

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	8
Date:	14 th July, 2008	Status	Open
Category	Decision within the functions of Executive		
Subject:	Working Neighbourhoods Fund Family Employment Initiative Suspension of Contract Standing Orders		
Report by:	Chief Executive's & Partnership Manager		
Other Officers Involved	Chief Executive Officer Director of Strategy Solicitor to the Council Director of Resources		
Director	Chief Executive Officer		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Leader Deputy Leader		

RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS

REGENERATION – Developing healthy, prosperous and sustainable communities by supporting an existing project to return people to work.

TARGETS

NI 153 Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods

VALUE FOR MONEY

Aim to impact/reduce the number of benefit claimants in the District.

THE REPORT

Background

Executive Members will recall the Authority's award of Working Neighbourhoods Fund earlier this year (Minute No. 886 refers). As part of the Council's approach to tackling worklessness, a Commissioning Framework has been established to allocate the funding in two ways:-

- i) tasking the Local Strategic Partnership for Bolsover with identifying measures to address and prevent the need to be in receipt of benefits or become unemployed, and
- ii) the Local Authority focus upon the people who are already receiving benefits and are unemployed and try to encourage them back into work and off benefits.

In respect of (ii) above, the Council has established a Core Worklessness Group which the Leader of the Council has delegated powers to agree the Working Neighbourhoods Fund spend.

The Group held its inaugural meeting on Monday, 23rd June, 2008. At this meeting, the Core Worklessness Group agreed that an allocation of the WNF be set aside for the Family Employment Initiative (FEI). FEI is an area based initiative, managed and delivered by the Coalfields Regeneration Trust. FEI was initially established in 2006 and works with hard to reach families and households breaking down barriers to employment. FEI Advisors target specific streets in deprived communities, visiting families at their homes or other accessible locations helping clients address their real and attitudinal difficulties; tackling barriers in order to access training and get into employment.

The FEI has developed a very successful approach to reaching hard to reach families and has provided services to over 43,000 residents (17,800 households) across Derbyshire and North Nottinghamshire in the last 2 years.

The WNF funding application that has been received for the FEI seeks £274,622 Working Neighbourhoods Fund for the period July 2008 – March 2011. This will lever in £260,219 of other funding sources into the area. It aims to move 196 unemployed people back into employment during this period. The initiative will be subject to review annually.

The agreed WNF Commissioning Framework utilised to allocate funds includes a tendering/procurement process and therefore will require suspension of the Authority's Contracts Standing Orders to allow this initiative to continue.

ISSUES/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. The Family Employment Initiative is already established, supporting families in Derbyshire and North Nottinghamshire, with very successful outcomes
2. It is an important part of the Making the Connection model, which focuses on expanding/incoming employers on the key strategic employment sites across the sub-region
3. Support for the continuation of the FEI from partners is strong, with financial support from Derbyshire County Council already committed for the next three years. Furthermore, a funding bid to the Alliance SSP is currently under appraisal and a successful outcome to this is expected within the next couple of weeks.
4. To consider the procurement/tendering process would be unnecessarily time consuming and would seriously jeopardise the best practice developed by the FEI. Furthermore, funding committed by partners would be lost.
5. The provision provided by the FEI meets the entire requirements of the Local Authority in respect of its National Indicator 153 target to reduce the number of people on out of work benefits.

6. The Chairman of the Council has agreed that the call-in procedure as set out in 4.5.16 of the Council's Constitution shall not apply.

IMPLICATONS

Financial: None other than the levering in of other external funding into the Local Authority area
Legal: The suspension of Contracts Standing Orders in relation to the project, as a tendering process would initially be required for a WNF project
Human Resources: None

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- (1) that the report be received
- (2) that the Executive suspends Contract Standing Orders 4.8.3 for the reasons given above
- (3) It be noted that the Chairman of the Council had agreed that the call-in procedure as set out in 4.5.16 of the Council's Constitution shall not apply.
- (4) It be noted that the Executive consider that the above decision is an urgent one.

REASON FOR DECISION TO BE GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION

To agree the suspension of Contracts Standing Orders in accordance with the Council's Constitution and to take account of the Working Neighbourhoods Fund Commissioning Framework process.

ATTACHMENTS: **NO**
FILE REFERENCE:
SOURCE DOCUMENT: