

Forward Plan reference number: (N/A)

Report title: To Agree Sector Support Fund Grant Allocation to the Delivering Skills Of The Future Through Teaching: Teaching For Growth Project (Project Extension)	
Report to: Chief Executive Officer of the SELEP	
Report author: Howard Davies, SELEP Capital Programme Officer	
Date: 8 July 2020	For: Decision
Enquiries to: Howard Davies: howard.davies@southeastlep.com	
Divisions affected: Pan - LEP	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the recommendations and supporting documentation of the Sector Support Fund (SSF) Bid for the Delivering skills of the future through teaching: teaching for growth project (Project Extension) (the Project). The Project has been through an Independent Technical Review (ITR) process, to enable £76,000 of Growing Places Fund (GPF) Revenue grant to be devolved to Essex County Council for Project delivery. The bid document is included in Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The ITR report sets out an analysis to demonstrate that the Project meets the criteria for funding. This report is included in Appendix 2.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **Approve** the award of £76,000 GPF Revenue grant to Essex County Council to support the delivery of the Project identified in the Funding Bid and which has been assessed as meeting the criteria for funding.

3. Summary of issue

- 3.1. On 9th June 2017 the SELEP Strategic Board (the Board) approved the use of the GPF Revenue grant to fund a programme of works to support the sector focussed activities that are being undertaken on a pan-LEP basis and predominantly led by the SELEP working groups, namely, the Sector Support Fund (SSF).
- 3.2. The Board agreed, in 2017, the programme of total funding available in each year would be up to £500,000 of revenue grant per annum for three financial years, beginning 2017/18.
- 3.3. The purpose of the SSF is to support one-off, discrete pieces of work of a pan-LEP nature with a sector focus that brings demonstrable benefits and has

support across the LEP. All applications must meet the criteria detailed in section 3 of the SSF Guidance and be submitted in line with the process in section 4 of the same. This process ensures that the funding is allocated in accordance with the requirements of the SELEP Assurance Framework.

- 3.4. The SELEP Skills Advisory Group has submitted a bid for SSF of £76,000 to support the delivery of the Project, which was endorsed by the Board via Electronic Voting procedure on 8 July 2020

4. Project Summary

4.1. The Project aims to help address teaching shortages, particularly in the area of apprenticeships and industry relevant growth, STEM skills, generally raising skill levels, and meeting the training needs of more employers. This will include pilot sector-based tutor training.

4.2. The project extension for an additional 12 months will enable:

- The production of five additional areas to increase project reach targeting alternative priority sector skill areas including Professional, scientific and technical, Transport and Logistics, Accommodation, food and logistics and Manufacturing Engineering
- Funds to cover the award of 60 more bursaries spread across level 3 and above to March 2021 to appeal to those joining the post-16 sector in the post Covid-19 period of June 2020 and beyond
- Continuation of the high-profile social media campaign
- The further development and subsequent legacy maintenance of the www.becomealecturer.org website for a period of 12 months

4.3 Post Covid-19 the project aims to focus on attracting and supporting people from industry into sector relevant teaching. Helping to improve the digitally active workforce and assessors of tomorrow thereby enabling greater on-line and remote delivery of technical education

5. Project Funding

- 5.1 The total cost of the Project is estimated at £126,000 including an SSF ask of £76,000, with the remaining £50,000 being provided by FE Sussex and granting of 60 new bursaries at an average rate of £800 per bursary (from FE employers) as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Project Funding breakdown (£s)

Source	2020/21	2021/22	Total
SSF	£76,000		£76,000
Other funding sources:			
Project administration by FE Sussex and processing of bursary requests for 12 months	£2,000		£2,000
Granting of 60 new bursaries at an average rate of £800 per bursary	£48,000		£48,000
Total Project Cost	£126,000		£126,000

Issues for consideration

6. Risks and Dependencies

6.1. Risks are low with regard to this project as it is an existing proven deliverer of outputs, however during this period of COVID-19 it is important to assess additional risks that may be connected to this pandemic. The following two areas have been assessed by the scheme promoter;

- The way colleges are operating during this period. However, colleges continue to recruit and will undoubtedly have an increased need for assessors when practical assessment can take place.
- The take up of bursaries to the extent outlined in the in the Project. This is mitigated by the likely high demand for industry expertise, particularly in practical subject areas which have existing shortages.
- The development of this proposal has involved consultation with provider networks and FE Sussex who have confirmed the continued strong need and relevance of this Project
- The Project has the support of the Skills Advisory panel
- The application for this Project includes extremely positive feedback from colleges awarded bursaries from the original concept, including; Bexhill College, Plumpton College, Colchester Institute and East Sussex College Group

7. Outcome of ITR Process (*Accountable Body Comments*)

7.1. The Accountable Body has independently assessed the Project Bid Document and has confirmed that the Project meets the criteria for funding, including the Assurance Framework requirement with supporting evidence provided to demonstrate value for money and a benefit cost ratio (BCR) of 6.5:1

7.2. The Project aligns with SELEP's strategic objectives to increase skills levels and STEM sector growth across the SELEP area.

- 7.3. The Project is stated to be pan-LEP as the benefits arising from the Project in terms of increased recruitment to skilled jobs, through increased provision of tutors and training opportunities will be experienced across the entire SELEP area. The project has been supported by the three Employment and Skills Boards across the SELEP area.
- 7.4. The Project is an extension of an existing discrete project.
- 7.5. Exemption 1: This may be applied where a project does not present High Value for Money (a Benefit Cost Ratio of over 2:1); but
- has a Benefit Cost Ratio value of greater than 1.5:1; or
 - where the project benefits are notoriously difficult to appraise in monetary terms.
- 7.6 Exemption 1 will only apply if the following conditions are satisfied:
- (1) The funding sought from SELEP in relation to the project must be less than £2.0m and to conduct further quantified and monetised economic appraisal would be disproportionate; and
 - (2) where there is an overwhelming strategic case (with minimal risk in the other cases); and
 - (3) there are qualitative benefits which, if monetised, would most likely increase the benefit-cost ratio above 2:1.

8. Financial implications (*Accountable Body Comments*)

9. Up to £500,000 of the GPF revenue grant was available in 2019/20 (plus carry forward of £301,600) to support the SSF programme, of which £206,500 remains unallocated. The Buy Local South East project and the Delivering skills of the future through teaching project are seeking £145,510 in total and therefore there is sufficient funding available to support the request for these Projects, leaving £60,990 to support future funding bids in 2020/21.

9.1. Three Projects came forward for endorsement for funding at the June 2020 Strategic Board meeting (to note, the Buy Local South East project and SE Export Development (SEED) are considered in separate reports where applicable). It should be noted that insufficient funding was available to fund all three projects, however the SE Export Development (SEED) project application did not meet the criteria of the Independent Technical Review. The Board endorsed the Teaching for Growth and the Buy Local South East projects by electronic vote on 8 July 2020.

9.2. On approval of these two Project awards, there will be a balance of £60,990 available for funding of SSF projects. Table 2 shows the breakdown;

Table 2: Sector Support Fund Summary

SSF Funding Available				
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
	£	£	£	£
Total Fund Opening Balance	1,000,000	500,000		1,500,000
Plus c/f from prior year	-	578,000	610,734	
Total Funding Available	1,000,000	1,078,000	610,734	
Total Funding Approved to Date	422,000	467,266	404,234	1,293,500
Available Fund Balance	578,000	610,734	206,500	206,500
Projects seeking approval following Endorsement				
Buy Local South East			69,510	69,510
Skills working group			76,000	76,000
Total seeking approval following endorsement	-	-	145,510	145,510
Balance following approval	578,000	610,734	60,990	60,990

9.3. This grant is a fixed maximum contribution to the Project; any Project over spends incurred will be required to be addressed by the Project delivery partner.

10. Legal implications (*Accountable Body Comments*)

10.1. The grant will be transferred to Essex County Council via a notional grant agreement; the grant agreement will include a requirement for claw back of the funding if it is not fully expended or not expended in line with the Project Bid Document.

11. Equality and Diversity implications

10.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 creates the public sector equality duty which requires that when a public sector body makes decisions it must have regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act;
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

10.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation.

10.3 In the course of the development of the project business cases, the delivery of the project and the ongoing commitment to equality and diversity, the promoting local authority will ensure that any equality implications are considered as part of their decision making process and where possible identify mitigating factors where an impact against any of the protected characteristics has been identified.

12. List of appendices

12.1. Appendix 1 – Project Bid Document

12.2. Appendix 2 – Independent Technical Review report

13. List of Background papers

13.1. Sector Support Funding Guidance

13.2. SELEP Assurance Framework

13.3. Minutes of the Strategic Board Meeting (Electronic Vote) DATE

Role	Date
Accountable Body sign off Peter Shakespear (On behalf of Nicole Wood, S151 Officer, (Essex County Council)	14/07/2020

I approve the above recommendations set out above for the reasons set out in the report.  Adam Bryan Chief Executive Officer for the South East Local Enterprise Partnership	Date 22/7/20
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