot then there will necessarily be a higher risk for funders and providers. Consequently, we propose that 30% of the grant be paid as a 'service fee' and 70% against achievement of an agreed profile of starters with a personal action plan and evidence of received in-work progression services over a minimum of 13 weeks.

When we externally commission provision the majority of payments will be on a PBR basis. The contracted out elements will be put out to competitive tender and the majority of payments to the successful contractors will be by 'payments by results' or milestones for the evaluation. We expect PBR indicators to reflect those agreed between the Combined Authority and DWP for the payment of the grant.

Our model is testing how beneficiaries can access other local services and support. We have estimated the value of this 'aligned funding', which is defined as the likely value of existing local services and projects which participants may access as part of their action plans. This is estimated to be in the region of £1,214,000.

Examples of the sorts of projects and services to be 'aligned' are included in Appendix 3.

## Cost Benefit Analysis

Initially, our aim is for **the pilot to be fiscally neutral**. In other words, we will generate savings in benefit expenditure which are at least equal to the cost of the pilot. This will give an overall fiscal benefit-cost ratio (in the NE CBA model) of 1, with the payback period over four years.

For the operation and delivery of the pilot we believe we need to keep the aims and indicators as simple as possible. Our intention is therefore to use an 'improved household income' indicator of £3,951,371 for Navigators and external providers. This target will generate the required benefit savings because of the reduced claim resulting from the higher income. The average reduced claim for the whole programme will be £3,293, equal to the unit cost multiplied by the projected number of those beneficiaries who report a reduction in their In Work benefit claims. See 'Performance' below for further discussion on this indicator.

However, we recognise that only covering the actual cost of the pilot is a relatively crude indicator, and there are a number of issues which must also be taken into account when doing a full CBA as part of the evaluation:

1. The indicator does not take into account **deadweight**, where people would have increased their income without the support of the pilot
2. Advice from Navigators may lead some people to **increase their benefit claim** if they were not previously receiving their full entitlements
3. It does not capture the wider **social benefits** such as improved well-being, and reduced poverty-related problems
4. The potential impact, or **displacement**, on other low-paid workers should be taken into account
5. It does not capture the specific costs and benefits of the pilot's work with **employers**.

Most of these issues are untested within the context of in-work progression. We think that with a step-by-step approach we can build a strong methodology to give robust results.

First, we intend to use the New Economy CBA model throughout the pilot. However, the model is not wholly designed for in-work projects, as such a slightly different approach will be needed. An early task of the external evaluators will be to ensure that the New Economy model is fit for purpose and that the pilot will be able to quantify the inputs required. This step will be an important element of the evaluation feasibility study (see 'Evaluation' section).

Second, we will produce a benchmark CBA model which will require the development and agreement of various assumptions about the profile of starters and performance. These assumptions will then inform the performance indicators we use for our referral agencies, in-house staff, and external providers.

The benchmark CBA can only be done by modelling different types of households claiming WTC/CTC or UC and the impact of changes to their income. We will use DWP recommended benefit calculators to estimate change in income and the reduction in benefit spending.

Third, we are committed to identifying the full range of outcomes (as identified in the NE CBA tool) and quantify the potential savings by the full range of our partners. This will be a key requirement of our external evaluators, recognising that we may need new ways to monitor and measure savings in other services.

## **Performance**

Our aim is for the cost of the pilot to be covered by the savings generated by reduced claims for WTC/CTC or UC, and related savings. Therefore our main indicator will be the estimated cumulative benefit savings as a result of beneficiaries increasing their earnings.

Unlike conventional unemployment programmes that are funded on a defined outcome, this pilot is designed to meet, understand and test out interventions for in-work progression. This approach involves some risks as there is little hard evidence on which to base any target on the numbers of beneficiaries that will increase their earnings. This approach also means that support is likely to be more personalised as Navigators and providers will be focused on achieving earnings gains, no matter how small.

Our emphasis is therefore on achieving the cumulative benefit savings rather than numerical targets for the number of people that progress. As part of our risk mitigation, we are assuming that some people will significantly reduce their benefit claim, some will reduce their benefit claim marginally, and some may make no progress or take a long time to progress. Our starting assumption is that around 40% of beneficiaries will increase their income to one extent or another. We will put in place indicators and metrics that can monitor the numbers of people progressing and the amounts. These metrics will enable us to monitor on a regular basis the progress towards the cumulative indicator.

We want to ensure gains in income are sustained and not the result of extra hours in a limited timeframe. We intend to measure the gain in income over a period of 12 months after a person has ceased receiving support. This will mean that the evaluation will continue after the pilot has ceased, however evaluators will be asked to report regularly on performance and what is working and what improvements are needed.

We will need early discussions with government on how we accurately measure the benefit savings for the cumulative indicator. However, our assumption is that we will need to use self-declared increases in earnings by beneficiaries and input the changes into one of DWP's recognised benefit calculators to derive the reduced value of benefits. For non-UC claimants all benefit savings, including Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support, will contribute to the cumulative indicator.

Beneath the cumulative indicator we will agree more detailed performance indicators with the Department. For example, the ERA evaluation found that support increased the likelihood of working full-time, so we will be closely monitoring the numbers of people that

make the transition from part-time to full-time. Overall we will be driven by the need to ensure the pilot is fiscally neutral and at best delivers cashable savings to national and local budgets. We think our cumulative indicator, backed up by more detailed indicators and metrics, will provide a strong performance framework for the pilot as a whole and for all staff and providers.

## **Deliverability**

### **Capacity and capability**

In the West of England Combined Authority there is a strong vision and ambition in relation to transforming employment and skills across the 16-19 and the 19+ landscape. To drive this forward through our system leadership and integrated working, we are confident that the current Employment and Skills Leadership Team has proven capacity and capability to plan, develop and execute high quality employment support interventions that are delivered to the highest quality, on time, within budget.

A recent example of this approach was our recent management of the highly successful and the award winning HYPE West programme. This 18 month £1.4 million Cabinet Office funded programme was delivered through a multiagency partnership across the West of England including four local authorities, the DWP and a range of business engagement and employment support providers. Project management, commissioning, monitoring and evaluation systems were efficiently designed and operated across a complex geo-political landscape. As a direct result of our successful project outcomes, including widespread sharing of best practice, elements of the HYPE West model have now been mainstreamed through on-going funding, including through public health. Evidenced practice has also been used to inform our integrated employment and skills model, including this new innovation pilot.

In addition to our existing internal capacity and capability, the Combined Authority is also in a strong position to draw on external expertise and resources to support our project development and delivery. As an initial step, to help us develop this business case, we have engaged an expert consultant through the Learning and Work Institute. In developing our evaluation strategy, we will also be keen to draw on both national and local expertise through specialist agencies and local HE partners.

### **Commissioning**

Across the new Combined Authority we are establishing a responsive procurement system that will enable us to resource flexible and agile solutions to meet our unique employment and skills challenges.

One of the advantages of place-based working is our ability to implement flexible support funding and dynamic purchasing, and building on our strong network of innovative, creative and niche local suppliers to address very local customer needs.

As we plan and refine our Innovation Pilot, we will be able to build on the HYPE West commissioning system, and also draw on legal input and feedback in the development of the new Work Zone 'spot purchasing' umbrella agreement system in Bristol. This will enable us to draw upon a broad provider base and to have a team of independent Navigators spot purchase the best solution to meet individual needs, through expanding our established framework of specialist provision.

### **Jobcentre Plus Engagement and Integration**

DWP Jobcentre Plus is a lead partner in the development and delivery of our in-work innovation pilot. At this initial planning stage, DWP/Jobcentre Plus senior and operational managers in the West of England have identified a number of aspirations and expectations in relation to their involvement and contribution to the project:

- One of the main Jobcentre Plus (JCP) Departmental priorities at this time is the transition to UC full service. UC is underpinned by employment progression. Whereas new claimants or those under-going benefits change will migrate to UC, those who form part of the 'old' case load will not migrate in the first instance and will take some time before they do. The West of England In-Work Progression Innovation Pilot is being co- designed to provide invaluable additional support in identifying and engaging with WTC claimants, in preparation for UC full service by 2021. Whilst this critical preparatory work is being undertaken through a collaborative partnership, with close input and steer from the local JCP Team, our involvement of housing delivery and other local specialist advice and support partners is intended to avoid placing negative capacity pressures on day-to-day JCP operations in the field.
- UC is intended to make the local labour market more dynamic. People on WTC may not feel great motivation to increase their earnings and expand their hours – by improving this motivation and providing support the innovation pilot could remove 'log jams' in the labour market and allow flow for new entrants.
- DWP UC conditionality regime – HYPE West worked best when project staff worked face-to-face with JCP job coaches and advisers. This enabled JCP staff to keep up to speed with community based services and project staff to understand the place of individuals in relation to the DWP benefits regime. In relation to the In-Work Progression Pilot it will be essential that individuals receive single messages and joined up advice, particularly in relation to updated conditionality where individuals will start to experience more pressure to increase their financial status and reduce their dependency on state benefits.
- Across our combined authority partnership, this pilot will also enable us to build a more coherent overall package of employment support through improved joined up working and service integration. Our project steering group will provide a senior manager forum to ensure that related interventions are aligned to help inform our co-design of an effective local delivery model e.g. DCLG preventing homelessness advice model; DWP In-Work Progression Trial.

- Culturally, DWP Jobcentre Plus are committed to moving away from numerical targets for people to get into work and to introduce a greater focus on quality customer service – this will take some time and will form part of the UC full service implementation. The Combined Authority can support the DWP with this transformation process as we work towards a more integrated model and service offer.

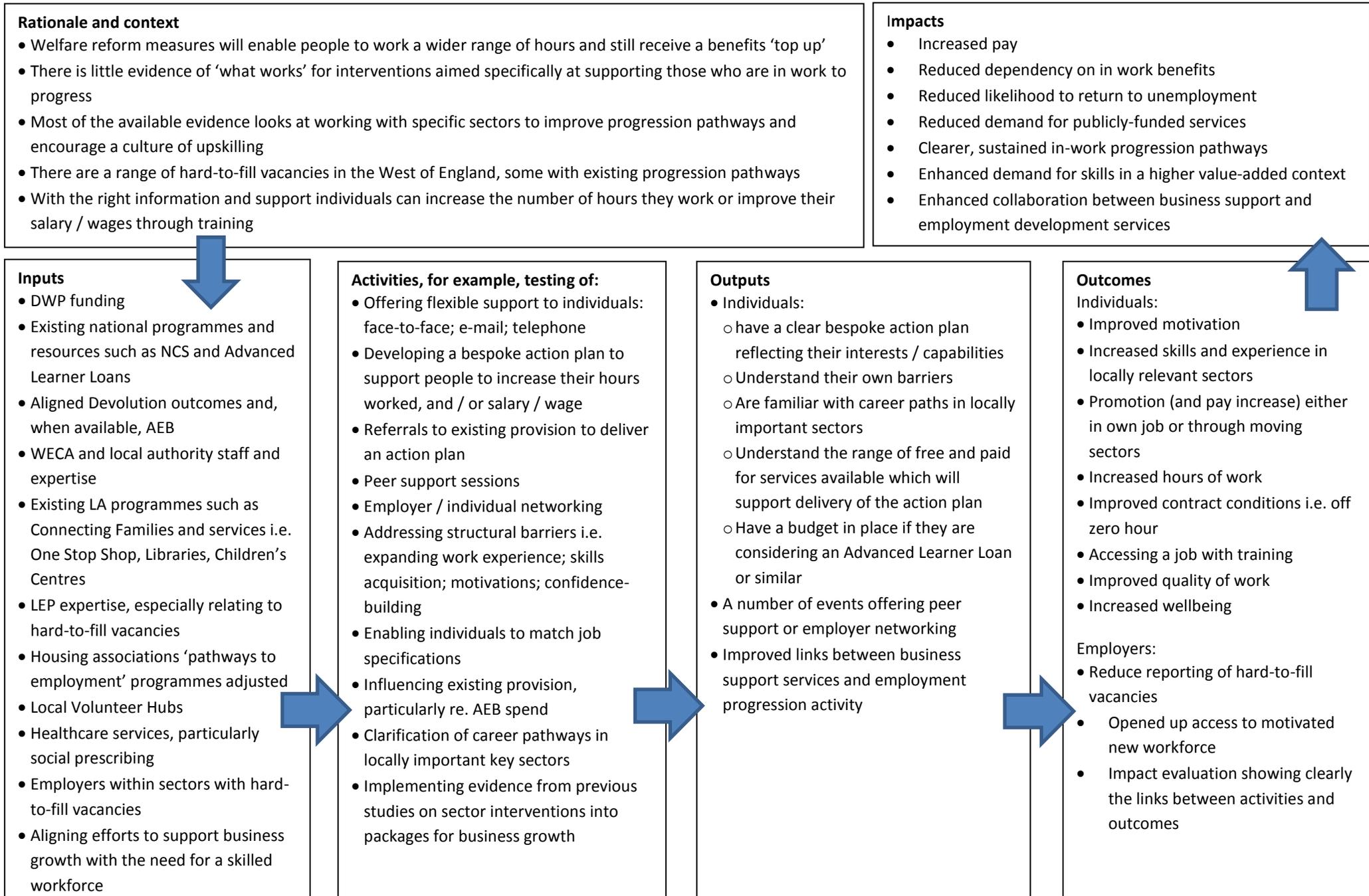
## **Governance**

The West of England Combined Authority will be the lead accountable body for our Innovation Fund pilot, made up of the new elected mayor and CEO/mayor representatives of our constituent local authorities.

A high level project steering group will be formed to oversee and manage the project on a day-to-day basis, serviced and supported by the project manager and project support worker. This steering group will be made up of all lead partner organisations across the local authorities and the DWP, with co-opted representatives from partner organisations e.g. registered social landlords, TU organisations; employers/employer engagement bodies.

A separate provider network will be formed to support effective sharing of good practice.

A detailed project governance diagram is included in Appendix 4.



## Appendix 2: Financial and Beneficiary Profile

Innovation Programme Budget	17-18			18-19					19-20				Grand Total
	Q3	Q4	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Total	
<b>Staffing fixed costs</b>													
Project manager	£12,500	£12,500	£25,000	£12,500	£12,500	£12,500	£12,500	£50,000	£12,500	£12,500	£12,500	£37,500	£112,500
Support officer	£8,750	£8,750	£17,500	£8,750	£8,750	£8,750	£8,750	£35,000	£8,750	£8,750	£8,750	£26,250	£78,750
Senior Management Time	£0	£0	£0	£0	£1,000	£0	£0	£1,000	£0	£1,000	£0	£1,000	£2,000
<b>Total Staffing</b>	<b>£21,250</b>	<b>£21,250</b>	<b>£42,500</b>	<b>£21,250</b>	<b>£22,250</b>	<b>£21,250</b>	<b>£21,250</b>	<b>£86,000</b>	<b>£21,250</b>	<b>£22,250</b>	<b>£21,250</b>	<b>£64,750</b>	<b>£193,250</b>
<b>Infrastructure Set Up</b>													
Office Equipment	£1,500	£1,500	£3,000	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500	£6,000	£1,500	£1,500	£0	£3,000	£12,000
Self Help Portal and Toolkit Development	£0	£20,000	£20,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£20,000
Legal, Financial and Procurement Costs	£0	£25,000	£25,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£25,000
CRM System	£0	£10,000	£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£10,000	£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£20,000
Marketing & Focus Groups	£10,000	£13,000	£23,000	£0	£3,000	£0	£4,000	£7,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£30,000
<b>Total Infrastructure</b>	<b>£11,500</b>	<b>£69,500</b>	<b>£81,000</b>	<b>£1,500</b>	<b>£4,500</b>	<b>£1,500</b>	<b>£15,500</b>	<b>£23,000</b>	<b>£1,500</b>	<b>£1,500</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£3,000</b>	<b>£107,000</b>
<b>Programme Costs</b>													
Navigators, (Outreach, Engagement Diagnostic and Light Touch)	£0	£160,000	£160,000	£160,000	£160,000	£160,000	£160,000	£640,000	£160,000	£160,000	£160,000	£480,000	£1,280,000
Employer Engagement	£0	£55,000	£55,000	£75,000	£55,000	£65,000	£75,000	£270,000	£75,000	£0	£0	£75,000	£400,000
Referral Costs to referring agencies	£0	£10,500	£10,500	£16,200	£12,600	£16,500	£18,000	£63,300	£14,100	£2,100	£0	£16,200	£90,000
Intervention Start- 0-8 hours contact time	£0	£49,000	£49,000	£75,600	£58,800	£77,000	£84,000	£295,400	£65,800	£9,800	£0	£75,600	£420,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£274,500</b>	<b>£274,500</b>	<b>£326,800</b>	<b>£286,400</b>	<b>£318,500</b>	<b>£337,000</b>	<b>£1,268,700</b>	<b>£314,900</b>	<b>£171,900</b>	<b>£160,000</b>	<b>£646,800</b>	<b>£2,190,000</b>
<b>Upfront Payments</b>													
8 - 16 hours contact	£0	£1,330	£1,330	£3,710	£2,730	£4,200	£3,850	£14,490	£3,990	£1,190	£0	£5,180	£21,000
16-24 hours contact time	£0	£1,960	£1,960	£12,600	£13,720	£14,000	£15,400	£55,720	£16,800	£9,520	£0	£26,320	£84,000
24 hours + contact time	£0	£0	£0	£12,250	£18,900	£14,700	£19,250	£65,100	£21,000	£16,450	£2,450	£39,900	£105,000
<b>Total Upfront Payments</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£3,290</b>	<b>£3,290</b>	<b>£28,560</b>	<b>£35,350</b>	<b>£32,900</b>	<b>£38,500</b>	<b>£135,310</b>	<b>£41,790</b>	<b>£27,160</b>	<b>£2,450</b>	<b>£71,400</b>	<b>£210,000</b>
<b>13 Week KPI Sustainment Payments</b>													
0-8 Hours contact time													
8 - 16 hours contact	£0	£0	£0	£998	£2,783	£2,048	£3,150	£8,978	£2,888	£2,993	£893	£6,773	£15,750
16-24 hours contact time	£0	£0	£0	£1,470	£9,450	£10,290	£10,500	£31,710	£11,550	£12,600	£7,140	£31,290	£63,000
24 hours + contact time	£0	£0	£0	£0	£9,188	£14,175	£11,025	£34,388	£14,438	£15,750	£14,175	£44,363	£78,750
<b>Total Outcome based 13 weekKPI sustainment payments</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£2,468</b>	<b>£21,420</b>	<b>£26,513</b>	<b>£24,675</b>	<b>£75,075</b>	<b>£28,875</b>	<b>£31,343</b>	<b>£22,208</b>	<b>£82,425</b>	<b>£157,500</b>
Client Responsive Budget	£0	£112,000	£112,000	£172,800	£134,400	£176,000	£192,000	£675,200	£150,400	£22,400	£0	£172,800	£960,000
Evaluation	£0	£16,703	£16,703	£16,703	£16,703	£16,703	£16,703	£66,811	£16,703	£16,703	£16,703	£50,108	£133,621
<b>Total Programme Costs</b>	<b>£32,750</b>	<b>£497,243</b>	<b>£529,993</b>	<b>£570,080</b>	<b>£521,023</b>	<b>£593,365</b>	<b>£645,628</b>	<b>£2,330,096</b>	<b>£575,418</b>	<b>£293,255</b>	<b>£222,610</b>	<b>£1,091,283</b>	<b>£3,951,371</b>

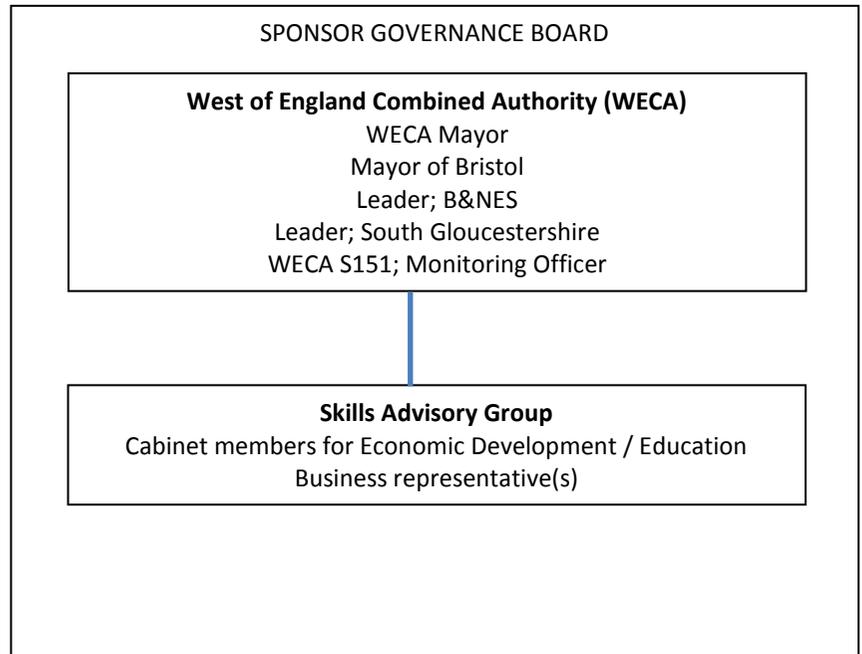
Innovation Programme Profile	17-18			18-19					19-20				Grand Total
	Q3	Q4	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Total	
<b>Programme Element</b>													
Engagement	0	350	350	540	420	550	600	2110	470	70	0	540	3,000
<b>Light Touch Service</b>													
Intervention Start and production of action plan	0	105	105	162	126	165	180	633	141	21	0	162	900
Achievement	0	0	0	11	68	74	75	227	83	90	51	224	450
<b>Full Service Upfront</b>													
Intervention Start and production of action plan	0	245	245	378	294	385	420	1477	329	49	0	378	2,100
Achievement	0	0	0	16	143	177	165	501	193	209	148	550	1,050
Employer Engagement	0	110	110	150	110	130	150	540	150	0	0	150	800
Numbers Accessing Client Responsive Budget	0	280	280	432	336	440	480	1688	376	56	0	432	2,400

**Appendix 3: Aligned Funding Elements**

<b>Element</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Estimated volume</b>	<b>Estimated Unit Cost</b>
Tenant Support and Homeless Prevention Services	£52,500	70	£750
Targeted Adult Education and Apprenticeship Provision / SFA Funded Provision	£270,000	180	£1,500
ERDF West of England Business Support Services	£50,000		
West of England Enhanced CEIAG service	£32,000	80	£400
Bristol City Council Work Zone Programme and Ways 2 Work Network	£88,000	80	£1,100
Bristol Learning City WORKS programme – including web portal and toolkits for employers and individuals	£4,000	20	£200
Bristol and South Glos Community Learning Budget	£32,000	80	£400
B&NES Your Care, Your Way linked employment portal, (currently under development).	£45,000	60	£750
Local Section 106 Development Obligations.	£42,000	60	£700
Employment and Skills Obligations through social value clauses in Council procurement activities.	£49,000	70	£700
Housing associations 'pathways to employment' programmes X4	£140,000	100	£1,400
Existing Social Prescribing Contracts	£15,000	25	£600
Big Lottery / ESF and other major VCS national and local programmes e.g. Hire Me My Way which is setting up in the West of England area	£168,000	140	£1,200
Work experience opportunities bespoke to individual needs through partner employers.	£50,000	100	£500
Skills West Connecting for Success	£50,000		
HYPE West - Further System / Process Development and alignment with Innovation Project	£40,000		
WECA and local authority staff and expertise	£50,000		
LEP expertise, especially relating to hard-to-fill vacancies and business engagement	£36,500		
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,214,000</b>		

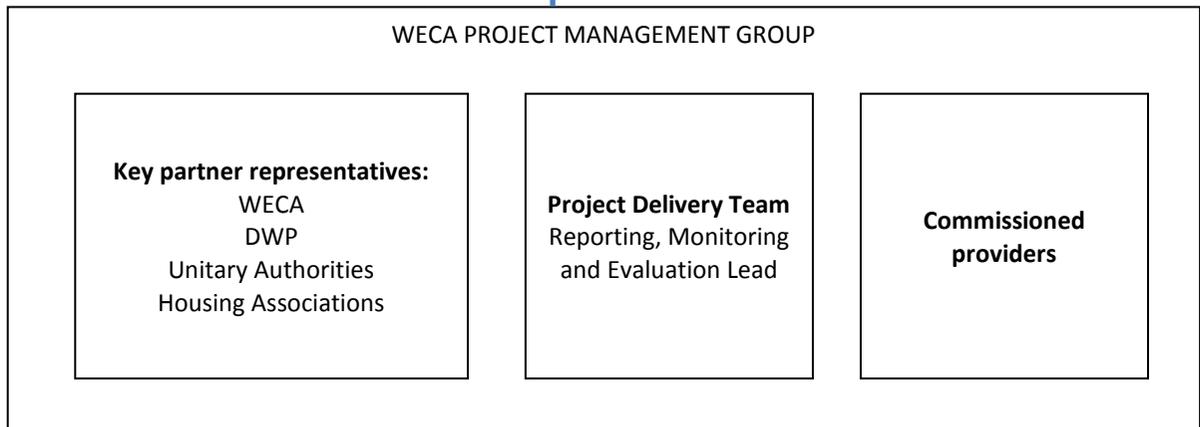
Note: Estimated values and volumes are based on predicted demand from beneficiaries requiring 'light touch' support over the two years of the pilot and are based on the current known/budgeted position. They do not reflect any potential changes in budgets/grants/programmes during the life of the project as these are currently unknown. Exact values for each individual will be identified through project monitoring. Additional and greater aligned resources will be captured through monitoring the activities undertaken by each individual engaged and supported.

**Appendix 4: Project Governance Diagram**



- Resolution of key issues*
- Decision taking beyond delegated powers*
- Reviewing project performance*
- Ensuring effective delivery*
- Challenge and support for the project team*
- Option to bring in specialist advisors*

- Project Advisors
- Tenant Reps
- Trade Unions
- Business West
- Key Sector Reps
- Advice Services
- Training Providers



- Day-to-day project management*
- Reporting against plan to SGB*
- Identifying matters requiring reference to the SGB*
- Coordinate the functional outputs of the project*
- Establish communications and information flows*

**ITEM: 13****REPORT TO: WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY****DATE: 30<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2017****REPORT TITLE: AGREE NEXT STEPS FOR ADULT EDUCATION BUDGET****AUTHOR: CHRIS JENNINGS, INTERIM HEAD OF BUSINESS & SKILLS,  
WECA****Purpose of Report**

- 1 To provide an update on the current position regarding devolution of the Adult Education Budget to the West of England Combined Authority (WECA).
- 2 To seek a decision on how to work with the Department for Education during the 'transitional' 2018/19 academic year ahead of full devolution which is now planned for 2019/20. We have been asked been asked to inform DfE of our preferred approach.

**Background**

- 3 The principal purpose of AEB is to provide adults with the skills and learning they need to equip them for work, an apprenticeship or further learning. This includes the provision of statutory entitlements such as a first full level 2 qualification for those aged 19-23.
- 4 AEB provision has previously been determined by National Government with the budget being administered by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). As laid down in the West of England Devolution Agreement however, Government has committed to devolve responsibility for the 19+ Adult Education Budget (AEB) in the WECA area to the Combined Authority.
- 5 Devolution of AEB was originally intended to take place in time for the 2018/19 academic year. Due to a number of different factors, including the June 2017 UK Parliamentary Election, Government's current intention is to devolve responsibility for this budget to WECA for the 2019/20 academic year. Following this decision Government has committed to working with Combined Authorities during a 'transitional' year (2018/19) to ensure as much responsibility as possible can be passed to local areas.

**Progress Update**

- 6 Officers from across the Constituent Councils within the WECA area have been working to prepare for devolution over many months and recently WECA reassigned a post, from within existing resources, to focus on this important area of work.

**ITEM 13**

- 7 A key element of preparing for devolution has been working with Government to agree a set of Readiness Conditions and Operational Readiness Tests in time for the 2019/20 academic year. This includes work in the following areas:
- a. Governance and business planning
  - b. Funding rules and eligibility
  - c. Provider funding and allocations systems
  - d. Contracting
  - e. Funding formula rates
  - f. Provider management arrangements
  - g. Data collection, analysis and reporting
- 8 In addition, officers have been working to understand the financial and resource implications of devolution for WECA. There are many contracts in place across the region that are currently contracted and administered by the ESFA. We need to identify what resources will be required locally to manage this new work, which is not currently resourced. We have also begun to explore the setting up of data sharing agreements with the ESFA to enable us to understand better current provision in the region.
- 9 Once an analysis of current provision is complete, the focus for the next element of work will be to develop recommendations for the Combined Authority for what changes should be made to AEB provision.

**Options for transitional year**

- 10 With devolution of AEB now planned for the 2019/20 academic year the Department for Education (DfE) are offering two different options for how they can involve Combined Authorities with local commissioning of AEB for the 2018/19 academic year. The two options that have been proposed are 'delegation' and 'influencing'.

*Delegation*

- a. The Secretary of State for Education delegates AEB functions and funding to the Combined Authority, essentially seeking to bring devolution powers forward through another legal mechanism other than statute.
- b. Acting as the Secretary of State's agent, the Combined Authority decides on adult education provision for its residents, commissions provision, funds providers and manages delivery of provision.
- c. Terms and conditions of the delegation would be the mechanism by which DfE would hold the CA accountable and assure itself that the planned set of provision is consistent with the Secretary of State fulfilling her functions.
- d. Implementation and timing challenges are as great as they would have been for full devolution.
- e. This option enables a devolved area to exercise greater control over AEB but with a greater share of risk. It requires an area to have all relevant systems and practices in place within a very short timeframe.

*Influencing*

- a. WECA 'steering' the use of AEB funding during the 2018/19 academic year.
- b. The CA would be able to vary allocations for certain in-scope providers within a framework. The full range of in-scope providers has yet to be determined by DfE.
- c. Final funding allocations would be made to the relevant providers by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) in line with locally agreed plans.
- d. The ESFA would carry out the funding activity on behalf of the MCA for 2018/19, in advance of it establishing full funding and provider management systems, to support full devolution for 2019/20.
- e. Existing AEB funding policies, rates, rules and performance management would apply to all 2018/19 delivery. The national funding formula would continue to apply.

**ITEM 13**

- f. This option enables less direct control over AEB but does not require the implementation of new systems and practices. It enables WECA to influence AEB delivery whilst building towards full devolution.

11 Whilst the delegation option is the closest to full devolution and would therefore, give greatest control to the region, we believe that there are too many risks involved in seeking to take this approach at this stage. For example:

- a. The Secretary of State for Education has yet to conclude whether the Delegation option is achievable within the timeframe required for the 2018/19 academic year.
- b. Clarity over the full scope of the delegation option and its legal basis have yet to be provided by DfE and so cannot be properly considered by WECA. Therefore, the ongoing timeframe for achieving the necessary work is not fully known (but likely further compressed).
- c. As the operational readiness tests for the delegation option are not finalised the resource implications are not fully known.
- d. We have not yet completed the work required to recommend any changes to the AEB provision and resources are not in place to undertake this work.

12 Given these risks we recommend that influencing is the best option for the transitional year.

**Consultation**

13 This paper has been developed in consultation with officers in the constituent councils within the Combined Authority and discussed at the Skills Advisory Board. The Board's views will be provided to the Committee from the Chair of the Advisory Board (Tim Bowles).

**Public Sector Equality Duties:**

14 There are no equalities implications in relation to this report, any future changes to AEB will be subject to full consideration of relevant equality legislation.

**Economic Impact Assessment:**

15 Whilst the impact of how the AEB budget is spent will have a positive economic impact by supporting residents to improve their skills and consequently career potential, there are no Economic Impacts arise as a direct result of this report.

**Legal Implications:**

16 There are no legal implications resulting from this report.

**Finance Implications:**

17 The Budget Outturn paper (separately on this agenda), includes resourcing proposals for the WECA which would provide for 1 FTE to manage AEB work. This resource is required regardless of the option for the transitional year, to prepare for devolution.

18 In addition, we have bid for additional funding from the DFE to resource wider implementation activity to support the influencing option. Financial implications of full devolution are not yet known

**Human Resources Implications:**

19 No HR implications arise as a result of this report.

**ITEM 13**

**Recommendation:**

20 That WECA endorses the influencing option from the two proposals tabled by DfE.

**Report Author: Henry Lawes**

**Telephone: 0117 428 6210**

**West of England Combined Authority Contact: Henry Lawes**

**ITEM: 14****REPORT TO: WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY****DATE: 30<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2017****REPORT TITLE: APPROVE EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT INNOVATION PILOT FUNDING****AUTHOR: CHRIS JENNINGS, INTERIM HEAD OF BUSINESS & SKILLS, WECA****Purpose of Report**

- 1 To provide a brief update on the DWP-funded Employment Support Innovation Pilot being managed by the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) and delivered in partnership with constituent councils.
- 2 To seek approval to grant fund Councils to enable delivery of the pilot project.

**Background**

- 3 The WECA Employment Support Innovation Pilot (ESIP) is a £3.9m initiative funded by the Department of Work and Pensions. The programme will work with c.3,000 individuals who are in employment, claiming in-work benefits (i.e. Working Tax Credit / Universal Credit) and are resident (or awaiting tenancy) in social housing. The pilot will provide support to these individuals, helping them raise their own skill levels and motivation for career progression leading to more secure or higher quality employment. Overall, the project will seek to maximise participation of the Combined Authority's workforce in the economy and support residents to benefit from the prosperity and opportunities in the region.
- 4 It should be noted that whilst this pilot is a component of the West of England Devolution Deal (published 16 March 2016), para 22 of the deal text refers to target group as "those who are hardest to help and furthest from the labour market". Following detailed discussions with DWP in the development of a successful business case, it recommended the focus of the pilot change to the current cohort.
- 5 WECA will be accountable to DWP for the funding and will monitor delivery and oversee the programme's evaluation. Following an external recruitment process, a Project Manager (Sue Dobson) was appointed on 9 October 2017. A project steering group has been established comprising officers from WECA and constituent councils. Project front-line delivery will commence in early 2018 and last for a two-year period up to and including December 2019.

**ITEM 14****Funding**

- 6 WECA will receive funding from DWP in three tranches (in 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial years) across the life of the project totalling £3,959,652. The majority of funding will be granted to the constituent local authorities, subject to individual grant funding agreements. Each local authority will be responsible for successful delivery in their local area as part of the overall programme, delivered within the levels of funding agreed. The proposed funding split, based on resident population demographics and associated delivery, outputs and targets – and agreed by local authority officers on the WECA Skills Officer Group – is as follows:

<b>Authority</b>	<b>Project funding<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Proportion of total project<sup>2</sup></b>
Bath & North East Somerset	£915,000	23%
Bristol, City of	£1,823,000	46%
South Gloucestershire	£915,000	23%
WECA	£307,000	8%

**Consultation**

- 7 This financial profile of the project was developed by – and in consultation with – officers in the constituent councils within the Combined Authority and WECA officers. A progress update on the programme was discussed at the Skills Advisory Board. Any additional views from the Advisory Board will be provided to the Committee from the Chair of the Advisory Board (Tim Bowles).

**Public Sector Equality Duties:**

- 8 There are no equalities implications in relation to this report.

**Economic Impact Assessment:**

- 9 Whilst it is hoped that by providing additional support to the identified cohort of residents there will be a positive impact both for the individuals and for the wider economy, no specific economic impacts arise as a direct result of this report.

**Finance Implications:**

- 10 This report describes the grant funding of income to be received by WECA from the Department for Work and Pensions. Individual councils are responsible for the successful delivery of the programme within agreed funding levels and subject to a local grant funding agreement. The programme budget has been developed and agreed by officers from each constituent council.

**Legal Implications;**

- 11 In securing these funds the Combined Authority is relying on its general power of competence and the education powers contained in the Order. Following the transfer of funds to the Mayoral budget the Mayor will use the power to pay grants contained in Article 7 of the Order to allocate the funds to the constituent councils.

<sup>1</sup> These figures are rounded to the nearest '000

<sup>2</sup> These figures are rounded to nearest whole %

**ITEM 14****Human Resources Implications:**

- 12 Local authorities will choose the delivery model most appropriate to their needs. This may include employing staff (“navigators”) directly to deliver front-line work or undertake this through arrangements with local partners. Differing approaches will have differing HR implications in terms of fixed-term employment of staff.

**Recommendation:**

- 13 That the WECA approves a sum of £3.96m resource to be allocated as follows:
- a. Within the WECA Budget to fund WECA project costs (£307,000)
  - b. to the Mayoral Budget to enable to allocation of grant funding to councils to meet the costs of delivery (£3,653,000) subject to the full grant of £3.96m being paid to the Combined Authority by DWP.
- 14 That the Chief Executive in consultation with the Mayor be delegated responsibility for making appropriate arrangements for grant funding the constituent council(s) for the delivery of this project including agreeing the profile and amounts of funding between financial years

**Report Author: Adam Powell**

**Telephone: 0117 4286210**

**West of England Combined Authority Contact: Adam Powell**