Purpose of Report

1. To provide an update on the 5G Smart Tourism project being funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) through the 5G Testbed and Trials Programme. WECA is the Lead Partner for the project, working with 25 other organisations, including the BBC, BT, the University of Bristol and Bristol City and Bath and North East Somerset Councils.

2. To seek approval for the use of the DCMS capital funding allocated to WECA for the project.

Background

3. The 5G Smart Tourism project is a £8.2m project for which capital grant of £5m has been secured from DCMS. Through the partnership, the project will see the existing 5G Testbed hosted at the University of Bristol expanded to visitor attractions in Bristol (M-Shed and hopefully the SS Great Britain) and in Bath (Roman Baths) to trial some research and development use cases. The testbed extension and use use cases will test the capabilities of 5G networks and associated hardware as well as the applications that can be developed in a 5G enabled system. The use cases seek to enhance the visitor experience, mainly through mobile Virtual Reality or Augmented Reality applications, and to keep them safe, through public safety focused activity.

4. WECA will be accountable to DCMS for the capital funding and will deliver the project to budget and timescale. All funding is paid direct to WECA and then distributed properly to the partners. WECA will sign a grant agreement with DCMS and a collaboration agreement with all partners. There will also be a Programme Participation Agreement for signature by all partners. The project must complete all capital grant funded expenditure by 31 March 2019, giving a short 12-month implementation period.

5. WECAs delivery costs will be met through the grant award. An external Programme Lead will be procured to work with WECA to manage the partnership and ensure delivery to time and budget. Governance, through a high-level board will be chaired by WECAs named Accountable Officer with DCMS in regular attendance.
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**Funding**

6  WECA will receive the £5m of capital grant from DCMS in four instalments throughout the 2018/19 financial year. Payment of grant instalments is conditional on the achievement of project milestones. Scope exists within the grant arrangements for DCMS to enable a longer grant period, or to add additional grant to the project. WECA will disburse the capital grant to partners upon receipt of claims, backed by invoices and detailed capital expenditure descriptions.

**Consultation:**

7  All details of the project, as set out in the application, have been agreed by the partners to the bid.

**Public Sector Equality Duties:**

8  Funding is conditional on WECA, as Lead Partner, assuring itself that all recipients of capital grant funding comply with the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

**Finance Implications:**

9  WECAs costs in delivering the project are met by the DCMS grant. Any risks involved in under-performance of the project will be managed with each partner through a Collaboration Agreement that all partners are required to sign. WECA is not under-writing any financial risk within the partnership and its liability is limited to the value of capital grant that it has received. and to paying grants to partners in-line with the Capital Grant Agreement and Collaboration Agreement.

10  Two Local Authorities are partners in the bid and due to receive capital grant payments from WECA – Bristol City Council (£409K) and Bath and North East Somerset Council (£102k). Any financial risks of partners will be established in the Collaboration Agreement and will be in line with the Capital Grant Offer conditions.

11  All capital grants are subject to expenditure satisfying capital accounting requirements.

Advice given by: Tim Richens (Director of Investment and Corporate Resources)

**Legal Implications:**

12  The enabling powers for the project are contained in those related to the WECA Tourism functions and the General Power of Competence."

Advice given by: John McCormack (Monitoring Officer)

**Human Resources Implications:**

13  External procurement will be undertaken for a Programme Lead and members of the Accountable Body team will be redeployed from ERDF activity, which is diminishing in-line with the success of these staff in bringing forward projects to take up the full allocation of funding available in the West of England. Additional, short term, research and development expertise will also be procured externally. All staff costs and external consultancy costs will be met from the grant.

Advice given by: Alex Holly (HR lead)
Recommendation:

14 That WECA approves the acceptance of the £5M DCMS capital grant offer to deliver the 5G Smart Tourism project, and the inclusion within the 2018/19 WECA approved capital budget to fund capital grants to partners to deliver the project and WECA costs as lead partner.

15 That the detailed funding allocations and capital grant funding arrangements to be delegated to the WECA Chief Executive, in consultation with the WECA S151 Officer

Report Author: Chris Jennings, Interim Director of Skills and Business

West of England Combined Authority Contact:
Any person seeking background information relating to this item should seek the assistance of the Contact Officer for the meeting who is Antony Corfield and who is available by telephoning Joanna Greenwood on 0117 426210; writing to West of England Combined Authority, 3 Rivergate, Temple Way, Bristol BS1 6ER; email: democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk