



Action Note for Skills Providers

Good Growth Programme: People and Skills Commissioning

April 2023



Funded by
UK Government



CORNWALL
COUNCIL
one and all · onen hag oll



Council of the
ISLES OF SCILLY

**LEVELLING
— UP —**

1. Good Growth: People and Skills

1.1 Strategic vision

A total budget of £12m has been allocated from the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) for the People and Skills investment priority to deliver employment and skills related activities across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (CloS).

The £12m budget was originally restricted to the financial year 2024/25 only. On the 23rd March 2023 the Council received communication from HMG that People and Skills activities can now be utilised in the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25.

Activity under the People and Skills investment priority will have a particular focus on increased skills levels in the workforce, greater levels of workforce participation, increased average wage levels in CloS, increased levels of functional numeracy and literacy in the adult population and a reduction in the healthy life expectancy gap.

1.2 People and Skills delivery timescale changes

The existing European Social Fund (ESF) activity to deliver the above provision in CloS is funded until December 2023 at the latest, which previously would have meant a gap in provision between January-April 2024. Whilst the recent programme change allows activity to commence in April 2023, this would duplicate and distract from existing funded provision and would not align to the strategy set out in the Good Growth Investment Plan to provide a single front door to access provision with commissioned providers delivering strategic support within this.

On this basis, it is positive that the change in restriction on Y2 spend allows the programme to ensure there is no gap between funding programmes and to ensure continuity of provision. However, it does not change the intended commissioning model and activities which will continue to be commissioned in the same way with starting timescales brought forward to Autumn/Winter 2023 onwards to allow dovetailing of support.

Further detail on the commissioning model and activities is provided in the annex to this action note.

1.3 Partnership and provision transition support

The People and Prosperity team within Cornwall Council's Economy and Skills Service have begun the process of gathering information on both project activity and final project close dates from current delivery partners.

The existing ESF People Hub are actively supporting with end of project co-ordination, working with local ESF delivery partners assisting them to identify, and signpost project participants requiring ongoing support to other available provision. Plus, taking referrals from providers and onboarding individuals into the People Hub for further support. The ESF People Hub team are also continuing their face-to-face sessions, bringing together front-line staff, advisers and mentors from across ESF and mainstream funded projects and programmes to talk next steps for participants. These meet ups will help projects meet their goals and ensure nobody misses out on the provision that's available to them.

2. SPF People and Skills Funding - Commissioning Models, Activities and Timelines

SPF will be used to invest in people and skills activity that contribute to the process of re-engineering our economy and improving overall productivity levels; based on a clear understanding of the skills and people of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Investment will be used for the following activities:

| Activity | Allocated funding | Route to market | Details |
|---|-------------------|---|---------|
| Coordinated Employment and Skills Support (People Hub) | up to £6m | Cornwall Council direct delivery with procured partners to support delivery (via EOI process) | Annex 1 |
| Youth Engagement | £2m | Open Invitation | Annex 2 |
| Digital Upskilling | £2m | Open Invitation | Annex 3 |
| Green Upskilling | £2m | Open Invitation | Annex 4 |

The proposed timeline* for Open Invitations is:

- 5 June – Open invitations launched on website
- 31 July – Deadline for applications
- 31 July-16 August – Appraisal
- 20 September – Economic Prosperity Board decision making
- October – Contracting with successful applicants
- Nov/Dec – Delivery commences

**Please note that these are optimum timescales and could be subject to change.*

Annex

1. Coordinated Employment and Skills Support (People Hub) – up to £6m, Direct Delivery

A new model of Employment and Skills support centred around the People Hub working with a series of strategic partners to be identified as the single front door for residents aged 16+, either seeking work or in work progression, across CloS. The model will allow local residents to access a simplified, yet comprehensive, employment and skills support offer, and it responds to feedback from residents and stakeholders that there is a need to reduce duplication of provision, related confusion and more widely the time spent by residents searching for Employment and Skills support that addresses their individual needs; the service will be supported by an inclusive employment and skills portal, which will provide access to a range of advice, guidance and support and employment opportunities.

By building on the current CloS Hub, the People Hub will deliver:

- a core and coordinated Employment and Skills support offer, based on impartial triage to wider employment and skills support,
- development of individual tailored action plans,
- coordination and signposting to bespoke partner led interventions that cannot be delivered by the Hub that will have been commissioned as part of the Hub establishment.

Invitation for Expressions of Interest from Specialist Providers

Cornwall Council (CC) is inviting Expressions of Interest (EoI) from potential Providers wishing to form part of a new Coordinated People and Skills Support (CPSS) service to residents of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly; specifically those Providers who are able to supply CC with specialist employment and skills support to those residents in specific Client Groups who are out of work and aged 16 or over. The proposed service, which will be based upon the existing Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly People Hub (People Hub) delivery model, will be led by CC and provisionally run from 1 January 2024 to 31 March 2025.

You can view the EoI and associated Specification via the following link and search for the title 'Coordinated People and Skills Support':

<https://www.supplyingthesouthwest.org.uk/>

It is also on Due North:

<https://procontract.due-north.com/Advert?advertId=475eefb3-c4e5-ed11-8121-005056b64545>

2. Youth Engagement £2m, Open Invitation

Working with a wide range of local partners to identify and provide targeted, specialist support for young people aged 16-24, including care leavers, who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) or a risk of being NEET. Providing wrap around support for key areas like mental health, employability, financial well-being and housing support. Helping equip young people with employability and life skills. Providing work experience/work tasters, work preparation (including apprenticeships), skills training or support to re/engage with further/higher education. Supporting young people to take important first, positive steps into long term careers.

3. Digital Upskilling £2m, Open Invitation

Accredited and non-accredited training for individuals. Helping address current and future skills needs for the digital sector, particularly supporting SME skills needs and training requirements, over and above that already fundable by adult skills programmes. Delivery responding to need and demand, as highlighted in our recent Digital Skills Deep Dive commissioned by CloS Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). With a particular focus on women engaging with digital skills to help address the gender profile of the sector and wage gap. The activity will also focus on highlighting digital career pathways.

4. Green Upskilling £2m, Open Invitation

Accredited and non-accredited training for individuals. Helping address current and future skills needs for the current and emerging green sector, over and above that already fundable by adult skills programmes, as highlighted in our recent Green Skills Deep Dive commissioned by Cornwall CloS LEP.