

WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 2 OCTOBER 2019

FUTURE BRIGHT UPDATE

DIRECTOR: STEPHEN BASHFORD, HEAD OF BUSINESS & SKILLS

AUTHOR: SUE DOBSON, PROJECT MANAGER FUTURE BRIGHT

Purpose

1. To update the committee on the progress of the Future Bright project and the proposal to progress the project beyond the pilot stage as “Future Bright plus”.

Summary

2. The Future Bright project was set up as an innovation pilot project in 2018, through a £4m award from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). The project is managed by WECA and has been jointly developed for delivery in partnership with Bristol City Council, Bath & North East Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council.

3. The project has worked to support residents across these authority areas who are in work, on low incomes and receiving benefits with career progression, providing holistic support to help overcome a wide range of life challenges so that individuals are empowered to make progress.

4. Key outcomes and impacts from the project have included:

- * 1,300 participants with action plans
- * Over 300 participants increasing their skills
- * 67% of participants making positive progress, measured against 12 outcomes

5. Stephen Bashford, WECA Head of Business and Skills and Sue Dobson, Future Bright Project Manager will attend the 2 October Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting to give a detailed presentation on the progress of the project and next steps. A copy of the presentation is included at Appendix 1.

6. DWP funding for the pilot is due to end in March 2020, and with no confirmation of further funds from DWP, there is a risk the delivery architecture will fall away. The continuation of Future Bright is recognised as a priority within the Employment and Skills Plan and on this basis a Full Business Case has been submitted by WECA seeking £3.6m from the Investment Fund, which would be drawn from the £30m allocation for business and skills and enable a seamless transition when DWP funding ends. This builds on the lessons learned from the pilot phase. As part of the Investment Fund report submitted to its 4 October meeting, the WECA Committee will consider a recommendation seeking approval of the Full Business Case for Future Bright Plus (which is published on the WECA [website](#))

RECOMMENDATION:

That this update report be noted.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Future Bright Plus (presentation)

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 Ian Hird / Tim Milgate on 0117 332 1486; or by writing to West of England Combined Authority, 3 Rivergate, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6EW; email: democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk