

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR MAYORAL DECISION – MD2691

Title: European Social Fund commitment of additional funding to London Borough of Ealing

Executive Summary:

Mayoral Decision 1583 approved the designation of the GLA as an 'Intermediate Body' for the 2014-20 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and European Social Fund (ESF) programmes, in accordance with the functions set out in the Memorandums of Understanding with Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government for ERDF and Department of Work and Pensions for ESF.

Mayoral Decisions 1613 and 2094 approved the commitment and award of ESF funding to Co-Financing organisations, including London Borough of Ealing (on behalf of West London Alliance sub-regional partnership).

This Mayoral Decision seeks approval for a further commitment and award of ESF funding to the London Borough of Ealing to support additional ESF provision up to December 2023.

Decision:

The Mayor approves:

The commitment and award of an additional £6,205,000 European Social Fund (ESF) to the London Borough of Ealing to support additional activity for newly unemployed individuals under ESF Priority Axis 1 "Inclusive Labour Markets".

Mayor of London

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:



Date:

7/10/20

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE MAYOR

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. The UK benefits from seven-year EU programmes known as European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is the 'Managing Authority' (MA) in England for one such fund, the European Social Fund (ESF). In 2015, DWP agreed an 'Operational Programme' (revised in October 2018) with the European Commission (EC) for the £4bn England European Social Fund (ESF) programme that set out the activities and targets (such as people into employment) that would be undertaken across England.
- 1.2. The ESF programme is delivered across England's 38 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) areas, each of which has an ESIF Strategy to support local delivery. The £4 billion has been notionally allocated to LEP areas. LEP Area ESIF Committees, including the London ESIF Committee, provide advice to the Managing Authority (and the GLA as an Intermediate Body in London), on the needs and opportunities in an area and on the strategic fit of applications for funding.
- 1.3. Article 123 of EC Regulation 1303/2013 states that a Member State may designate one or more 'Intermediate Bodies' (IB) to carry out certain tasks of the MA.
- 1.4. DWP has accordingly devolved responsibility for managing London's share of England's ESF programme to the GLA as an IB. The relevant arrangements between DWP and the GLA are formally recorded in a Memorandum of Understanding and were approved via MD1583 in March 2016.
- 1.5. Mayoral Decisions 1613 and 2094, in March 2016 and April 2017 respectively, approved the commitment and award of ESF funding via a number of Co-Financing Organisations (CFOs).
- 1.6. CFOs provide the required eligible match funding and use their expertise to procure and contract manage, or grant fund, ESF provision. The provision is contracted on the basis of skills and employment programmes agreed by the London Economic Action Partnership (LEAP, the LEP for London) and local partners. In order to become a CFO, organisations must first apply for CFO status (only organisations that meet the Government's criteria can apply) and subsequently submit an application for ESF funding from London's allocation to deliver locally agreed activities.
- 1.7. The GLA European Programmes Management Unit (EPMU) signed a CFO Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with London Borough of Ealing in January 2018 in its capacity as lead borough for the sub-regional 'West London Alliance' partnership. The match funding for this CFO programme is provided by DWP, which has devolved management of the Work and Health Programmes (WHPs) in London to sub-regional partnerships.
- 1.8. Additional funding of £640,000 for the London Borough of Ealing was approved via Mayoral Decision 2501 in July 2019.
- 1.9. For CFOs, any amendments to be made to the MoU must be submitted through a Project Change Request process. A request has been received from London Borough of Ealing and EPMU has 60 calendar days to assess it and notify the decision to the CFO.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic Government departments, including DWP, have been developing recovery plans. As part of the recovery response, additional funds have been made available to support individuals who have been unemployed for three months or more and who require support to find employment. This support is required to start in October 2020.

- 2.2. The current WHP programme focuses on supporting the long term unemployed (2 years+) and this element of the programme would remain. The additional allocated funds would broaden the scope of the programme, and when matched with ESF would further increase the number of individuals that could be supported.
- 2.3. The additional funding would be used to support 8865 individuals within West London who have recently become unemployed as a result of Covid-19. Of these, 75% are expected to progress into employment or another positive outcome such as further training.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. The ESF Operational Programme sets out the requirements for adherence to mandatory equalities 'cross-cutting' themes. ESF promotes equality in accordance with European Union and national requirements.
- 3.2. Furthermore, the GLA as a public authority must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty set out in section 149 (1) Equality Act 2010. This provides that, in the exercise of their functions, public authorities must have due regard to the need to:
 - eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 3.3. The obligation in section 149(1) is placed upon the Mayor, as decision maker. Due regard must be had at the time a particular decision is being considered. The duty is non-delegable and must be exercised with an open mind.
- 3.4. This duty applies in the delivery of ESF and means that the implementation of the England Operational Programme in London must consider the needs of all individuals and have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people. The ESF programme targets its support to individuals; and seeks to make positive contributions to: long-term unemployed people, inactive people, lone parents, disabled people, people from ethnic minorities, ex-offenders, young people and older people. DWP has set output targets to ensure the programme helps appropriate numbers of these people; London projects are required to contribute to these targets.
- 3.5. The Programme is required to record equality and diversity data on individuals receiving support to ensure there is no inherent bias in the provision of help and that it is accessible by all. This monitoring data will be submitted by ESF grant recipients as part of the claims process and is reviewed by GLA officers. Where a project has a particular objective to work with people with specific protected characteristics (as defined in the Equality Act 2010), this will be inherent in the project application; grant recipients capture and report this data as part of their project management processes.

4. Other considerations

a) Key risks and issues

- 4.1. The amount of ESF allocated to the CFOs may be revised during the approval process as officers negotiate contracts. However, it is not expected to exceed the amounts stated on the cover page of this Mayoral Decision.

- 4.2. Once a revised Memorandum of Understanding has been issued and signed, GLA officers will monitor the delivery of the project to ensure activity takes place and outputs and/or results are achieved, in the same way as for any other ESF project awarded funding.
- 4.3. The ESF programme in London will continue through to closure until 2023-4, whether or not a free trade agreement with the EU is successfully concluded this year.

b) Links to strategies and Strategic Plan

- 4.4. The projects approved for ESF contribute to London's share of the England ESF Operational Programme targets, under which calls are launched. As part of their appraisal, all projects are assessed on their alignment with the LEAP's ESIF Strategy which, in turn, supports the Skills for Londoners Strategy, as well as the Mayor's Economic Development Strategy for London and the Mayor's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

c) Impact assessments and consultation

- 4.5. In accordance with DWP requirements, the views of the London ESIF Committee were sought on the strategic fit of requests for ESF funding. The comments of the LEC were considered in the decision regarding the approval of additional ESF funding.

d) Conflicts of interest

- 4.6. There are no conflicts of interests to declare in relation to the staff involved in the drafting or clearance of this decision document.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. Approval is being sought for the award and commitment of £6,205,000 ESF funding to the London Borough of Ealing to support unemployed individuals in West London into employment. The requested funds are in addition to their existing Work and Health Programme which is required to be further enhanced following the impact of Covid-19.
- 5.2. It should be noted that the GLA is the designated Body for the management and administration of the ESF funding on behalf of DWP therefore this request will not impact GLA funds. The European Programmes Management Unit (EPMU) will continue to be responsible for managing the programme on behalf of the GLA.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1. Section 1-4 of this report indicate that the decisions requested of the Mayor concern the exercise of the GLA's general powers, falling within the GLA's statutory powers to do such things considered to further or which are facilitative of, conducive or incidental to the promotion of economic development and wealth creation, social development or the promotion of the improvement of the environment in Greater London; and in formulating the proposals of which a decision is sought officers have complied with the GLA's related statutory duties to:
 - pay due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people;
 - consider how the proposals will promote the improvement of health of persons, health inequalities between persons and to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom; and
 - consult with appropriate bodies.
- 6.2. In taking the decisions requested, as noted in section 3 above, the Mayor must have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010; namely the need to eliminate

discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, and to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment) and persons who do not share it and to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. To this end, the Mayor should have particular regard to section 3 (above) of this report.

- 6.3. The GLA must ensure all appropriate documentation is put in place in relation to the award of ESF to London Borough of Ealing CFO.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Variation to ESF MOU	September 2020
Contracts/extensions awarded to providers	September/October 2020
Delivery end date	31 December 2023

Appendices and supporting papers:

None.

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Part 1 - Deferral

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring)

Part 2 – Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form – NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to confirm the following (✓)

Drafting officer:

Karen Azaadi has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Sponsoring Director:

Philip Graham has reviewed the request and is satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor’s plans and priorities.

✓

Mayoral Adviser:

Jules Pipe has been consulted about the proposal and agrees the recommendations.

✓

Advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal.

✓

Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 21 September 2020.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature

Date

D. Gove

23 September 2020

CHIEF OF STAFF:

I am satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Mayor

Signature

Date

D. Bellamy

25 September 2020