

CABINET

Lancashire ESIF Project - More Positive Together 6 December 2016 Report of Chief Officer (Health and Housing)

PURPOSE OF REPORT				
To approve the council's participation in a bid for European Structural and Investment Funds being made by Lancashire Sport, and for the council to act as a "cluster lead".to support the More Positive Together tackling worklessness project within social housing in this district.				
Key Decision	X	Non-Key Decision		Referral from Cabinet Member
Date of notice of forthcoming key decision		November 2016		
This report is public				

RECOMMENDATIONS OF COUNCILLOR KAREN LEYTHAM

- (1) That approval is given to the council's participation in a bid for European Structural and Investment Funds being made by Lancashire Sport, and for the council to act as a "cluster lead "to support the More Positive Together tackling worklessness project within social housing in this district.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Many social housing residents face considerable disadvantage in the labour market. They are less likely to be in work than those in other tenures, and those out of work are much less likely to be looking for work or available for work (described as being 'economically inactive'). In this context, the council as a housing provider can play an increasingly valuable role in tackling worklessness.
- 1.2 Lancashire Sport is acting as the lead in pan-Lancashire bid for ESIF funds to support Theme 6 of the Lancashire ESIF to help tackle worklessness found amongst social housing households. The bid for ESIF funding is competitive and Lancashire Sports submitted a Stage 2 bid in November 2016. The outcome of this bid is to be shortly announced. Given the possible short timescale of the announcement of the outcome of the bid, an urgent decision is required to enable the council to access the ESFIF funding for this district.
- 1.3 As part of its bid, Lancashire Sport has developed a More Positive Together project and is seeking ESIF funding that brings together Social Housing Organisations from across Lancashire to address to help those residents

furthest from the labour market to improve their employment prospects.

- 1.4 The programme Lancashire Sport envisages developing consists of a comprehensive offer to tenants of working age (16-65) across Lancashire with a wider offer of sports, environmental and arts activities and a range of opportunities to get involved in work experience, apprenticeships, volunteering and training which will help them be more prepared for the world of work and/or gain employment.

2.0 Proposal Details

- 2.1 Through the Stage bid Lancashire Sport have indicated that they are seeking £4m ESIF funding for the project across Lancashire.
- 2.2 The specific objectives of the project are to support households with multiple and complex barriers to participation in work, and to address the underlying issues to enable them move closer to or into the labour market.
- 2.3 It is proposed that the City Council becomes “cluster lead” and works with “delivery partners” to engage unemployed people, residents in social housing and encourage them to start on a pathway of improved wellbeing and personal development, and to procure a variety of services utilising ESIF funding working with a range of existing providers and services to provide:
 - Initial assessment of individual needs
 - Identifying the key barriers to progression
 - 1:1 mentoring
 - Advice and guidance activities
 - Referrals to mainstream support
 - Overcoming barriers to accessing work
 - Identifying positive attributes and skills

Support could include:

- Numeracy and literacy support
 - Personal survival budgeting
 - IT skill development
 - Life skills coaching and support
 - Updating qualifications
 - CVs, application forms and introductory letters
 - Online applications
 - Job search and interview skills
 - Presentation – making the right first impression
 - Mock interviews
 - Work ethic and expected behaviours
 - Work experience placements
 - Volunteering opportunities
 - Traineeships
- 2.4 The roles and responsibilities of Lancashire Sport, “the cluster lead”, and delivery partners are set out in Annex A.

- 2.5 From the outset it has been clear that we have limited opportunities to provide match funding, but it is proposed that a 'Match Funding Contribution' of staff time is made to support the role of "cluster lead" - £131,379 over the three years of the programme. This will attract £165,078 of grant funding over the same period if the ESIF bid being made by Lancashire Sport is successful. Lancashire Sport would be the accountable body. The ESIF grant funding received will be used to purchase employment services either via a support/delivery partner, and or through other appropriate procurement purchases.

3.0 Details of Consultation

- 3.1 Some initial discussions have taken place with "support/delivery providers", particularly in the local voluntary sector, to make them aware of the More Positive Together bid and to access the potential for engaging in the project.

4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

	Option 1: Not accept the bid and funding being sought by Lancashire Sport for European Structural and Investment Funds and not to act as a "cluster lead" for the More Positive Together programme within this district.	Option 2: To accept the bid and funding being sought by Lancashire Sport for European Structural and Investment Funds and to act as a "cluster lead" for the More Positive Together programme within this district.
Advantages	Any internal resources released through not participating in the programme could be deployed on other activities	Additional outside funding would be made available in this district to assist in reducing worklessness. Social housing tenants would be provided with the opportunity to enhance their employability, and potentially reduce the need for welfare benefits.
Disadvantages	Additional outside funding would not be made available in this district to assist in reducing worklessness.	Accessing ESIF funding presents organisational and bureaucratic demands.
Risks	Reputational risk of not being part of a pan-Lancashire funding programme.	Reputational risk though possible inability to bring together a programme to be delivered through delivery partners. Financial risk of ESIF claims not being accepted.

5.0 Officer Preferred Option (and comments)

- 5.1 The Officer preferred option is for Cabinet to accept the bid and funding being sought by Lancashire Sport for European Structural and Investment Funds and to act as a "cluster lead" for the More Positive Together programme within this district.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposals outlined above should enable the council to support households with multiple and complex barriers to participation in work and to address the underlying issues to enable them move closer to or into the labour market.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

Corporate Plan:

More Positive Together project would help the council meet some of its core purposes as set out in the Corporate Plan.

Supporting the bid is compatible with the councils core purposes to:

- “bring communities and agencies together to work in partnership to address the major issues affecting the district”, and
- “maintain a sustainable and cohesive community by ensuring we understand the needs of our communities and provide equality of access to our services and employment opportunities”

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, HR, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

There are no equalities implications directly arising from the matters under consideration at this stage. (Equality Impact Assessment attached)

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The total project is estimated to be just over £296K over a 3 year period, split £131.3K LCC match (Staffing) and £165.1K ESIF Grant (volunteer & employment procured services, facility hire, transport hire, training, marketing & promotion, office consumables, etc.).

Subject to approval of the Service Review report elsewhere on the agenda it is not expected that there will be any additional financial implications arising in terms of delivery or significant risk of not being able to provide appropriate match evidence in order to draw down the grant funding should the ESIF bid be successful. Any administrative workload associated with acting as the ‘cluster lead’ will also be absorbed within existing staff resources.

In terms of the Service Review Report, under that proposal it is worth noting that the council would be undertaking work relating to this bid, but in accepting the ESIF grant funding (subject to a successful outcome of the bid), this would provide some additionality, which in turn should increase the chances of more successful outcomes being achieved overall.

Finally, the Council is experienced in managing such funding and so already has the appropriate systems and processes in place in order to administer the grant funding.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
Human Resources: There are no staffing implications subject to the approval of the Service Review.	
Information Services: NA.	
Property: NA	
Open Spaces: NA	
SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.	
MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.	
BACKGROUND PAPERS DWP/EU – 2014 to 2020 European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme, Call for Proposals European Social Fund Priority 1: Inclusive Labour Markets (24 May 2016)	Contact Officer: Chris Hanna Telephone: 01524 582516 E-mail: channa@lancaster.gov.uk Ref:

Annex A

Roles and Responsibilities

Cluster Leads Roles and Responsibilities

Each Cluster Lead will need to undertake a number of roles to ensure that there is consistency across the programme and to facilitate the delivery of activities in each cluster area. This role will be a combination of coordination, arbitration and supervision of the individual delivery partners.

Agreeing Cluster Priorities

Each Cluster Lead will be responsible for agreeing a programme of activity with cluster partners during the application process to address the priorities of the Social Inclusion Call for More Positive Together. This will mean pulling together an agreed set of actions to be delivered in the target areas.

This will involve identifying the delivery partners for each activity, the scale of activities the specific outputs to be delivered. The discussions need to include the potential for lead partners for certain strands of delivery, or even agreeing to share resources/delivery with other clusters.

Coordination of Delivery

Following approval of the bid, the Cluster Leads will be responsible for coordinating the activities of cluster partners within the agreed delivery framework. We suggest that this will involve at a minimum, monthly cluster meetings to discuss progress against targets and to facilitate discussion amongst partners.

Monthly Monitoring and Claims

LSP will be responsible for coordinating all monitoring of outputs and claims to CLG for the ESF grant. It is expected that this will be based on quarterly claims, but this is to be clarified. However to manage this and to support the cash flow to partners, it will be necessary to monitor activity, outputs and expenditure on a monthly basis. Each cluster will need to produce monthly monitoring summary that can be used to underpin financial claims.

Cluster Leads will be responsible for pulling together monthly expenditure claims for each cluster, based on actual delivery costs, made up of Direct Staffing Costs, Other Direct Costs and Indirect (Overhead Costs). The Accountable Body will provide all documentation and claims forms.

Resources

The LSP will provide full support to each cluster during the application process in terms of guidance on eligibility of activities and setting up systems and record keeping. Post approval, each cluster will be allocated a support officer

from the Accountable Body to assist with the administration of the clusters, project monitoring and the claims process.

Summary of roles and responsibilities:

Lancashire Sport Partnership – Accountable Body

Project/programme management
Claims process
Project monitoring
ESF Compliance
Eligibility guidance

Cluster Leads

Agreeing cluster priorities
Coordination of cluster delivery
Coordinate cluster monthly returns to Accountable Body

Individual delivery partners

Project delivery
Record keeping
Beneficiary monitoring
Evidence for Monthly returns