

INTERREG (FCE) PROGRAMME

Acceptance of funding offer from the Interreg (France Channel England -FCE) 2014-2020 programme

Part I Briefing Report



1.0 SCHEME SUMMARY

PCC has secured funding from the Interreg (France Channel England - FCE) 2014 -2020 programme to support innovation in order to address the economic and societal issues facing the FCE area.

The project title is Covid Channel Area Response Exchange (C-Care) and seeks to increase the quality and effectiveness of service delivery to the most socially and economically disadvantaged groups through social innovation Covid Channel Area Response Exchange.

The overall programme runs from 1 August 2020 to 30 June 2023. This particular project will commence on 1 April 2021.

C-Care is a ground-breaking partnership of 4 English & 3 French organisations along with a much wider network of stakeholders and previous Interreg projects from the FCE area who have developed a unique and ambitious package of targeted support in response to some of the socio-economic impacts of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Covid-19 has affected every area of life in the FCE area and the C-Care capitalisation project aims to address issues where the impacts have been the greatest.

The project will deliver 4 cross-border work packages aimed at supporting individuals at risk of exclusion and businesses at risk of closure in order to reverse some of the negative impacts of the pandemic.

- **Work Package 1 (WPI) - a reflection on the last year** - Respond, Reflect, Report will enable partners, stakeholders and other FCE projects to review initial Covid-response, gather good practice and bring together lessons learnt in order to shape a new package of Covid-19 response and recovery actions
- **Work Package 2 (WP2) - Individuals (further) disadvantaged by the pandemic** - C-Care Support for Social Inclusion will deliver targeted support to more than 4547 individuals to develop new skills and tools to help them into employment or start a business
- **Work Package 3 (WP3) - Business adaptation and Resilience** - C-Care Support for Business Recovery will provide direct support to over 1,947 businesses via advice, vouchers and grants aimed at helping sectors hard-hit by the pandemic to develop new business models to respond market changes and ensure a green, inclusive and sustainable economic recovery.
- **Work Package 4 (WP4) - Future models of working** - C-CARE Reset and Redesign will develop blueprints for future town centres to improve long term prospects for businesses and work on new ways to tackle social exclusion and in particular digital and food poverty.

2.0 BUDGET SUMMARY AND BUSINESS CASE

The grant of 1,127,995.47 Euros apportioned to Plymouth City Council as Project Partner will address the following categories of spend and lead on the following delivery projects and will involve the appointment of 5 new staff for the duration of the programme:

- WP2 Future Work Skills – community outreach to the Skills Launchpad

This strand links to our work with businesses to engage individuals who have been disproportionately affected by pandemic. It tackles a need identified to enable community outreach services to engage

and refer individuals to develop skills action plans that will equip them for future work opportunities in the city. As we emerge from the pandemic, face-to-face contact through safe trusted contacts will be vital to begin to tackle the barriers of isolation and lack of confidence that many face. The project will engage 500 individuals via 20 outreach services and engage 500 individuals via 20 outreach services and provide them with skills action plans that are aligned to Labour Market Information and work in new ways.

- Community outreach to engage people disadvantaged by the pandemic
- 500 skills action plans
- Promotion aligned to labour market information
- WP3 Sustainable Business Recovery – implementing the Charter

This strand implements a programme for inclusive economic growth. It is designed to build on the lessons of the emergency to enable businesses and organisations to understand and implement new practices that make the city's whole economy more resilient in the increasingly complex economic environment. It will provide businesses with new learning tools to understand how their business environment is changing and how they can adapt to new ways of working. Learning from WPI will be used to pilot 5 new business support programmes in: supply chains; skills/ workforce engagement, employment practices, high street renaissance and climate emergency. These pilots will then be rolled out to wider audiences. We will work with 50 businesses on the pilots and roll out to a further 150 businesses. PP2 will also engage in this strand, bringing in expertise from related programmes, and helping develop and evaluate activities.

- Pilots with 50, roll out to 150
- Supplier Directory,
- Employer Hub of Skills Launchpad,
- Campaign for good employment practice (procured)
- Engaging with community organisations
- Understanding our increasingly complex business environment and planning for environmental action
- WP4 Future Blueprint for Cities (procured)

This activity strand, will create a blueprint for city centres and suburban high streets. These are experiencing a significant shift away from high street retail, with closed shops unlikely to be re-let, and changes in the premises and locations businesses need as they change the way they work. Delivery will be procured for specialist cultural knowledge and expertise using a co-created brief from the earlier deliverable. It will investigate the culture of the high street and opportunities to use vacant shops to provide new services and in new ways – both online and face-to-face – that provide inclusive jobs and enable people to live healthy and productive lives. Pilot investments will enable start-up businesses, interest groups or collaborations to take over empty shops and public spaces with new uses (not otherwise present in the area), along with co-ordination resources such as a web-portal, to demonstrate how the change can be implemented. The output for the project will be a Blueprint for City Centres and High Streets with 15 case studies showing practical delivery.

- City Centre renaissance cultural organisations

Spend category	Euros
A. Staff;	634,150.52
B. Office and administration;	95,122.55
C. Travel and accommodation;	18,622.39
D. External expertise and services;	380,100.01
E. Equipment;	0
F. Infrastructure and construction works.	0
Total value of project	1,127,995.47

3.0 REVENUE IMPLICATIONS

£ 974,506 (1,127,995 Euros) of ring-fenced revenue grant has been awarded to PCC to meet 100% of the cost of achieving the revenue grant objectives. Effective project management will ensure that the project is delivered within the grant terms and conditions. There are no expected revenue pressures arising as a result of accepting this grant award.

4.0 RISKS

Key Risk	Nature of Risk	Mitigation
Generic		
Strategic / Operational		
Outputs not achieved	Forecasting is based on assumptions that are not fully realised	Outputs have been forecast using economic modelling and experience of similar schemes. We will maintain robust project management protocols through regular monitoring and review. Remedial action will be taken where necessary
Reputational		
Failure to maximise opportunity for local businesses to tender / benefit from contracts	The risk is that national companies with no local connections / footprint could be appointed for some of the work, so local workforce will not benefit from these opportunities	The project team will ensure that suitable contractors are invited under procurement rules. There are a number of locally approved contractors and the new Procurement strategy under Resurgam supports local suppliers
Financial		
Budget is insufficient to deliver all elements	Budget is based on some assumptions	Close monitoring of budget and effective consultancy work undertaken to ensure that risk areas of the project are investigated thoroughly. Account taken of Staffing salary increments and annual pay awards

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Leader of the Council:

- Approves the briefing note.
- Accepts the funding offer of 1,127,995 Euros from the the Interreg (France Channel England - FCE) 2014 -2020 as described in the Executive Decision made by a Cabinet Member with appropriate sign offs from PCC Legal, Finance and Democratic Support