

Cabinet – 17 December 2014

Extending the Economic Growth Programme

Portfolio: Councillor Mohammad Nazir, Deputy Leader, Regeneration.

Related portfolios:

Service: Regeneration – Strategic Regeneration and Development and Delivery

Wards: All

Key decision: Yes

Forward plan: Yes

1. Summary

- 1.1 Cabinet approved the Economic Growth Programme (EGP) on the 4 April 2012, since then it has delivered significant outcomes towards key Council Plan objectives, including: 692 young people into full apprenticeships, almost 5000 local people into work, £378million of new investment developing 90,893 square metres of new floor space, creating or securing over 1700 jobs.
- 1.2 Cabinet also approved the New Homes Bonus (NHB) Programme on the 8th February 2012. This report seeks authority to combine these two programmes and by reinvesting the remaining NHB funding together with existing EPG reserves, to continue the delivery of services by council staff that produce significant outcomes, in support the Economic Growth of Walsall through to the end of March 2018.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet approves the use of £3,506,557 of existing funding, including all previous New Homes Bonus (NHB) resources as set out in table 3.9.1 and section 3.11, to extend the current Economic Growth Programme (EGP) through to the end of March 2018, directly supporting Council staffing and associated costs in the delivery of services that create the conditions for, and achieve outcomes, as illustrated in table 3.3.1 and 3.3.2.
- 2.2 That Cabinet approve the use of all remaining and repaid NHB funding for use as part of the Economic Growth Programme (EGP), in accordance with 2.3 below.
- 2.3 That Cabinet grants delegated authority to the Executive Director for Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration to approve revisions or additions to the programmes; design, costs, contents, duration and flexibility as required, together with the reinvestment of reserves estimated at £732,339. Continuing its ability to meet identified local peoples and employers needs, within approved spending limits.

3. Report detail

- 3.1 Two previous Cabinet reports established the EGP on the 4 April 2012 and the NHB Programme on the 8 February 2012. This report proposes bringing together these two programmes into one Economic Growth Programme (EPG) and extending its life for a further 3 years through to March 2018, by utilising the resources available.
- 3.2 Through the 4th April 2012 EGP report Cabinet agreed to bring together mainstream revenue funding with a range of external funding received by the Council creating a budget that is capable of delivering the EGP, together with the anticipated outcomes, details are set out in the attached Appendix 1.
- 3.3 The Financial Plan approved by Cabinet on the 29 October 2014 sets out the 6 priorities for the council to provide focus in order for it to meet its purpose and vision. The EGP will make significant contributions and deliver outcomes towards 5 of the 6 priorities, as set out below in tables 3.3.1 & 3.3.2 and as evidenced in Appendix 2 attached, including:
- Support with cost of living
 - Promoting Health & Wellbeing
 - Helping local high streets and communities
 - Improving educational achievements
 - Creating jobs and helping people get new skills

Table 3.3.1 – Strategic Regeneration service area achievements so far

Key Outcomes/Outputs	Outcomes Achieved (Up to March 14)	Anticipated Numbers (Up to March15)
Apprenticeships (Pre & Full Apprenticeships)	692	800
Non Walsall Works Apprenticeships Supported	361	450
Local People (Beneficiaries) supported	16,895	16,895
New / additional users of the One Stop Shops	21,136	21,136
People Placed / Supported into Employment	4,913	4,913
Training Qualifications achieved	543	543
Businesses Assisted	267	500
Business Enquiries Managed	470	600
Jobs Safeguarded	380	380
Investment Enquiries Handled	107	110
Value of new business / Investment enquiries realised / constructed for / within Walsall	£14,750,435	£16million
EU / other external resources attracted into the borough of Walsall.	£38million (new EU programme)	£40million

Table 3.3.2 - Development and Delivery service area achievements so far

Key Outcome / Output	Outcomes Achieved (6 years to March 2014)	Projected Outcomes (Next 6 years)
Jobs Secured (Safeguarded and Created)	1,714	17,000
Floor Space Delivered (New and Refurbished)	90,893sqm	495,000sqm
Investment Secured (Public and Private)	£378.5million	£500million

- 3.4 The outputs for the Development & Delivery Service are achieved over a longer period as they reflect the whole development life cycle required to deliver the outcomes, often achieved beyond the timescales of the previous and proposed EGP, but will not be achieved without its support. Appendix 2 sets out the evidence / associated calculations for the outcomes set out in previous table 3.3.2.
- 3.5 In approving the EGP on the 4th April 2012, Cabinet allocated £8,038,767 of funding as set out within Appendix 1, covering a four year period through to the end of the 2014/15 financial year. Since its creation further areas for investment and resources have been added to the Regeneration Directorates portfolio and added to this programme, including:
- Black Country Joint Committee Programme Management
 - The Black Country Enterprise Zone and key employment sites across the Borough
 - Significant investment supporting the delivery of development projects in Walsall Town Centre e.g. Gigaport, Waterfront and St Matthews Quarter
 - Delivery of the Walsall Site Allocation Document and the Walsall Town Centre Area Action Plan
 - Walsall Works Apprenticeship Programme
 - The EU Technical Assistance Team
 - The Invest Black Country (IBC) Service
 - Local Growth Fund – including delivery of major projects and Accountable Body Status
 - City Deal – Managing and Accountable Body Status
- 3.6 The effective financial management of the budgets set out within Appendix 1 has driven the alternate use of partner's resources and secured new funding, including the European Regional Development Fund, together with driving the repayment of New Homes Bonus (NHB) loans by developers. This has created financial reserves totalling £4,238,896 for the two Regeneration Directorate service areas involved; Development & Delivery and Strategic Regeneration, as set out in table 3.9.1.
- 3.7 Cabinet approved the New Homes Bonus (NHB) programme on the 8th February 2012, with the grants from government estimated at that time to

consist of total payments over the 6 years following April 2011 at £5,469,036. This included the formation of a loan fund (£1million) to housing developers that aimed to stimulate the housing market by plugging the financial gaps that existed, with repayments made to the council at agreed rates and timescales. Due to improved confidence in the market place and resultant increased development activity, it's not felt that this NHB intervention model is required moving forward.

The following summaries the 4 Cabinet approved investment principles:

- the development of a policy base (£150k),
- supporting economic regeneration (£500k),
- stimulating future homes provision (loan and grant funding) (£1m),
- bringing empty homes back into use (£500k),

The Cabinet report also contained the following two recommendations;

- 2.2 That authority to use the NHB fund for 2012/13 flexibly to support the six investment principles previously endorsed by Cabinet be delegated to the Executive Director Regeneration, in consultation with the Regeneration Portfolio Holder.
 - 2.5 That any additional resources received by the Council relating to the allocation of the NHB in 2011/12 and 2012/13, by way of a loan repayment, disposal of land or any other mechanism, be recycled into the Regeneration Fund to provide future resources for the Regeneration Fund, and a further report will be submitted to Cabinet in relation to the expenditure of these recycled funds.
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- 3.8 The first recommendation is the extension of the current EGP through to the end of March 2018. This will include meeting / contributing towards the costs of 41 existing Council staff involved in the delivery and co-ordination of services, together with the subsequent achievement of outcomes for a further three years. Outcome levels will be agreed with the Executive Director for Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, they are estimated to be proportionate to those detailed in tables 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 for the previous 4 years.
 - 3.9 Table 3.9.1 on the following page brings together all remaining, repaid or anticipated (from NHB programme) funding together with the reserves held as part of the current EPG into one place. The table details the individual funding streams, the activity they have and can continue to support together with the amounts available.

Table 3.9.1 – Combined NHB and Economic Growth Programme funding available

Funding Stream	Activity Supported	Funding Available
Service Area - Development & Delivery		
Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI)	Town & District Centre Teams	£288,248
ERDF and Partner contributions –BCBPIP	Delivery of BCBPIP Grants Programme	£55,543
Willenhall THI (67,099),HPG (53,174) Heritage & Biodiversity Grant (7,201) / Landscape Fees (60,000) / New Habitats Burdens Grant (38,025)	Support to protect and enhance the natural and built environment	£225,499
New Homes Bonus (NHB) (Previously allocated for Economic Regeneration)	Supporting the development and delivery of physical economic growth.	£486,225
NHB - Available and not allocated		£454,087*
NHB - Loan Fund Repayments (expected). £175k due back, key risk it will not be repaid until the remaining homes are sold.		£495,000*
NHB - Loan Fund Repayments (received) – Money already received back (sitting on bal sheet).		£245,000*
Development & Delivery Total		£2,249,602
Service Area – Strategic Regeneration		
Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF)	Employment Growth & Skills Services. External Funding Programme, Economic Intelligence.	£964,989
Income from BCRS (Repayment of Loan)	Joint Committee & Growth Plan	£105,000**
Walsall Works	Walsall Works Apprenticeships Programme.	£320,000
ERDF	IBC and Employment Growth Team	£9,181
BC Councils & BCC Funding Contributions. (Black Country Invest Team)		£178,000
ERDF	Technical Assistance External Funding Team	£146,062
ERDF – Partner contributions		£96,062
LEP – Heseltine funding		£130,000
City Deal	Accountable Body cost recovery for the City Deal Pilot.	£40,000
Strategic Regeneration Totals		£1,989,294
Combined Totals		£4,238,896

* NHB resources available subject to approval by Cabinet as set out in paragraph 3.16.

** Subject to the recovery of commitments made with BCRS as part of their grant agreement.

3.10 To ensure that the Council remains within the funding levels available through existing mainstream and external funding, the costs associated with the

proposed 3 year extension of the Economic Growth Programme have been calculated and agreed with Finance colleagues. Table 3.10.1 below sets these costs out, together with the mainstream resources available after all agreed austerity budget reductions have been removed across the period proposed.

Table 3.10.1 – Economic Growth Programme extension costs

Team Costs

Team Costs (Total)	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Totals
Development & Delivery	£1,130,864	£1,126,794	£987,230	£989,972	£4,234,860
Strategic Regeneration	£916,912	£987,905	£893,220	£875,538	£3,673,575
Totals	£2,047,776	£2,114,699	£1,880,450	£1,865,510	£7,908,435

Mainstream budgets

Team	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Totals
Development & Delivery	£986,977	£865,471	£699,244	£578,131	£3,129,823
Strategic Regeneration	£459,143	£377,542	£304,933	£252,163	£1,393,781
Totals	£1,446,120	£1,243,013	£1,004,177	£830,294	£4,523,604

Balance required from Reserves and other funding (as per table above)

Team	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Totals
Development & Delivery	£143,887	£261,323	£287,986	£411,841	£1,105,037
Strategic Regeneration	£457,769	£610,363	£588,287	£623,375	£2,279,794
Totals	£601,656	£871,686	£876,273	£1,035,216	£3,384,831

- 3.11 Table 3.9.1 sets out the funding available totalling £4,238,896 the above table 3.10.1 calculates the costs of extending the programme through to the end of March 2018 at £3,384,831. If £121,726 is held in reserves towards any future redundancy costs associated with staff funded by the EPG, this gives a total funding requirement of £3,506,557, leaving a balance available to reinvest of £732,339.
- 3.12 Its recommended that Cabinet approve the use of all previous NHB allocations, together with all resources listed in table 3.10.1 for use against all Economic Development activities, delegating authority to the Executive Director for Regeneration in consultation with the portfolio holder to agree its future use, as set out in section 3.16.
- 3.13 Regeneration Directorate teams continue to work with partners to continually seek out contributory funding towards the delivery of council priorities through

initiatives including: The Enterprise Zone, the new European Programme (includes both European Social Fund and European Regional Development Funding streams). Together with developing initiatives in line with the Black Country Strategic Economic Plan (BC SEP), through its funding streams, including; the Local Growth Plan and City Deal programmes, for which Walsall Council is also the Accountable Body.

- 3.14 Should we be successful in attracting additional funding it is requested that this also forms part of the EGP and is factored into the annual review and sign off of the funding plans for each year by the Executive Director for Regeneration as set out below within section 3.16.
- 3.15 The figures associated with this report have been set out and agreed with officers in Finance, who confirm that the budgets are available and the spend tables as prepared by officers within the Development & Delivery and Strategic Regeneration teams are accurate, with mainstream budget allocations taking into account the four year savings reductions as approved by Cabinet in October 2014. Finance colleagues have advised however, that 2016/17 and 2017/18 budgets are based on indicative Government settlements meaning that available mainstream budgets may reduce. Should this occur, the Executive Director for Regeneration will need to ensure that costs reduce accordingly to meet the revised mainstream budget available.
- 3.16 Cabinet are requested to approve the continuation of the delegated authority to the Executive Director for Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration to approve the appropriate revisions to the programme design, costs, contents, duration and flexibility as required, together with the reinvestment of available reserves, currently estimated at £732,339. This is to ensure its continuing ability to meet identified local people and employer's needs, whilst remaining within approved spending limits. These details will be brought together into annual funding plans for each year's activity.

4. Council priorities

- 4.1 The Corporate Plan was agreed by Council on 23 September 2013 reaffirming the vision, values and priorities that were agreed in partnership and describing the outcomes we would expect to see, providing a clear focus to plan activities and target improvements in a time of significant budget reductions.
- 4.2 Its first listed priority is: Supporting Business to Thrive and Supporting Local People into Work, the outcomes listed are:
- Less people dependent on out of work benefits
 - More Businesses
 - More Jobs in Walsall
 - More Walsall residents in work
 - More Walsall people with better skills and behaviours that match what employers need

- 4.3 The EGP will throughout its lifetime make significant contributions towards the achievement of all of these outcomes through the delivery of effective services and the co-ordination of key partners.
- 4.4 The Financial Plan approved by Cabinet on the 29 October 2014 sets out the 6 priorities for the council, to provide focus in order for it to meet its purpose and vision. The Economic Growth Programme will make significant contributions and deliver outcomes towards 5 of the 6 priorities, including:
- Support with cost of living
 - Promoting Health & Wellbeing
 - Helping local high streets and communities
 - Improving educational achievements
 - Creating jobs and helping people get new skills

5. Risk management

- 5.1 There is a risk that Employers, Developers, Land Owners and Investors within the Borough could reject the offer of support and therefore not work with the Council to create the conditions within which new jobs may be created. This risk will be mitigated through joint working with the private sector, understanding their needs, building confidence and creative programme design that meets their identified needs.
- 5.2 There is a risk that local people will not receive the support they need; the Council will mitigate this risk by working with the right providers of services based on understanding people's individual needs, building confidence and creative programme design that meets these requirements, and places them into work.
- 5.3 There is a risk that action taken will not support and encourage inward investment, which will be mitigated through joint working with specialist organisations, such as Marketing Birmingham, who will support us to maximise the attraction of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) through UKTI (UK Trade and Investment).
- 5.4 There is a risk that the customers may not receive the services they ask for and need. We will mitigate this through a constant dialogue with our two key customer groups, local people and employers and the use of data and information from our customers to shape our service delivery moving forward.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 The financial implications of this programme will be met through allocations of funding estimated to be available to the Council as set out in 3.9 .1. No additional resources are required, however it should also be noted that the estimate of mainstream resources is based on indicative Government settlements. Recent indications are that austerity measures will not only continue, but will be strengthened, meaning that resources may reduce further. Should that occur for 2016/17 and 2017/18 then costs will need to be reviewed and activity aligned to meet the reduced funding available.

7. Legal implications

- 7.1 Any contracting and future expenditure will need to be in accordance with both existing and future legal and procedural requirements and fall within approved spending limits and authorisations. Advice will be taken from Legal Services going forwards.
- 7.2 Legal Services will be consulted with and involved in the drafting, approval and execution of any contracts and funding agreements, where required in accordance with the Council's Contract Rules. Legal Services will also be consulted in relation to any potential State aid issues that may arise.

8. Property implications

- 8.1 None

9. Health and wellbeing implications

- 9.1 The Economic Growth Programme will through its staff and service delivery make positive contributions towards the Health and Wellbeing of local community members and employers staff. This will include assistance with the removal of health barriers to employment through joint working with key agencies (e.g. Public Health) to develop and deliver initiatives that help to ensure that local people are fit and able to accept employment when offered and then remain in it.

10. Staffing implications

- 10.1 Council staff will manage and administer all aspects of this programme and work to understand the needs of customers as set out previously. These costs are budgeted for in the proposal as set out previously.
- 10.2 The 41 council staff receiving support from the EGP will be engaged in the direct delivery of support, information and services that support local people and employers. Staff appointed will be on the appropriate contracts as agreed with Human Resources, with all costs covered through the Economic Growth Programme (EPG) and included in all cost estimates as set out within table 3.10.1.
- 10.3 Should the growth programme fail to be extended by Cabinet or we fail to secure continued funding post 2017/18, we will agree the costs for the appropriate redundancies, and work with Finance colleagues to identify the sources of this funding, which will include the EPG. As a starting point £121,726 has been included to cover these costs.

11. Equality implications

- 11.1 Equality analysis, legal and built environment related requirements and good practice issues will be considered throughout the programme. An overarching Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been carried out and shows that there may be positive impact for people over the age of 16 years and disabled people.

12. Consultation

- 12.1 A wide range of organisations and partners have been involved in both the delivery of past services, and as partners continually advising us on how we structure the provision as part of the Economic Growth Programme.
- 12.2 We continually review our service content and delivery from our customer's perspective, taking into account their needs, views and requirements to ensure that we are offering solutions that really work and maximise the chances of success and the outcomes achieved.

Background papers

New Homes Bonus Cabinet Report – 8 February 2012

Economic Growth Programme Cabinet Report – 4 April 2012

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Simon Neilson
Executive Director

9 December 2014



Councillor M Nazir
Deputy Leader Portfolio holder
Regeneration
9 December 2014

Appendix 1 – Funding & outcome profiles approved by Cabinet (4th April 2012)

Cabinet on the 4th April 2012 considered and approved a Cabinet report establishing the EGP. Included within this cabinet report is table 3.8.1, setting out the sustainable funding profile, which subsequently directly supported staff in the delivery of services to achieve outcomes. The anticipated outcomes, were also set out within the 4th April Cabinet report as table 3.14.1, extracted and included below.

Table 3.8.1 – Proposed sustainable funding profiles

Funding Stream	2011/12	2012/13*	2013/14	2014/15	Totals
Council Mainstream	£512,115	£762,475	£637,295	£637,295	£2,549,180
Working Neighbourhoods Fund (Staff Funded Programmes)	£578,544	£208,253	£265,325	£379,256	£1,431,378
Working Neighbourhoods Fund (Granted Programmes)	£1,762,533	£776,254	£0.00	£0.00	£2,538,787
Working Neighbourhoods Fund (Uncommitted Funds)	£0.00	£263,709	£0.00	£0.00	£263,709
Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Scheme (LABGI)	£0.00	£49,541	£151,001	£133,796	£334,338
New Homes Bonus	£0.00	£0.00	£117,407	£363,551	£500,000
ERDF	£55,000	£73,333	£73,333	£18,334	£220,000
ESF	£0.00	£10,000	£20,000	£0.00	£30,000
Walsall Works	£0.00	£75,000	£75,000	£0.00	£150,000
Deprived Area Fund	£0.00	£21,375	£0.00	£0.00	£21,375
Totals	£2,908,192	£2,258,982	£1,339,361	£1,532,232	£8,038,767

Note; *these figures will be refined once the actual out-turn / carry forward figures from 2011/12 moving into 2012/13 are finalised at the close of the financial year process.

Table 3.14.1 – Anticipated key outcomes / outputs

Key Outcome / Output	Anticipated Numbers (March 2015)
Apprenticeships (Managing the Walsall Works programme)	600
Local People (Beneficiaries) supported	5000
New / additional users of the One Stop Shops	3500
People Placed / Supported into Employment	3000
Training Qualifications achieved	750
Businesses Assisted	500
Business Enquiries Managed	1200
Jobs Safeguarded	250
Investment Enquiries Handled	80
Value of new business / Investment enquiries realised / constructed for / within Walsall	£5million

Walsall.com / Find it web hits	50,000
EU / other external resources attracted into the borough of Walsall.	£3million

Appendix 2 – Evidence sources associated with key outcomes and outputs

Table 3.3.1 – Strategic Regeneration service area achievements so far

Key Outcomes/Outputs	Outcomes Achieved (4yrs to March 14)	Evidenced Through	Comments
Apprenticeships (Pre & Full Apprenticeships)	692	Signed individual employment contracts / grant agreements with employers & providers.	This information is held as part of the Walsall Works contract. This was audited last year, including outputs, with significant assurance given.
Non Walsall Works Apprenticeships Supported	361	Evidence from each learner participating.	
Local People (Beneficiaries) supported	16,895	Evidence collected from contracted partners and delivers of training services.	This is held through the WNF Worklessness contract. Sample evidence is held on our files - due to the amount of beneficiaries. All information is held centrally at Steps to Work.
New / additional users of the One Stop Shops to gain advice and guidance together with direct support into employment.	21,136	Evidence from the contracted providers of the one stop shops.	This is held through the WNF Worklessness contract. Sample evidence is held on our files
People Placed / Supported into Employment	4,913	Evidence from employers participating with providers.	This is held through the WNF Worklessness contract. Sample evidence is held on our files
Training Qualifications achieved	543	Evidence from records and providers contracted to deliver services.	This is held through the WNF Worklessness contract. Sample evidence is held on our files
Businesses Assisted	267	Records of engagements held by staff teams. Outcomes achieved through the teams supporting employers.	This is held in house by the Employment Growth Team. Value of new business Includes: £7 million Lonestar investment £5million Eurofoods investment £2.750m against Synergy's investment and a number of small grants.
Business Enquiries Managed	470		
Jobs Safeguarded	380		
Investment Enquiries Handled	107		
Value of new business / Investment enquiries realised / constructed for / within Walsall	£14,750,435	Evidence from 'Meet the Buyer events and engagement, set out on the following page.	
EU / other external resources attracted into the borough of Walsall.	£38million (new EU programme)	Drafting, submission and approval of the Black Country European Investment Strategy, allocating £152m for the	This is evidenced through a variety of means including EU funds and other bids

		Black Country, £38m anticipated for Walsall.	
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Table 3.3.2 - Development and Delivery service area achievements so far

Key Outcome / Output	Outcomes Achieved (6 years to March 2014)	Evidenced Through
Jobs Secured (Safeguarded and Created)	1,714	Evidence held by staff teams as set out below.
Floor Space Delivered (New and Refurbished)	90,893sqm	
Investment Secured (Public and Private)	£378.5million	

Development and Delivery service area outcomes achieved (6 years to March 2014)

Development	Jobs secured (safeguarded and created)	Commercial floor space delivered (sqm)	Investment secured
Asda	390	10,355	£25m
Goldmine Centre	-	2,000	£2.5m
Walsall College	741	24,645	£65m
Tesco	200	10,880	£55m
WHG headquarters	310	4,018	£7m
Waterfront South	13	-	£40m
Manor Hospital	-	33,600	£174m
Premier Inn Hotel	60	5,395	£10m
Total:	1,714 jobs	90,893 sqm	£378.5m

NB. These figures exclude the 322 residential units delivered at Waterfront South, and the 41 residential units as part of the Asda development. Some of the jobs figures are unknown due to a lack of information being available.

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for Policies, Procedures and Services

Proposal name	Extending the Economic Growth Programme		
Directorate	Regeneration		
Service	Strategic Regeneration & Development & Delivery		
Responsible Officer	Mark Lavender		
EqIA Author	Mark Lavender		
Date proposal started	4.11.14	Proposal commencement date (due or actual)	17.12.14

1	What is the purpose of the proposal?	Yes / No	New / revision
	Policy	No	
	Procedure	No	
	Internal service	YES	Revision
	External Service	YES	Revision
	Other - give details		
The extension of existing services			
2	What are the intended outcomes, reasons for change? (The business case)		
	The outcomes of the service revision is the extension of a current successful programme of activities, that aim to create new employment opportunities by supporting Walsall companies to expand or locate in Walsall, complemented by supporting local unemployed people to gain the skills employers need and then local employment.		
3	Who is the proposal potential likely to affect?		
	People in Walsall	Yes / No	Detail
	All	Yes	The opportunities are open to all people of working age.
	Specific group/s		
	Council employees		
	Other		
4	Summarise your evidence, engagement and consultation.		
	Evidence of need is provided through the Walsall Local Economic Assessment (LEA), which provides the nature and scope of the problems facing the economy of Walsall. Essentially too few available jobs, and local people who lack the opportunities or have barriers (skills and health needs etc.) to gaining employment.		

The LEA involved consultation with stakeholders and community groups / members, together with local employers as part of its drafting, complemented by on-going dialogue with the Regenerations Directorates customers, who include: local employers, local people and the providers of services associated with this proposal.

Consultation was carried out with key stakeholders and community representatives as part of the development of the Black Countries European Investment Strategy, this looks at developing and delivering interventions that promote Social Inclusion throughout identified geographical areas, assigned by the European commission.

Consultees expressed a desire to ensure that members within local communities, especially those furthest from the labour market within the protected characteristic's receive support to overcome barriers to work including: access to affordable Childcare, specific support for those in age groups shown to be vulnerable or holding a higher than average unemployment rates, those possessing low / no skills or experiencing wider problems that are limiting their access to employment.

It's too early to detail the content of the services that will be contracted across the Black Country including Walsall, as the specifications are currently being drafted. Once known these can be reported against.

As part of the development of strategies for implementation and the work carried out through the Economic Growth programme we will ensure that no person or persons are discriminated against in relation to their; Age, Disability, Gender, Circumstances, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex (Gender) or Sexual Orientation.

Consultation as part of the annual budget setting processes and more recently associated with the options for council budgets over the next 4 years indicated that employment and training opportunities are a key priority for local people.

**5 How may the proposal affect each protected characteristic or group?
The affect may be positive, negative or neutral.**

Characteristic	Affect	Reason	Action needed Y or N
Age	Yes	Positive – Improved access to training and employment opportunities for those aged 16+	N
Disability	Yes	Positive – Improved access to training and employment opportunities	N
Gender reassignment	None		N
Marriage and civil partnership	None		N
Pregnancy and maternity	None		N

	Race	Yes	Positive – Improved access to training and employment opportunities for all community members.	N
	Religion or belief	None		N
	Sex	Yes	Positive – Improved access to training and employment opportunities for all.	N
	Sexual orientation	None		N
	Other (give detail)	N/A		N
	Further information			
6	Does your proposal link with other proposals to have a cumulative affect on particular equality groups? If yes, give details below.			(Delete one) Yes
<p>The programme will assist with the delivery of many complementary programmes, including the Local Growth Fund, the City Deal Initiative and the new European Programme. It's not possible to quantify the impact on any particular equality group as this is to be determined. However all services will be available for all people throughout the borough, subject only to the eligibility criteria set by the funding organisations.</p> <p>The proposal will also utilise existing council reserves harnessing these to support local businesses to create new jobs, and local people to apply and successfully gain them.</p>				
7	Which justifiable action does the evidence, engagement and consultation suggest you take? (Bold which one applies)			
A	No major change required			
B	Adjustments needed to remove barriers or to better promote equality			
C	Continue despite possible adverse impact			
D	Stop and rethink your proposal			

Now complete the action and monitoring plan on the next page

Action and monitoring plan				
Action Date	Action	Responsibility	Outcome Date	Outcome
April 2015	Evaluate / understand the likely (positive) impact the EU specifications may have on protected groups.	Strategic Regeneration Service area through the Technical Assistance Team.	September 2015	Understand and if possible define the positive impact on protected groups

Update to EqlA	
Date	Detail