

**ESF NEETs and Youth Employment Programme - Specification**

**Change Log**

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| **Version** | **Date** | **Author** | **Section** | **Changes** |
| V1 | 08.09.2021 | GMCA |  | Specification at launch of mini competition |
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**Annexes**

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| **Annex 1** | Data set requirements | A list of data items required related to individuals before, during and after delivery. |
| **Annex 2** | GMCA Performance Management and Compliance Framework | A description of how performance will be managed and the improvement action to be taken if necessary. |
| **Annex 3** | Information Governance | Information Governance requirements and guidance in relation to the specification. |
| **Annex 4** | Values and Standards | A description of the policies and plans that providers should have in place to meet required values of delivery. |
| **Annex 5** | Background and Help Document | A list of key contacts and information to support the development of co-designed bids. |
| **Annex 6** | Data Pack | Overview of available datasets on GM NEET and youth unemployment. |

1. **Introduction**

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) has secured £10m European Social Fund (ESF) and is looking to procure two lead organisations to deliver an innovative engagement and mentoring programme for young people and young adults aged 15-24 who are **affected by missed learning, and/or are disengaged from mainstream skills support offers, and/ or are not in employment or training**. Both national and regional research indicates several challenges in engaging and supporting this group of young people, which will be addressed by this specification.

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| **The main aim of the programme is to mitigate the impacts on those young people most affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, those who are experiencing disadvantage, and those not engaged with other provision. This will be delivered through a comprehensive engagement and transition offer that will enable these young people to successfully engage in a positive learning or work destination and develop the skills and confidence to continue into a sustainable career pathway.** |

**This programme is being procured as two separate lots – one focusing on young people aged 15-19 and one focusing on young people aged 18-24 years. Lead bidders responding to this opportunity are invited to bid for ONE lot only.** This specification covers the programme as a whole and should be read and considered by all bidders. Sections specific to each lot are clearly highlighted as such. The Mini-Competition Document includes common questions for bidders which apply to both lots; however, bidders should tailor their response to the age range applicable to the lot applied for.

The programme is split into two lots in recognition of the different needs of these cohorts, and the context in which the existing system currently engages and supports these age groups through NEET prevention/engagement activity and employment and skills support. Either lot can be accessed by 18- and 19-year-olds to ensure that the most appropriate package can be provided for each individual depending on circumstance and support previously accessed. Providers will be expected to ensure that each participant is able to access the right programme to meet their needs and aspirations.

The programmes delivered under the two lots must work closely together to offer a seamless and coordinated package of support to young people. Once providers are awarded for both lots, GMCA will facilitate introductory discussions, but providers will be expected to manage this relationship and associated systems closely on an ongoing basis.This will be overseen through governance arrangements for the programme (see section 18).

Due to the need to reflect local variations in demographics and the differing challenges of the groups we would like to engage with, **it is expected that applications should be a partnership** with various providers coming together to deliver different aspects of the lot being bid for.

Applicants will need a good understanding of current trends and challenges in the wider NEET, youth employment and youth engagement sector and, in particular, a demonstrable, detailed understanding of the trends and challenges specific to Greater Manchester. It is also expected that applicants will understand existing support programmes for young people and work alongside them to **avoid duplication of provision and add value** to the offer across the whole sector.

Existing support available for the target group includes the below, this is not an exhaustive list and bidders are expected to undertake their own research:

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| **GM Procured / Devolved** | **National Programmes** |
| * [Bridge GM and GMACS](https://bridgegm.co.uk) * [Prince’s Trust Future Workforce Fund](https://manchester.princes-trust.org.uk/about-us) * [Growth Company – Skills Support for Employment programme](https://gcskills-support.uk/) * [Adult Education Budget - adult skills provision](https://greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/work-and-skills/adult-education-budget/) * [GM Working Well employment support programmes](https://greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/work-and-skills/working-well) | * DWP Youth Offer * National Careers Service * Study Programmes * Traineeships * Apprenticeships * DWP Kickstart |

An additional overview of existing provision for young people across GM is included in Annex 5.

1. **Strategic Background and Context**

The **Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS)** identifies a range of strategic priorities for the city-region, which place our residents and employers at the heart of everything we do. Crucially, our priorities together with those set out by the Greater Manchester Employment and Skills Advisory Panel (ESAP) in its [Local Skills Report and Labour Market Plan](https://greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/4348/greater-manchester-local-skills-report-and-labour-market-plan-march-2021.pdf) (March 2021) respond to some of the most deep-rooted challenges that remain across GM, reflecting the issues experienced by neighbourhoods, communities and individuals who have not had the opportunity to engage with and benefit from the city-region’s increased economic growth prior to the pandemic, or who have been hit hardest by its impact and seen existing inequalities of opportunity worsen.

Within the GMCA [Education, Work and Skills Directorate](https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/work-and-skills/), we are committed to strengthening the offer for all young people to enable them to leave education and training ready to succeed in the labour market, with a balance of academic, technical and ‘life ready’ skills.

Deprivation clearly has a negative impact on the life chances and social mobility of current and future generations. Some of our most significant challenges centre around children and young people, and we want to ensure they are given the best opportunity to start life well and feel supported throughout education and on into adulthood. The [Greater Manchester Independent Inequalities Commission](https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/equalities/independent-inequalities-commission/#:~:text=Independent%20Inequalities%20Commission%20Launched%20in%20October%202020%2C%20the,should%20be%20tackled%20and%20outline%20specific%2C%20ambitious%20recommendations.) recently published their report ‘The Next Level: Good Lives for All in Greater Manchester’. The mission of the Commission has been to better understand the pre-existing and emerging inequalities in the city region, consider how these inequalities should be tackled, and outline some specific and hard-hitting recommendations. Bidders should consider and refer to the relevant recommendations and show how their model will support these.

Our young people come from diverse backgrounds and live in diverse communities, from some of the most affluent areas in the country to some of the most deprived. Critically, we know that as a collective group, our children and young people have a lower life expectancy, are more likely to live in poverty and have a greater likelihood of being in the care system when compared to national averages. The [Independent Prosperity Review](https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/economy/greater-manchester-independent-prosperity-review/), carried out as part of the development of GM’s Local Industrial Strategy, also found that:

* at the age of 16, non-disadvantaged learners are more than twice as likely to go onto a school sixth form or sixth form college;
* poorer pupils are three times more likely to drop out of their chosen educational pathway after Key Stage 4; and
* by the age of 19, only 37% of disadvantaged young people have gained a Level 3 qualification, compared to 63% of non-disadvantaged young people.

This has been further supported by the [Impetus Review into the 'Youth Jobs Gap'](https://www.impetus.org.uk/assets/publications/Report/Youth-Jobs-Gap-The-Employment-Gap-in-the-North-West.pdf) (April 2019), which found that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds were twice as likely to be NEET than their better-off peers, whilst the [Department for Education's analysis of long-term NEET characteristics](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/characteristics-of-young-people-who-are-long-term-neet) (February 2018) found that being care experienced, known to social care, excluded and/or educated in an alternative provision setting or having a statement of special educational needs (SEN) were the most common risk factors associated to long-term NEET.

Greater Manchester has a youth employment rate gap compared with national rates. Data from the ONS Annual Population Survey shows that between Jan-Dec 2020, 24,900 or 14.4% of people aged 16-24 were unemployed in Greater Manchester; and that 140,700 people aged 16-24 were considered economically inactive, which includes a wide range of factors including full time students, carers, people with health conditions or disabilities, and those who do not wish to actively seek work. This means that there are a significant number of young adults who are not actively engaged in mainstream DWP services and may not be accessing other support, and with guidance could progress into training or fulfilling careers. The [Greater Manchester Hidden Talent programme](https://www.gmcvo.org.uk/GMsHiddenTalent) focused on supporting those aged 18-25 who were NEET and not claiming out of work benefits. The evaluation of that programme provides insights into this ‘hidden’ group of young adults and their needs and aspirations.

During 2020, young people across GM told us through the design of the [Young Person’s Guarantee](https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/children-and-young-people/youth-task-force-and-young-persons-guarantee/young-persons-guarantee) what they were most worried about in terms of their future. They told us they need more employers to be supported to be better able to connect with the full diversity of talented young people across Greater Manchester – and to give currently marginalised young people the skills and confidence they need to take full advantage of all the opportunities available. Recommendations for further action include:

* Consider options to implement employment and training support for young people who are furthest from the labour market or ineligible for current programmes;
* Explore options for extending access to appropriate employment support for young adults with a learning disability, autism or a severe mental illness;
* Look at both current devolved skills funding for those aged 19+, and funding for 16-18-year-olds to explore responding to where there are current/future gaps in occupations;
* Explore supporting businesses to become more youth-friendly, potentially as part of the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter and looking at standards that apply to employers recognised by Youth Employment UK; and
* Consider mechanisms for retaining the Apprenticeship Levy Matchmaking Service that encourages more local business to develop apprenticeship opportunities for priority groups of young people in Greater Manchester, e.g. care-leavers.

Analysis has shown that young people have been the worst affected by the Covid-19 pandemic in terms of access to the labour market. [An Unequal Crisis: The impact of the pandemic on the youth labour market](https://www.employment-studies.co.uk/resource/unequal-crisis-impact-pandemic-youth-labour-market) report found that:

* Young people account for 46% of the overall fall in employment;
* Young people are bearing the brunt of lockdown – 47% of people furloughed aged under 24;
* The fall in employment is four times higher for young Black people and nearly three times higher for young Asian people; and
* Almost 200,000 young people who are out of work have been unemployed for over six months

The full **impact of Covid-19 and of Brexit** on education and the labour market will become clearer over time, but we do know that young people aged 15-24 have been most affected economically and are at greater risk of long-term scarring and reduced earnings as a result. The Institute for Fiscal Studies reported in 2021 that the substantial loss of learning in schools due to Covid-19 is likely to be followed by lower skills and qualifications for children at school during the pandemic, resulting in permanently lower incomes during their careers. The risk of becoming NEET is not just about lost/disrupted learning but about other opportunities that help young people take their first steps on their career pathway: research has found that young people who have four or more employer encounters with the world of work whilst at school are five times less likely to become NEET, and on average will go on to earn 16% more than their peers who did not have such opportunities*[[1]](#footnote-2)*

Young people tend to be employed in the sectors that have been most immediately impacted and many roles that existed previously are at risk. This programme seeks to address the immediate impacts of the pandemic through missed education, increased social anxiety and isolation, and the need to provide additional time and resources to support those for whom existing mainstream support is not appropriate. Many of these young people have **personal barriers around motivation and confidence which hampers engagement, attendance and outcomes** and we see this programme as a “bridge” to address poor or fluctuating engagement, where local delivery and accessibility is a priority, taking the needs and history of the service user into account to establish a strong and positive transition pathway into education, work and skills support.

Despite the range of provision available and the commitment, expertise and enthusiasm of providers and stakeholders, **the current employment and skills system does not engage effectively enough with our most disadvantaged young people** and there is a consistent disparity in NEET and unemployment levels for these groups.

1. **Eligibility of Individuals**

Individuals accessing the programme will need to meet the [ESF eligibility criteria](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/european-social-fund-eligibility-documents/esf-national-eligibility-rules-and-programme-guidance#participant-eligibility) and responsibility for collecting evidence on individuals (at entry to the programme), results and outputs will be the procured providers’ responsibility. Please see guidance on [ESF data evidence requirements](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/european-social-fund-eligibility-documents/esf-data-evidence-requirements-eligibility-and-results) for more detail on evidencing.

The programme will have a core focus on supporting young people aged 15-24 who are unemployed or economically inactive and not in full time education or training, with a particular focus on those who have been most disadvantaged through the Covid-19 pandemic. The programme does not exclude working with those that are on zero hours contracts if they are not actually in paid employment at the point of starting on the programme and the point that any outcomes are claimed. Further information can be found in the [ESF eligibility criteria](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/european-social-fund-eligibility-documents/esf-national-eligibility-rules-and-programme-guidance#participant-eligibility).

In addition to the ESF eligibility, individuals will also need to evidence at entry to the programme the following requirements. They:

* Must be able to evidence the right to work and live in the UK
* Must reside within Greater Manchester (individual’s residency must be on the approved postcode list provided on the tracker system mentioned in section 15)
* Must be aged 15-24 at the point that they enrol onto the programme:

Aged 15 to 19 years – NEET / risk of NEET

Aged 18 to 24 years – NEET inc. unemployed/ economically inactive or those on zero hours contracts who meet the eligibility criteria.

Note: Young people under the age of 18 who are NEET – or at risk of NEET – do not need to provide separate proof of a right to live and work in the UK in order to join ESF. However, evidence in the form of a school, National Careers Service or local authority referral (plus evidence from local authority confirming that the individual is at risk of being NEET where appropriate) will be required.

1. **Scope, Design and Delivery**

The programmes commissioned will deliver **evidence-based models** to find and engage young people aged 15-24 who are disconnected from mainstream education, work and skills activity and who are likely to require more intensive and tailored interventions to progress into a positive destination. The objective is that more participants will be engaged with education, training, or work on leaving, with the aim of contributing to a reduction in NEET and youth unemployment levels. This will be measured by the Critical Success Factors (see Section 6) and Minimum Service Delivery Standards (see Section 7) detailed in this specification.

The aim of this call is to proactively connect with **6000 vulnerable young people aged 15-24** who are **disengaged from mainstream education, work and skills services**. It will focus on those who are experiencing greater disadvantage and are not accessing or being adequately supported through existing provision and will provide a differentiated and personalised mentoring, wellbeing and support offer that builds confidence, resilience, and motivation to progress into a positive transition outcome and link young people to local labour markets.

Applicants should consider working with local colleges, DWP, Local Authorities, and independent training providers, as well as GMCA as the funder, to show how their proposed programmes will add value to the current delivery available. This specification will not duplicate NEET, youth employment and skills support that is already commissioned across the GM footprint or nationally. If not already in place, the successful applicant will be expected to establish relationships across the provider network and evidence the groundwork that has been undertaken to enable this, to support the development of a GM whole system approach to the delivery of Education, Work and Skills support for young people.

GMCA have a Skills Intelligence function, which aims to bring the employer voice closer to both national and devolved labour market and skills policy. The work of this team focuses on the key sectors within Greater Manchester and the employment and skills challenges faced by businesses in these sectors. Current intelligence is summarised [here on the GMCA website](https://greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/work-and-skills/skills-for-growth/). Bidders should show an understanding of the key messages from this work and have a good grasp on current trends in the wider labour market and skills landscape and have strong links with local employers or the ability to develop these at pace.

Proposals must be strongly evidence-based, and applicants must demonstrate a strong track record of delivery of outputs and results. There should be a consistent measure of job readiness and distance travelled in relation to confidence, motivation, and resilience which bidders will need to include in their response.

There are **two lots** within the overall programme relating to key transition periods for young people. GMCA recognises the specialist nature of the engagement and support model and the need to closely work with the GM provider network and therefore strongly encourage **innovative models which encourage collaboration and partnerships with specialist providers and grassroots community partners**. We will also require clear evidence that the model has been **co-designed with young people** and reflects their priorities and needs.

The key requirements of the two lots outlined below are a **minimum** guidance and the design of the programmes are down to the bidder.

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| **Lot 1 – Engaging young people aged 15-19 years who are at risk of NEET or NEET into strong and positive transitions** | |
| Objective | This programme is about proactively connecting with vulnerable young people aged 15-19 years who are disengaged from mainstream education, work and skills services. It will provide a differentiated and personalised mentoring, wellbeing and support offer that builds confidence, resilience, and motivation to progress into a positive transition outcome.  Bidders will be expected to propose a programme of activities that will support priority groups through key transition points to:   * Decrease levels of young people identified as at risk of NEET transitioning into NEET * Reduce NEET levels for priority groups * Reduce the disparity in NEET levels for priority groups against whole age cohort * Reduce levels of young people aged 16-18 whose situation is not known – e.g. not engaged with post 16 services and destination not confirmed via Local Authority tracking duties * Increase participation levels of priority groups |
| Suggested programme model | |
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| Who is this programme aimed at? | * Young people **most at risk of NEET** based on risk stratification evidence * School and college leavers who have **missed education / disengaged** due to Covid-19 * Young people experiencing barriers related to **mental health, anxiety, social isolation and missed opportunities for workplace encounters** due to Covid-19 * Young people whose situation is **not known** – e.g. not engaged with post 16 services and destination not confirmed via LA tracking duties |
| Priority Groups | * Missed education / home educated * School attendance issues / exclusions * PRU / Alternative Provision * Early college drop out in year 12 or 13 * Looked after children * Young people with Special Educational Needs (not in receipt of an Education, Health and Care Plan), and/or Social Emotional and Mental Health needs * Young people involved in early help, social care, child in need etc. * Young offenders/ at risk of crime/ gang membership/ victims     Bidders will be expected to set out how they intend to engage with and appropriately support the above at-risk groups, including how they will work with organisations who already have relationships with these young people. Bidders are also invited to include additional priority groups based on experience and evidence.  Bidders should show how they will engage with young people at key transition points in their journey, recognising the importance of preventing them from moving into inactivity and keeping them engaged e.g. leaving LA duty of care, leaving sixth form college. |
| Volumes | * 3000 young people to be supported through the programme * Minimum of 45% to achieve positive transition outcome (see Critical Success Factors in Section 6) |

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| **Lot 2 – Engaging and supporting young people aged 18-24 years into further education, training or employment** | |
| Objective | This programme will engage and support young people aged 18-24 who are not in employment, education or training. It will focus on those who are experiencing greater disadvantage and are not adequately supported through existing provision, via a holistic response to their needs.  The objectives of this programme are:   * To reduce the number of young people aged 18-24 who are not in education, training or employment * To reduce the gap in activity for most disadvantaged groups * To reduce the gap in activity levels across Greater Manchester localities |
| Who is this programme aimed at? | This programme is aimed at young people:   * Who are not in education, employment or training and whose situation is not known e.g. not engaged with other services, have dropped out of DWP services or are supported by parents/ carers or other financial means * Who are inactive in the labour market, for example because they:   + have a disability or health condition   + are full time carers or parents * Who are unemployed and claiming out of work benefits   In recognition of the current range of support available to young adults who are engaged with Jobcentre Plus, **at least 50% of participants are expected to not be on a DWP benefit which requires their active labour market engagement.** Individuals engaged will be required to confirm their DWP and benefit status upon signing up to the programme. This will be monitored through the MSDS requirements as set out in Section 7.  For individuals accessing this programme who are engaged with DWP services, engagements to the programme should be on the basis that the individual’s Jobcentre Plus Work Coach believes this is the most suitable provision based on their needs. Bidders are expected to show how their proposed model will add value to the DWP Youth Offer and the range of employment and skills programmes available to people aged 18+ in GM.  The aim of this programme is to engage and support individuals who are not engaged with services and are disadvantaged, and it is recognised that individuals will require support of different intensities and durations, depending on their needs. Bidders should consider how their model will balance the needs of those who require less intensive support with cases which are more complex. |
| Priority Groups | **Risk factors identified for young people aged 18+**   * Care Leavers * People with disabilities * People with physical or mental health conditions * Young people with Special Educational Needs (not in receipt of an Education, Health and Care Plan), and/or Social Emotional and Mental Health needs * People experiencing substance misuse problems * Young parents and lone parents * Young offenders/ those at risk of crime/ gang membership * People of ethnic minority background * Young people for whom the Covid-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on their education and attainment   Bidders will be expected to set out how they intend to engage with and appropriately support the above at-risk groups, including how they will work with organisations who already have relationships with these young people. Bidders are also invited to include additional priority groups based on experience and evidence.  Bidders should show how they will engage with young people at key transition points in their journey, recognising the importance of preventing them from moving into inactivity and keeping them engaged e.g. leaving LA duty of care, leaving sixth form college. |
| Suggested programme interventions and activity | * Engage with a variety of partners to identify young people aged 18-24 within the target group * Establish innovative outreach communication channels to engage young people who are currently “unknown” to local services * Undertake proactive engagement with young people to identify personal concerns and barriers and match to their keyworker with the right skill set and experience to build rapport and offer support * Consider a holistic and sequenced approach to supporting young people, wrapping provision around a wide range of practical and wellbeing needs which will help them on their journey * Develop personalised plans with the individual around agreed goals aimed at achieving successful transition * Provide support and activities for the young person to build personal skills, motivation and resilience to achieve their personal goals and achieve successful transition. * Provider impartial advice and guidance to refer individuals to the appropriate skills/ training/ other services as required |
| Volumes | * 3000 young people to be supported through the programme * Minimum of 45% to achieve progression outcome (see Critical Success Factors in Section 6) |

**Bidders for both Lot 1 and Lot 2 should take into account the following:**

* Engagement should target young people aged 15-24 who are **disconnected from mainstream education, work and skills activity** and this should be reflected in the design of the marketing and communication plan for the programme. The successful organisation will be expected to **generate engagement onto their programme** to achieve the numbers set out in the Critical Success Factors (see Section 6),by engaging with young people, local community partners, Local Authorities, place-based teams and other stakeholders. We expect to see evidence of **experience of innovation in engagement** and a **strong network of delivery partners** to support this.
* Linked to the above it is expected that the successful applicant will make their own **links with stakeholders,** including youth groups, Local Authorities, Jobcentre Plus and providers delivering NEET/ youth employment/ skills projects in GM. GMCA will support this by inviting these various stakeholders to take part in collaboration workshops and encouraging partnerships.
* Bidders will need to show how their model will deliver support to young people **across all Local Authority areas of GM, and is reflective of local priorities,** via their engagement strategy and delivery locations. There are no targets being applied to this, however the split of engagements and outcomes across localities will be monitored via performance management arrangements, and where the Programme Office consider provision to not be meeting the geographical spread set out in their bid, the provider will be required to adjust their delivery accordingly.
* It is expected that bidders consider the value of participants having access to **face to face**, hands-on delivery, alongside the benefits of a blended approach to activity via online participation and skills development. This should be designed around young people’s needs and focused on **removing barriers to engagement** through a personalised approach which addresses Covid-19 restrictions as required. We expect to see a strong focus on **mentoring and hand holding** in this programme to facilitate transition into wider skills delivery or work, with improved confidence and wellbeing as a key factor.
* The model should include a degree of **transitional support** through in training/in work support following the achievement of a positive outcome to ensure sustainability.
* Applicants need to be explicit throughout their bid how the delivery model maps closely to the[**Young Person’s Guarantee**](https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/children-and-young-people/youth-task-force-and-young-persons-guarantee/young-persons-guarantee)**.**
* Bids should show awareness of **inclusivity and accessibility** in the way their engagement and support will be delivered.
* The successful applicant will be expected to carry out specific marketing activity to generate interest from the different groups which need to be targeted. This will likely involve **proactively running targeted activities and events** to reach the appropriate audiences and promote the importance of work and skills for those who have missed education or relevant workplace experience through additional barriers in their life.
* It is important that young people accessing the programme are able to influence their support and **give feedback on their experience**. This should be used to continually monitor and improve the service. Bidders should show how they will build this into their model.
* The **insights and expertise of staff** delivering the service on the frontline should be a fundamental element of continuous improvement. Bidders should show how they will actively include this in the design and ongoing delivery of the programme.
* It will be expected that the successful applicant will continue to **share learning with the Programme Office** through regular meetings and engagement to ensure learning from this package continues to develop understanding around high quality NEET and Youth Employment delivery and supports GMCA in delivering the Young Person’s Guarantee. Please refer to governance arrangements in Section 18.

1. **Stakeholder Engagement**

Providers, as well as needing experience in delivering person-centred support as part of their delivery model, must recognise that programmes supporting disengaged cohorts with multiple barriers cannot do so without strong engagement with **key local stakeholders working in communities and settings which are familiar to young people**.

Providers must work with a myriad of stakeholders to ensure this programme benefits the right residents in Greater Manchester, as per the priority groups listed in Section 4. This must occur throughout the programme model; from engagement, to signposting during time on programme, to securing appropriate and sustainable progression outcomes for participants.

Providers must also recognise that stakeholder engagement comes in many different forms. They must ensure appropriate arrangements are in place and this could include (list not exhaustive):

* Strong locality-based supply chain
* Co-location
* Signposting arrangements
* Co-design
* Referral arrangements
* Employer engagement

Therefore, we expect the providers to have substantial experience in developing strong and collaborative working relationships with key stakeholders, particularly including (list not exhaustive):

* Local Authorities (including 14-19 Leads, Work & Skills Leads, Troubled Families, Social Teams, Neighbourhood Teams, Connexions Teams etc.)
* Education Teams, Schools, Colleges, Pupil Referral Units and Alternative Provision
* Local Authority and other government commissioned partners (e.g., Career Connect, Positive Steps, Working Well programmes)
* Local VCSE partners working with the priority groups
* Jobcentre Plus
* Housing Associations
* Employers and employer facing partners
* Agencies to signpost to for additional support where applicable (including Mental Health Support, Digital Support, Drugs and Alcohol Support, Sexual Health etc.)
* Existing support programmes for Young People

1. **Critical Success Factors**

The **Critical Success Factors** and targets associated with the two lots being commissioned under this programme are listed in the boxes below and would be seen as the **minimum requirements** for successful delivery.

All outputs must be compliant with ESF funding requirements and claims. A draft provider guidance is provided as a supporting document to this specification, the finalised guidance will be confirmed on award of contract. Monthly qualitative and quantitative reporting to GMCA will be required to monitor performance and compliance. It is the provider’s responsibility to ensure that they obtain the necessary evidence to support all outcomes.

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| **LOT 1 – Engaging young people aged 15-19 years who are at risk of NEET or NEET into strong and positive transitions**   1. As outlined in Section 4: A minimum of 3000 individuals to **start** on the programme. **Programme starts will be paid by results, up to a maximum of 3000 participants.** This cap is in recognition of the focus of this programme on providing the right level of engagement and support to participants, and the associated funding needed to do this. In order that new starts have sufficient time to access support through the programme, the last date of new starts to the programme is 30th April 2023. 2. A minimum of 45% of all individuals on the programme to **progress to one of the following positive outcomes:**  * Entering employment * Re-entering education * Enrolled onto an accredited training or skills course * Starting an Apprenticeship, Traineeship, or Supported Internship * Moving into self-employment   Participants must have been **actively attached to their outcome for 28 days** before an outcome can be claimed. Bidders should show how their model will continue to support the young person’s transition into their destination. Evidence requirements for this are set out in the draft Provider Guidance document provided with this specification.  **Progression to a positive outcome will be paid on results. Bidders should set out their proposed target for this outcome in the Pricing Schedule in Appendix A**. **The target must be between 45-55% of 3000 starts on programme.**   1. At least 80% of individuals on the programme to complete support with an end of programme discussion and completion of an Exit Template which will be developed in partnership with the provider. Completions on programme will include individuals for whom a progression outcome is not achieved as well as those who have met the requirements for a progression outcome. Some examples of positive outcomes might include the following; however bidders are invited to set out their proposals for supporting participants who are completing the programme in their response.  * Engagement with volunteering/work experience as a stepping stone towards an education, skills or employment outcome * A referral to a health or wellbeing service * A referral to another employment support or skills programme   **Programme completion will be paid on results. Bidders should set out their proposed target for this outcome in the Pricing Schedule in Appendix A**. **The target must be between 80-90% of programme starts.**   1. The successful provider must be able to demonstrate how their proposed model will make an ongoing effort to engage and support those **priority groups** identified as experiencing greater disadvantage in accessing education, employment and training. These groups are set out in Section 4 but we invite bidders to outline additional risk factors and disadvantage indicators based on your experience. This requirement will be monitored via the MSDS in Section 7. |

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| **LOT 2 – Engaging and supporting young people aged 18-24 years into further education, training or employment**   1. A minimum of 3000 individuals to **start** on the programme. **Programme starts will be paid by results, up to a maximum of 3000 participants.** This cap is in recognition of the focus of this programme on providing the right level of engagement and support to participants, and the associated funding needed to do this.A minimum of 50% of starts must not be currently engaged with DWP on a benefit which requires their active engagement in the labour market, which will be monitored through the MSDS in Section 7. In order that new starts have sufficient time to access the programme, the last date of new starts to the programme is 30th April 2023. 2. A minimum of 45% of all individuals on the programme to progress to one of the following positive outcomes:  * Entering employment * Entering education * Enrolled onto an accredited training or skills course * Starting an Apprenticeship or Traineeship or Supported Internship * Moving into self-employment   Participants must have been **actively attached to their outcome for 28 days** before an outcome can be claimed. Bidders should show how their model will continue to support the young person’s transition into their destination. Evidence requirements for this are set out in the draft Provider Guidance document provided with this specification.  **Progression to a positive outcome will be paid on results. Bidders should set out their proposed target for this outcome in the Pricing Schedule in Appendix A**. **The target must be between 45-55% of 3000 starts on programme.**   1. At least 80% of individuals on the programme to complete support with an end of programme discussion and completion of an Exit Template which will be developed in partnership with the provider. Completions on programme will include individuals for whom a progression outcome is not achieved as well as those who have met the requirements for a progression outcome. Some examples of positive outcomes might include the following; however, bidders are invited to set out their proposals for supporting participants who are completing the programme in their response.  * Engagement with DWP services and a successful benefit claim * A referral to a health or wellbeing service * A referral to another employment support or skills programme   **Programme completion will be paid on results. Bidders should set out their proposed target for this outcome in the Pricing Schedule in Appendix A**. **The target must be between 80-90% of programme starts.**   1. The successful provider must be able to demonstrate how their proposed model will make an ongoing effort to engage and support those **priority groups** identified as experiencing greater disadvantage in accessing employment and training. These groups are set out in Section 4 but we invite bidders to outline additional risk factors and disadvantage indicators based on your experience. This requirement will be monitored via the MSDS in Section 7. |

1. **Minimum Service Delivery Standards (MSDS)**

In addition to the Critical Success Factors set out above, the below Minimum Service Delivery Standards (MSDS) will also be required. The payment of the service fee from the second payment onwards will be attached to successful performance against identified MSDS, with others classed as mandatory requirements, and these will be monitored as part of the Performance Management Framework set out in sections 9 and 13 below.

Draft MSDS standards are outlined below and will be agreed with Providers at contract award. Agreed MSDS targets must be adhered to from the start of programme delivery and GMCA reserve the right to withhold payment where underperformance is identified.

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| **Standards directly related to Service Fee**  ***(Payment of service fee can be withheld following under performance on 3 or more of these standards over a rolling 3- month period)*** | | **Target** |
| 1 | Make initial contact within 2 working days of referral/ initial outreach engagement | 100% |
| 2 | Initial appointment to take place within 5 working days of initial contact | 90% |
| 3 | High level action plan to be agreed with participant within 10 working days of start date | 95% |
| 4 | Projected length of support (level of intensity) to be agreed within 10 working days of start date | 95% |
| 5 | Minimum weekly engagement with Keyworker for first 30% of planned intervention period (based on level on of intensity) or Participants who are live on the programme to be in contact with their keyworker on a minimum of fortnightly basis (Provider to confirm) | 95% |
| 6 | Minimum monthly review of progress with participant to identify distance travelled and explore ambitions, barriers and ongoing support for mental health and wellbeing | 95% of caseload |
| **Standards required for tracking / reporting** | | **Target** |
| 7 | If participant misses an appointment, make contact within 1 working day | 100% attempted |
| 8 | If participant disengages make agreed number of attempts to re-contact, re-engage (provider to identify their re-engagement approach) | 100% attempted |
| 9 | If unable to re-engage participant advise Local Authority/JCP/referral agency within 2 working days of withdrawal to enable follow up (if appropriate) | 95% |
| 10 | Initial assessment to commence at first appointment and be completed by end of second | 90% |
| 11 | Caseload size not to exceed 45-60 per keyworker (to be defined by provider and agreed with GMCA) | 90% |
| 12 | Participants to be confirmed as being from identified priority groups | 90% of caseload |
| 13 | Agreed percentage of engagement to be face to face and delivered in local community venues (Provider to provide details of engagement model) | 100% |
| 14 | In work/in training transitional support to be provided to all participants achieving a positive outcome for minimum 28 days from start date (Provider to confirm in work/in training support model) | 90% of positive outcomes |
| 15 | Provider to develop plan to contact all participants who have completed support or achieved a positive outcome, in order to follow up on status and offer advice and signposting as needed | To be included in bidder’s submission |
| **Mandatory Requirements** | | |
| 16 | Minimum of 1 case study per Local Authority area to be provided each month to highlight good practice and areas for improvement | |
| 16 | Quarterly overview of feedback from young people on reasons for disengagement/none starts, to support development of future services | |
| 18 | Quarterly overview of impact of work with priority groups by Local Authority area with narrative to describe what is working well and where system wide barriers remain | |
| 19 | Minimum quarterly engagement with young people to inform ongoing development and delivery of the programme – reported to Operations Board | |
| 20 | Quarterly report on participant feedback with narrative on satisfaction levels and areas to improve | |
| 21 | Quarterly report on conversion rates from engagement to starts on programme and narrative as to barriers identified and potential mitigations | |
| 22 | Quarterly report on Social Value targets and performance | |
| 23 | Exit reviews completed with participants who complete including rationale for decision on ongoing support | |
| 24 | Lot 1 – monthly information provided to Local Authorities on 16-18 starts and ends to support statutory duties under Raising the Participation Age. | |
| 25 | Lot 2 – minimum 50% of starts from individuals who are not claiming a DWP out of work benefit which requires active engagement in the labour market | |

1. **Social Value**

GMCA are committed to acting in a socially responsible way and to influencing others with whom we work with to do the same. In accordance with the Social Value Act 2012 we must consider social value in all our decisions.

As we rebuild our economy in Greater Manchester during and following the crisis caused by Covid-19, it is increasingly important to secure the maximum possible value from every pound of public money that we spend.

This means GMCA will ensure every contract achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organisation, but also to society and economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment.

GMCA’s [Social Value Framework](https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/economy/social-value-can-make-greater-manchester-a-better-place/) is structured around 6 priority goals:

* Provide the best employment that you can
* Keep the air clean in Greater Manchester
* Create the Employment and Skills Opportunities That We Need to Build Back Better
* Be Part of a Strong Local Community
* Make Your Organisation Greener
* Develop a Local, GM-based and Resilient Supply Chain

Further detail regarding our approach to social value is included in Appendix B and providers are required to complete the associated Social Value Response template in Appendix B, providing a clear description of the activities that will be delivered through the life of this programme.

1. **Reporting**

To meet ESF standards as set out in Sections 3 and 6 as well as GMCA requirements, we will expect to see:

* Clear reporting built into the programme at intervals in line with the payment model.
* Reporting which meets ESF requirements.
* Reporting against outputs outlined in payment model to the programme office on a monthly basis, in order to make the claims as per the payment model.
* Clear stakeholder engagement with regular engagement and reporting of delivery across GM.
* Commitment to continuous improvement: as part of the delivery model the provider will be expected to gather feedback from participants on the support they have provided and use this to inform future delivery to improve their service. As part of both the evaluation work and communications activity case studies and examples will be expected at regular intervals.
* Programme evaluation: The Research Team within GMCA will be undertaking evaluation on the programme in its entirety, therefore the providers will need to work with the GMCA evaluation lead and report the required information. All individuals will be asked to give consent for the evaluation lead to contact them.

1. **Timescale**

The table below sets out the key milestones for the programme for both Lot 1 and Lot 2. The funding period runs until 30th September 2023 and there will be no extension to this.

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| **Milestone** | **Date** |
| Delivery to start | No later than 31st January 2022 |
| Final date for new participants to be enrolled onto the programme | 30th April 2023 |
| Final date for progression outcomes (the 28-day period must be completed by this date) | 30th September 2023 |
| Final date for participants to undertake an exit interview linked to a completion | 30th September 2023 |
| Date for final claim via GMIT | 31st October 2023 |

1. **Budget**

The maximum budget for both lots is:

**Lot 1: £5,000,000**

**Lot 2: £5,000,000**

The bidder is expected to complete the Pricing Schedule in Appendix A to break this down in line with the below payment model. There will be no increase in these budgets and the programme under **each Lot must deliver within its financial envelope**.

1. **Payment Model**

The payment model for this programme is a mixture of service fee and payment for results. Bidders are asked to read and submit the Pricing Schedule in Appendix A where they can submit the intended volumes and unit prices for outcomes and completions on the programme. The Critical Success Factors set out in Section 6 above are the **minimum** volumes expected.

**Service Fee**

As this programme has an emphasis on outreach and engagement, requiring upfront investment, we are anticipating the providers will need to complete some upfront development work on the package - in particular to ensure engagements lead into participants starting on the programme - and will therefore make a maximum of 40% contract value available as a service fee.

A first payment (£666,666) will be made on contract award covering the first six months of delivery. Following this a quarterly contract review will take place and four further quarterly service fee payments (£333,333 each) will be payable upon the Minimum Service Delivery Standards (MSDS) performance being satisfactory (see Section 7). GMCA reserves the right to withhold the service fee in the event of MSDS performance being lower than the bidder’s stated forecasts. Underperformance may also trigger the performance management framework as set out in Annex 2.

**Payment for activity and results**

The remaining 60% of the payments will be paid upon successful completion and verification of claims to the programme office on a monthly basis. Claims can be made **per participant** at the following points:

* **Start – 20%**
* **Completion – 20%**
* **Progression into a Positive Outcome – 20%**

(**NB:** Specific Progressions by Lot is detailed in Section 6 above)

The bidder must provide a monthly forecast profile of the volumes they intend to complete, using the financial template provided with performance against this profile monitored by GMCA, in line with GMCA’s performance management framework as set out in Annex 2.

The successful organisation will be paid monthly in arrears for results at a fixed unit cost per unit as specified in the provider’s financial submission. Monthly payment will vary dependent on actual performance achieved. Payment will be based on the submission of an invoice with supporting evidence.

For all payment components GMCA will undertake validation against both contractual and ESF requirements of provider evidence (financial and participant records) prior to releasing payment within our 30-day payment terms.  
  
**Supply Chains**

Lead bidders will be expected to apply the same payment terms to their supply chain. Lead bidders should provide information in their response to show how they will ensure that their supply chain providers are able to access contract funding to enable successful delivery from the start of the programme. GMCA reserve the right to verify supply chain payment arrangements via Open Book Accounting (see Section 15).

1. **Performance requirements**

The Providers will be required to report performance to GMCA monthly. GMCA will also build in six-monthly review points to assess the delivery and performance and reporting requirements.

The aim is to ensure the Providers meets the performance levels that make up the Critical Success Factors and targets listed within the specification (see Sections 6 and 7). This will be monitored through activities such as the monthly performance report, six-monthly review, audits, and monthly claim.

The Critical Success Factors, targets and ESF requirements will be referred to in the performance management framework as Minimum Service Delivery Standards (MSDS) and where required the Performance Office will take formal actions against the Provider, where they do not meet such performance levels and MSDS.

Further detailing regarding the performance management framework and levels of performance management can be found in the Provider Guidance.

1. **Data collection & GM Individual Tracker (GMIT)**

As part of the wider programme GMCA has designed and procured an individual tracker system which the provider will be required to use to manage their claims and performance submissions monthly to the GMCA Performance Office.

The GMIT system is a bespoke built system commissioned for the purpose of ESF programme delivery.

The system has been built using a cloud-based AWS server hosting the database. For security the server is fully encrypted, password and user protected with automated alerts to identify unauthorised system access.

The system creates a centralised database that providers will use to input the data information regarding each individual to generate the individual record of participants accessing the programme.

The Performance Office will access the GMIT system to verify individual information from the provider to enable the monthly payment for services / provision to be made.

GMCA will need to make claims on a quarterly basis to ESF and this will include anonymised individual information. The GMIT system will generate these reports for ESF to make the claim and generate the necessary documentation and reports for ESF inspection.

GMCA require the system in place to track the individuals through the programme and to support the generation of reports of performance in line with ESF outputs. This will enable GMCA to monitor the success of the programme and have a constant overview of delivery and performance.

The functionality of the GMIT system, reporting and data within the system will be of benefit and support to the provider within their own operational delivery of the contract.

The system will be used to audit the provider to check quality and compliance of individual records. The system will allow for ease of access from the GMCA Performance Office for spot checks and notified audits / inspections.

GMCA have designed the system with providers in mind using data items from ESF requirements and similar large-scale programmes.

It is required that the GMIT system can “talk” to the provider’s CRM system to populate information within the system. If the provider cannot enable this “talk” or does not have a CRM system in place, manually inputting to the GMIT system will be required.

We expect the successful provider to use the GMIT system on award of contract from day one delivery to submit claims and performance data. The web-based link and user accounts will be created by the GMCA Performance Office and shared with the provider.

On award of this contract the providers, IT systems and team will need to work alongside the GMIT software provider to ensure compatibility of systems. As part of mobilisation of the contract the provider and GMIT provider will meet to begin establishing compatibility of systems, this will be facilitated by GMCA.

GMCA will provide full guidance, log-ins / licenses and user training to accessing the system and bear all costs on behalf of the provider.

The GMIT provider has a service/help desk resource to support the provider and GMCA with errors and troubleshooting issues to ensure that the system maintains functionality and does not impact on delivery or monthly claims being made timely.

1. **Monitoring and Compliance**

The GMIT system will be the key reporting mechanism for all individual activity, evaluation and compliance. This will be completed by the provider and used by the GMCA Programme Office and the evaluator to monitor performance and assess the impact of the programme. A copy of the data set can be found in Annex 1. This is an example of the minimum data we will require but is not the definitive list.

The GMCA Programme Office will undertake regular verification and compliance visits to test systems, processes and compliance against both contractual and ESF requirements.

This will include the sampling of individual records (paper or electronic) via GMIT. This includes eligibility, action plans etc are being completed, evidence of follow ups, supporting evidence to verify outputs and outcomes and all other delivery standards required to ensure compliance across all aspects of the contract.

The GMCA Programme Office will undertake regular sampling to ensure claims made, based on monthly submissions, meet the contractual requirements.

The Provider is expected to have the necessary remote IT infrastructure to enable GMCA to carry out centralised checks of the Provider’s systems.

The sample of records to check will be selected randomly using a method chosen by GMCA Programme Office. The frequency and size of the samples may change throughout the contract period. All issues arising from compliance checks will be reported to the Provider. Contract review meetings with GMCA Programme Office will include discussions around compliance issues.

The Provider must permit access to all relevant documentation (paper or electronic) in relation to the provision for inspection and audit by the GMCA Programme Office Team.

The Provider is required to maintain a robust system of internal control which must include appropriate checks, monitoring arrangements and adequate records to demonstrate that you are entitled to make the claim. The records maintained need to be sufficient not only to support a claim for the outcome, but also to allow internal management checks, scrutiny from other external bodies - including the ESF Managing Authority.

The provider is required to make this evidence available for testing by the GMCA Programme Office and other external bodies when requested, and it must be retained in line with the [ESF Operational Programme 2014-20 Guidance](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/731515/ESF_Document_Retention_Guidance.pdf).

The GMCA Programme Office may undertake additional checks to complement those listed above by looking more in depth at individual cases. The checks will seek assurance that the Provider is addressing the business needs and requirements, and to test that the approach is in line with the Contract.

The GMCA Programme Office may also undertake “deep dives” into specific areas to understand where there are specific areas of weakness. This includes using Open Book Accounting.

The Provider will be expected to participate in both regular performance management and quality meetings. The meetings will be conducted in the spirit of co-design for the purpose of continuous improvement, but the commissioners reserve the right to terminate the contract, in line with GMCA performance and management framework, if performance is consistently low.

**Open Book Accounting**

GMCA reserves the right to use Open Book Accounting to review the financial operations of the successful provider in delivering the service.

As part of the Cabinet Office Guidance on Open Book Contract Management in Public Sector Contracts, there will be a six-monthly Contract Review between the supplier and GMCA Finance and Operational leads.

Open Book Contract Management is a structured process for the sharing and management of costs and operational and performance data between the Provider and GMCA. The aim is to promote collaborative sharing of data between parties as part of financial transparency. The outcomes should be a fair price for the Provider, value for money for GMCA and performance improvement for both parties over the life of the Contract.

1. **Organisational Experience**

Providers of both Lots must ensure and be able to demonstrate that the employees with responsibility for delivering any element of the provision have experience, skills and, where appropriate, qualifications that are relevant to the type and scale of the provision offered.

Providers must ensure and be able to demonstrate that their management structure is of sufficient size, is organised appropriately and is supported by administrative systems and any other infrastructure necessary to effectively manage and deliver the provision from the implementation phase of the contract.

Providers will need to have the capacity to operate flexibly, responding to emerging evidence as the programme progresses.

Providers must provide recruitment plans at regular intervals, and immediately inform the Programme Office of any staff absences with mitigation plans that will impact on the delivery of the programme.

The provider is expected to comply with GMCA’s values and standards as described in Annex 4.

Where a bid for either Lot includes a supply chain, the lead bidder must provide evidence of the necessary systems and governance arrangements for ensuring robust management and support of the supply chain providers. Lead bidders will be solely responsible for the performance across the whole of the Lot. Please refer to the Values and Standards (Annex 4) for more information.

1. **Evaluation**

The Research Team within GMCA will be leading on an evaluation of the programme in its entirety. The aim of the evaluation is to assess the overall success of the programme in meeting its objectives and helping young people into the ‘right’ pathway - whether that is education, training or work. As with other programmes, evaluation also provides a means of understanding ‘what works’ with programme delivery more generally. The service evaluation will be used to inform and influence decisions made by policy makers and commissioners when funding, designing and delivering similar programmes and services both in GM and nationally.

The evaluation will operate through a mixed-methods approach: quantitative data in respect of clients, processes and progress, and extracted from the GMIT system, will be one important strand of the evaluation. However, to enable insight and understanding interviews with providers, caseworkers and young people will also be crucial. The term ‘evaluation’ will cover both these aspects and the Evaluation Lead will be tasked with undertaking both strands.

There will be data collection and data sharing requirements for Providers of both lots associated with supporting the evaluation activities. The Providers will be expected to gain individuals’ consent to be contacted by the evaluation lead for reasons outlined below.

The evaluation is a crucial element of the programme. The Providers will be required to share qualitative and quantitative performance monitoring and evaluation data (including individual data, case studies and completed evaluation questionnaires) on an agreed basis with both the GMCA Programme Office and the GMCA evaluation lead. This will form a requirement of the Programme Contract and the Providers will be expected to implement the required transparency process as provided by the GMCA Programme Office to support this.

The Providers will be expected to have data protection legislation compliant systems and processes in place to support this. A detailed specification of data requirements will be provided by the Evaluation Lead. The broader quantitative performance management framework requirements will also include the monitoring and reporting of the agreed Social Value performance measures. The schedule for submission will be decided upon contract award.

The Providers will be expected to work closely with the Evaluation Lead and input management and staff time into data collection to support evaluation activities intended to capture lessons learned from the project. The Evaluation Lead may wish to interview the Providers, their sub-contractors/supply chain, and the individuals involved in the service provision, where the Providers may be asked to provide the relevant contact details. In order to facilitate this process, the Providers should seek advance agreement from delivery staff, sub-contractors and individuals to take part in evaluation activities. Advance notice will be given where the Provider’s co-operation is required. The Provider will also be expected to record where individuals have agreed to be part of the evaluation and to implement the transparency process as provided in relation to the evaluation.

The Providers will be required to take part in regular reviews with the Evaluation Lead to identify whether the existing performance monitoring and evaluation procedures are meeting the relevant objectives, and to implement any changes recommended as a result of this review process.

The Providers are required to have flexible systems and processes for performance monitoring that will allow for more data fields to be added should such a requirement arise as the project matures.

1. **Governance and Reporting**

The accountability for the contracts under Lot 1 and Lot 2 will be the responsibility of the GMCA Executive, and will also report to the GM Employment and Skills Advisory Panel. Performance and evaluation reports will also be shared with the European Social Fund Managing Authority.

Providers of both Lots may be requested to attend GMCA governance meetings to present and update on the programme, this may include Committee meetings and other formal governance meetings.

A separate monthly performance review for the Lead Provider of each Lot will be established between the GMCA Programme Office and the Provider with the purpose being to review delivery, performance, issues and risks. The performance review meetings will be arranged in line with the monthly reporting requirements as set out in Section 9.

A quarterly NEETs and Youth Employment provider forum will be established by GMCA for all providers, including sub-contractors, delivering both Lots of the programme. The objective of this forum will be for providers to share updates on their delivery, for GMCA to update on wider activity, and to create an environment where best practice and learning can be shared.

Providers of both Lots will also be required to attend two key GM Local Authority groups on a regular basis to share updates on the programme and discuss opportunities or issues. These are the GM Careers and Participation Group, and the GM Work and Skills Local Leads Group.

The Providers of both Lots may be requested to attend other partnership meetings as appropriate.

1. **Marketing and Communications**

The Provider will be responsible for the production of all marketing and communications materials. These must adhere to the branding guidelines which will be supplied to the Provider, with particular importance on the [ESF Branding requirements](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/836956/ESIF-GN-1-005_ESIF_Branding_and_Publicity_Requirements_v8_updated.pdf). There will be a requirement for all marketing materials to be signed off by the GMCA Programme Office prior to them being used.

The Provider will be expected to engage in regular campaigns with GMCA and other providers delivering in this programme. This will involve producing case studies and marketing materials upon request to promote the wider programme.

The Provider will be required to produce hard copies of relevant materials (e.g. leaflets, flyers advertising the project and others as required).

The GMCA Programme Office should immediately be notified of any media enquires relating to the programme. The GMCA Programme Office will take the lead in coordinating responses, however the Provider will be required to input into these responses where required by the GMCA Programme Office.

Successful engagement with the hardest to reach young people, young people with multiple barriers, referral agencies and other key stakeholders is fundamental to the successful delivery of this programme and it is expected that significant and varied marketing and communication activity will take place.

Therefore, it is vital that The Provider can utilise various relevant marketing and communication channels and methods to ensure the opportunity reaches, and is attractive and accessible to, the most disengaged young people, young people with multiple barriers, referral agencies and other key stakeholders.

It’s important that The Provider recognises some of the traditional marketing methods will not be fit for purpose for this programme as the Young People will be **disconnected from mainstream education, work and skills activity**. Therefore, activities should be as **inclusive** as possible, so the Provider should ensure they are able to demonstrate how they have been able to think creatively and **involved young people** when designing and delivering marketing and communications activities.

As part of the mobilisation period post contract award, the Provider will submit a detailed Marketing and Communications plan to GMCA to demonstrate how they will successfully communicate and market the programme to key stakeholders. GMCA will provide feedback and work with the Provider on this plan. The Plan will be a live document that will evolve over time to incorporate natural developments e.g., including case studies. This document will form a part of performance management conversations where applicable.

1. **Information Governance**

Information Governance requirements are laid out in Annex 3.

1. **Modern Slavery Act 2015**

As part of Local Government, the GMCA recognises that it has a responsibility to take a robust approach to slavery and human trafficking. In addition to the GMCA’s responsibility as an employer, it also acknowledges its duty to notify the Secretary of State of suspected victims of slavery or human trafficking as introduced by section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. The GMCA is absolutely committed to preventing slavery and human trafficking in its corporate activities and to ensuring that its supply chains are free from slavery and human trafficking. The GMCA requires that all direct providers, service providers and contractors to the GMCA are absolutely committed themselves to preventing slavery within their own activities and through their supply chain which includes manufacturers, and producers.

1. **Safeguarding**

Bidders must take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and welfare of the young people engaging with, and participating in, the programme. This will include evidence of:

* An up-to-date Safeguarding Policy which includes how you will comply with the Prevent Duty
* An up-to-date Child Protection Policy
* Details of DBS checks required for all staff working on the directly with children and young people and how evidenced.

1. Mann A. (2012) [It’s Who You Meet: Why Employer Contacts at School Make a Difference to the Employment Prospects of Young Adults](https://www.educationandemployers.org/research/its-who-you-meet-why-employer-contacts-at-school-make-a-difference-to-the-employment-prospects-of-young-adults/) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)