

Enterprise M3 Programme Management Group

14 November 2019

Basingstoke College of Technology - Launch Space – Item 5b

Programme Management Group members are asked to:

AGREE that the LEP enter into a legal agreement with Basingstoke College of Technology to deliver the Launch Space project and allocate £300,000 from the Local Growth Fund for this project.

1 Summary

- 1.1 The LEP has established a process whereby promoters of schemes that have been provisionally allocated Local Growth Fund (LGF) should submit completed full business cases to the Programme Management Group (PMG) for further consideration. For schemes seeking less than £3m LGF, PMG has delegated authority to approve the allocation of this funding directly to projects.
- 1.2 Basingstoke College of Technology submitted an Expression of Interest for the Launch Space scheme in June 2019 and PMG agreed that it should be progressed to the due diligence stage. The total cost of the scheme is £612,000 with Enterprise M3 funding of up to £300,000 sought.
- 1.3 The Launch Space Centre will deliver 420sqm of dedicated EdTech education and employment space. This will utilise both the physical hardware, software and educational theory to facilitate learning and improve performance by using the appropriate technological processes and resources. Working across the curriculum it will upskill both students and teachers enabling students to have greater competitiveness within the local job market.

2 Launch Space

- 2.1 This project is focussed on developing skills in one of our key sectors – digital capacity. BCoT will create 6 highly connected and digitally enhanced suites and will upskill staff, support student learning, upskill local businesses and other educational establishments. Launch Space will prepare the future workforce in digital capability and will enhance digital pathways to L4+ qualifications. It will provide a testbed for new EdTech and will engage in the 5G development ideas for the region building long lasting relationships with local experts and SMEs, to ensure that the business skills that are needed tomorrow are being embedded and learnt in the present.
- 2.2 Consultation with local businesses has shown that what businesses want are students that are work ready when they leave College. The College through this project will integrate digital skills across the curriculum by providing dedicated teaching space that will reflect the modern workspace where collaborative working and learning requires the need to have an open space as well as smaller rooms for small group working. Teaching methods are changing, and the traditional teaching space shapes and layouts need to change with it. The plans in this instance are to create an environment that breaks away from the standard classroom and gives teaching specialists the flexible space that they need to deliver their objectives. It will engage with employers to ensure that courses are ‘fit for industry purpose’. The College is already working with the construction industry via the Future Skills Centre to integrate Virtual Reality through site pre-visualisations and health and safety tests within the construction curriculum. This can be expanded across the Colleges core curriculum in addition to delivering the core digital skills required for modern industry within all sectors. The College are also exploring initiatives that will integrate education and students into industry through a proposed collaboration with Desklodge whereby the College will rent space within Desklodge that will be used for student placement and curriculum impact with access to and collaborative opportunities with SMEs based there.

- 2.3 The project will help to develop a local centre of excellence to meet the needs of local companies and therefore contribute to economic growth. The College will continue to work with Emsi to use analytics on skills gaps and this will inform the College curriculum to prepare students with the skills needed for work. BCoT are already leading the way with EdTech through their work nationally and Scott Hayden has been awarded Teacher of the Year in this regard.
- 2.4 Enterprise M3's funding will support the physical development of this centre which will deliver the modernisation and refurbishment of approximately 420sqm to deliver a multipurpose, open and tech-rich facility.

3 Launch Space – Scrutiny

- 3.1 AECOM reviewed the Expression of Interest and raised comments and questions with the scheme promoter who responded to some of these, both in writing and through meetings with the project team at BCoT.
- 3.2 AECOM have reviewed the build programme and consider this to be robust, with the project expected to complete and operational in September 2020. AECOM have also reviewed the project cost and have recommended that these be revisited with the College as the costs of the project appear higher than originally anticipated – an increase of £80,983.40. This has highlighted some anomalies within the costing and a recommendation that the contingency needs to be recalculated. To address this point, we have asked that BCoT confirm that they would cover any cost overruns associated with the delivery of this project and requested that they confirm this in writing to the Enterprise M3. This confirmation has been received.
- 3.3 AECOM have recommended that BCoT demonstrate how the governance of the project will be set up to sign off key project milestones and how design development will be cost controlled and checked against the available budget. There also needs to be clarification around the role of the Project Manager. BCoT have been asked to submit written confirmation of the above. This confirmation has been received.
- 3.4 AECOM have recommended that BCoT demonstrate that relevant insurances are in place to cover this project. BCoT have been asked to submit evidence in this regard. This evidence has been received.
- 3.5 The Scheme Promoter envisaged the project over the next 5 years (2019 – 2024) will create 4 new jobs throughout the construction period. It will integrate well with existing projects e.g. Innovation South Virtual Campus and pipeline projects e.g. Electric Vehicle facility. It will be integrated in cross curricular work undertaken with 127 schools and Educational establishments across the region. It will impact the learning for up to 2000 students and apprentices per year and is forecast to increase higher apprenticeship uptake by 5%. It will embed digital skills and strategies across 300+ vocational and professional courses. It will provide an incubator for ideas and be a national showcase for the development and use of DigiTech teaching/learning and assessment. It will enable the hosting of 20 business events per annum. These will be growth events to support the development of local start-ups within the 'Basingstoke Tech Scene' creating a bridge between local businesses and digital capability.

4 Funding

- 4.1 The total cost of the scheme identified in the business case is £612,000 with LGF of up to £300,000 being sought.

£m	2019-20	2020-21	Total
EM3 LEP Funding	40,000	260,000	300,000
BCoT Match Funding	52,000	260,000	312,000
Total			612,000

5 Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 The independent scrutiny concluded that once the recommended actions have been undertaken that this project is viable and that a grant should be approved.

Criteria	Assessment	Comments
Strategic Fit	Very good	The Enterprise M3 plays a key part in the UK's successful digital economy. This project will equip BCoT to deliver access to digital skills and increase the number of people with high level digital skills. It will also enable our future workforce to be work ready.
Low Carbon	Good	The project will be achieved via the usage of renewable materials and the use of smart sensor technology that will automatically adjust heating and lighting.
Digital	Very good	The facility will be equipped with a range of specialist digital equipment to facilitate the curriculum delivery and address employer skills requirements, including access to VR technology. The facility will also have increased capability via the use of 'Aruba Network' a Wi-Fi upgrade with fewer wired connection points to enable students to connect their own devices to a secure network. Widespread installation of the Barco software will allow users to join virtual classrooms or book learning and networking space and also generate user feedback.
Impact of the Scheme	Very Good	The project will deliver a curriculum wide EdTech approach that incorporates and reflects employer demands. It will develop skills that are required to ensure businesses remain productive and innovative in competitive markets by providing development for current and future students as well as supporting start up and established businesses. It will enable research and innovate for greater competitiveness and long-term sustainability
Percentage of Match Funding	Very good	Match funding exceeding 50% is guaranteed for this project
Past Performance of Scheme Promoter	Very good	BCoT has experience in delivering schemes of this nature and a track record of delivering Enterprise M3 projects. In addition, they are gaining traction nationally for the development of EdTech for curriculum development.

5.2 The Programme Management Group is asked to **AGREE** that the LEP entering into a legal agreement with Basingstoke College of Technology and award the College £300,000 from the Local Growth Fund for this project.

Jeannie Satchell, Head of Skills
6 November 2019