

# Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



Reference Number:

3470

Author:

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Department:

Development and Growth

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Subject:

Midlands Engine Government Programmes

Key Decision (decision valued at more than £1million):

Yes

Total Value:

£8,000,000 (Type: Revenue)

Decision Being Taken:

1. To accept a Government grant award of £8m, made up of £1m for 'English for Speakers of Other Languages' and £7m to support employees with mental health illnesses, and to enter into an agreement with the Department of Health and Social Care and the Department for Education to deliver the services.
2. To delegate authority to the Director of Economic Development to award contracts to providers across the Midlands following an open procurement process.

**Reasons for the Decision(s)**

The Midlands Engine is a partnership of Local Enterprise Partnerships, the West Midlands Combined Authority, universities and businesses working together in new and transformative ways to invigorate the £207 billion Midlands economy.

Nottingham City Council acts as the Accountable Body for the Midlands Engine.

In aiming to create economic growth across the Midlands area, Midlands Engine is seeking to raise productivity and create a stronger economy, with the aim to achieve a fairer society and greater quality of life for all Midlanders. Strengthening the Midlands Engine as a place to invest, and supporting the efforts of Midlands businesses to trade and export also complements the Government's work to strengthen our country internationally.

The Midlands Engine Strategy 2017 [www.gov.uk/government/publications/midlands-engine-strategy](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/midlands-engine-strategy) announced the government's intention to establish a Midlands Skills Challenge, with the objective of closing the skills gap between the Midlands and the rest of the country. The government's first steps to support the region to meet this challenge included funding pilot innovative approaches to supporting employers to raise productivity by helping employees with mental health issues and increasing access to employment and careers progression for those with English as an additional language .

In the Midlands Engine strategy, the Government committed £7m for the delivery of innovative approaches to improve the mental health of employees in the Midlands with the aim of improving productivity.

On 9 January 2017 the Prime Minister announced a series of Mental Health reforms in the UK, this included a commission for an independent review into the mental health of employees. Thriving at Work; The Stevenson / Farmer review of mental health and employers, was published in October 2017 alongside the Deloitte report, Mental Health and Employers: The Case for Investment. A key recommendation from the report is that all employers, regardless of size or industry, should adopt six core standards that lay the basic foundations for an approach to workplace mental health.

The Midlands Engine, through open procurement, will be seeking to commission providers to deliver innovative interventions with employers to support their employees across the Midlands Engine geography with a view to supporting and improving the mental health of employees.

In the Midlands Engine strategy, the Government committed £1m for ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) training for people in the Midlands whose lack of ability to speak English is holding them back from accessing employment.

HM Government's Integrated Communities Green Paper describes anecdotal evidence that improving English language skills can help adults to become part of local communities, reduce isolation and build confidence. Further details can be found at [www.gov.uk/government/consultations/integrated-communities-strategy-green-paper](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/integrated-communities-strategy-green-paper). The objective of this project is to test new innovative ways of delivering improved English language skills that lead to better access to work and career prospects for the individual along with enhanced productivity outcomes for employers.

The Midlands Engine, through open procurement, will be seeking to commission providers to deliver innovative ESOL training to those in work and those away from the jobs market across the Midlands Engine geography with a view to improving access to employment and career progression.

**Other Options Considered:**

Not to accept the funding - This was rejected as funding allocated to the Midlands area will be lost and the Midland Engine strategy not delivered.

**Background Papers:**

None.

<b>Published Works:</b>	<b>Midlands Engine ESOL ITT</b>
<b>Affected Wards:</b>	<b>Citywide</b>
<b>Colleague / Councillor Interests:</b>	<b>None.</b>
<b>Consultations:</b>	<b>Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.</b>
<b>Crime and Disorder Implications:</b>	<b>None.</b>
<b>Equality:</b>	<b>EIA not required. Reasons: The initial assessment is that this work does not have negative impacts on any defined group. Growth in the economy will help raise living standards and opportunities Midlands wide.</b>
<b>Decision Type:</b>	<b>Leader's Key Decision</b>
<b>Subject to Call In:</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Call In Expiry date:</b>	<b>02/04/2019</b>
<b>Advice Sought:</b>	<b>Legal, Finance, Procurement</b>
<b>Legal Advice:</b>	<b>The City Council must ensure it complies with the terms of the grant agreement. Notwithstanding that the City Council is acting as the accountable body and is using Midlands Engine grant monies it must ensure that the services are procured in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the City Council's Financial Regulations as the contract will be awarded by the City Council.</b> <b>Advice provided by Andrew James (Team Leader Contracts and Commercial) on 27/02/2019.</b>

**Finance Advice:**

**Nottingham City Council are the Accountable Body for the Midlands Engine (DD2598). As such it will accept and manage the grant award of £8m as outlined in this decision and in line with Nottingham City Council Financial regulations, Contract Procedure Rules and governance arrangements.**

**The Decision requests that authority is delegated to the Director of Economic Development to award contracts to providers in line with the grant. It is the responsibility of designated officers within the department to ensure that all grant conditions are met and records are kept in line with the Accountable Body responsibility.**

**Advice provided by Susan Tytherleigh (Senior Finance Manager) on 28/02/2019.**

**Procurement Advice:**

**The procurement team will assist with all tendering exercises for the projects listed to ensure that any contracts awarded are compliant with EU procurement rules and that deliver value for money services.**

**Advice provided by Paul Ritchie (Lead Procurement Officer) on 15/02/2019.**

**Signatures:**

**Jon Collins (Leader of the Council)**

**SIGNED and Dated: 26/03/2019**

**Chris Henning (Corporate Director for Development and Growth)**

**SIGNED and Dated: 25/03/2019**