

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	5
Date:	6 th April 2009	Status	Open
Category	2. Decision within the functions of Executive		
Subject:	Working Neighbourhoods Fund Monitoring Report		
Report by:	Consultant Programme Manager		
Other Officers Involved	Chief Executive's and Partnership Manager		
Director	Chief Executive Officer		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Regeneration		

RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS

REGENERATION – Developing healthy, prosperous and sustainable communities.

TARGETS

The Working Neighbourhoods Fund will impact on the National Indicator 153 – Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods. Bolsover District Council has agreed a holding target with the LAA of reducing the out of work claimant rate within the worst performing neighbourhoods from 28.7% to 25.4% by March 2011. The Local Authority's success in tackling worklessness will also be measured against a further 4 indicators, these being:

- NI 117 – 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, training or employment
- NI 118 – Take up of formal childcare by low income working families
- NI 163 – Working age population qualified to at least Level 2 or higher
- NI 172 – VAT registered businesses in the area showing growth.

VALUE FOR MONEY

The principles of Value for Money – economy, efficiency and effectiveness will be applied in all interventions considered.

THE REPORT

Background

1. Executive Members will recall the Authority's award of Working Neighbourhoods Fund earlier this year (Minute No. 886 refers). The

Working Neighbourhoods Fund was introduced as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement and is one element of the new Area Based Grant. It provides resources to local authorities to tackle worklessness and low levels of skills and enterprise in their most deprived areas.

2. The WNF allocation to Bolsover District Council is:

2008/09	£2,055,516
2009/10	£2,440,522
2010/11	£2,535,018

3. As part of the Council's approach to tackling worklessness, a Commissioning Framework has been established to allocate the funding in two ways:-
- i) the Local Authority's focus upon the people who are **already receiving benefits** and are unemployed and try to encourage them back into work and off benefits, and
 - ii) 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.
4. In respect of (i) 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.
5. £1m per annum has been allocated to the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) in respect of 2(ii) above

Progress Update

6. NI 153 is the primary indicator for the Working Neighbourhoods Fund – “Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods”. The measure for this indicator is defined as those Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) with a benefit claim rate of 25% or more based on a four quarter average between May 2006 and February 2007. Bolsover District Council agreed a holding target through the LAA against NI 153 to reduce the average claimant rate of the six eligible LSOAs from 28.7% to 25.4% by March 2011 (this equates to a **net reduction** of 163 people off benefits and into work by March 2011).
7. The table below reflects a trend of improvement of the average claimant rate across all six targeted LSOAs in the rolling average for the 12 months ending August 2008 is 26.2%. However, it should be noted that these figures do not provide an accurate picture of the current economic downturn and the impact on worklessness within local communities as data on all income related benefits is only available up to August 2008.

LSOA	Ward Name	Working age population (16-59/64)	Average worklessness benefits claimants *	Rate (%)
E01019509	Shirebrook North West	649	208.75	32.2
E01019507	Shirebrook East	1,056	287.50	27.2
E01019488	Bolsover West	920	243.75	26.5
E01019498	Elmton-with-Creswell	1,022	236.25	23.1
E01019523	Whitwell	666	185.0	27.8
E01019483	Bolsover North West	1,304	310.0	23.8
Total		5,617	1471.25	26.2

** Includes Job Seekers Allowance, Incapacity Benefit, Lone Parents and others on income related benefits.*

Commissioning Activity

8. The Core Worklessness Group and the Local Strategic Partnership are currently progressing a range of interventions for commissioning. A summary of approved projects and those still progressing through the commissioning process can be seen on the following pages.
9. Actual WNF funded delivery in 2008/09 has been minimal to date. However, a number of projects will be ready to commence delivery early in the new financial year and 2009/10 will also see a number of large projects being commissioned. Furthermore, it has been necessary to commission a number of studies in order to inform future delivery, i.e. example, Financial Inclusion and Public Sector Apprenticeships
10. To maximise use of the WNF and to ensure sufficient time is made available to target and impact in local communities, the Leader of the Council via delegated authority, has agreed that projects will be allowed to span a 3 year period (for many this will be 2009/10 to 2011/12. This is feasible as the WNF grant is a rolling programme of funding and therefore allows the Local Authority flexibility in utilising the spend.
11. Bolsover District Council is hosting a further priority setting event to drive forward the delivery of WNF objectives in the district on 26th March 2009. It is intended that this will build upon the WNF Launch Event held in July 2008 and result in the development of a Strategy and Action Plan that will guide the delivery of the funding available. There will be four workshops in the afternoon that will focus on:
 - Young People;
 - Unemployed;
 - Health; and
 - Employer Engagement and Business Support.

Financial Update

12. The table below provides summary information on the WNF allocations, approvals and commitments for both the LSP and the CWG.

	LSP	CWG	Total
Management and Admin Budget		285,100	285,100
WNF Budget for Commissioning	3,000,000	3,745,956	6,745,956
WNF approved to date	264,212	627,530	891,742
Indicative Cost of Priority Interventions	1,673,000*	1,054,275*	2,727,275
Remaining WNF	1,062,788	2,064,151**	3,126,939

* *Indicative figures only i.e. actual WNF required may go up or down during the commissioning/tendering process*

** *Some of the CWG's priority interventions summarised on previous pages do not have an indicative cost attached to them yet*

Suspending Contract Standing Orders

13. The CWG have identified a priority intervention through their commissioning activity where there are considered to be justifiable reasons for suspending Contract Standing Orders. Endorsement from the Executive is now being sought to suspend CSO's for the project outlined below.

Disability Dynamics

14. The aim of the proposed service is to provide a substantive offer with pro-active Business Adviser support and targeted promotional activity specifically for a people with disabilities. The proposed service is based on an emda (East Midlands Development Agency) pilot programme which was delivered by Disability Dynamics Ltd in 2007 and provided a package of support which included assistance with market research and business planning; access to low-cost computer equipment; free business cards and publicity for each new business and support and assistance from a dedicated business advisor during the first few months of trading.
15. It is envisaged that WNF in the region of £200,000 would be required to deliver the objectives of the project over a two year period, with an opportunity to extend the project for a further year subject to the project providing additionality to the regional business support offer.
16. This programme of support is seen as an extension to a successful pilot which was delivered in 2007/2008. To ensure consistency of approach and building on lessons learnt from the pilot programme it would be justified to continue the programme with Disability Dynamics Ltd. In addition to this, Disability Dynamics Ltd have submitted a bid to Chesterfield Borough Council under their WNF programme which has

been successful. Using the same deliverer across Chesterfield and Bolsover will provide economies of scale and early discussions have taken place with Chesterfield and Disability Dynamics Ltd with regards providing best value through shared resources where possible.

17. Further to the above, the procurement/tendering process would be unnecessarily time consuming and would seriously jeopardise the best practice developed by Disability Dynamics Ltd and the opportunity to achieve best value through working in partnership with Chesterfield Borough Council.

CORE WORKLESSNESS GROUP

Approved Projects	WNF Approved
<p>Family Employment Initiative An additional Adviser to provide outreach support within the Family Employment Initiative team to work with economically inactive adults in the most deprived neighbourhoods. During the period August – December 2008, the FEI Team worked with 211 individuals which resulted in 76 people entering employment</p>	<p>£273,681 to March 2011</p>
<p>BizFizz Business start-up support and advice through a BizFizz Coach in Clowne and Elmtun with Creswell (2008/09 only)</p>	<p>£24,927 to March 2009</p>
<p>LEADER Programme Contribution towards the Management of the LEADER programme which aims to improve the quality of life and economic prosperity of rural communities through small scale innovative projects</p>	<p>£66,000 to March 2009</p>
<p>Grants to Voluntary Organisations BDC approved funding towards worklessness activities of the Trade Union Safety Team and the Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centres over three years</p>	<p>£96,867 to March 2011</p>
<p>Public Sector Apprenticeship Programme A scoping piece of work has been commissioned to explore the potential for a Public Sector Apprenticeship Programme. The work will result in the production of a delivery plan which will then be taken forward in Phase 2</p>	<p>£16,625 to May 2009</p>
<p>Ways to Work This project is aimed at reducing the barriers to employment associated with transport difficulties and is an enhancement to the existing Wheels to Work programme in the district. New elements of the programme include push bike and electric bike loan, personalised travel planning, bus/taxi vouchers, subsidised driving lessons and better information on transport options.</p>	<p>£149,430 to March 2012</p>
<p>TOTAL</p>	<p>£627,530</p>

Proposed Interventions	Indicative WNF and Timescale
Business start-up support and advice for people with disabilities/learning difficulties. Exemption from Contracts Standing Orders is required	£200,000 to March 2011
An ILM programme to tackle worklessness and provide accredited training for those with multiple barriers including ex-offenders, substance mis-users, young people not in employment, education or training and the long term unemployed.	£150,000 2009/10 pilot
Pre 'Skills for Jobs' intervention and development including courses for JCP/CET clients who need more intensive support and guidance than is presently provided, i.e. red/amber clients that are furthest away from the labour market	£175,000 to March 2012
Employer engagement intervention to include engagement with JCP and FEI clients who are close to employment but need job-specific skills. This is a cross-cutting project with the LSP and includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-employment gateway training course • Job-specific short courses • Additional outreach workers • Aftercare service to employers to improve employee retention 	£215,000 to March 2012 (cross cutting project with the LSP)
'Bus to Work' Mini-bus service picking up from Langwith, Shirebrook and Bolsover and taking people to work at Markham Vale, Clowne and Balborough Links. SSP funding secured until June 2009, WNF required beyond then	£130,000 to March 2011
An online directory of employment services providing detailed and up-to-date information on publicly funded employment and related services within the district. A resource for local people as well as community engagement teams which will involve the recruitment of a dedicated person to maintain the directory. The directory was originally designed for East and Southeast London City Strategy Pathfinder and can be purchased for local use	£80,000 to March 2012
To recruit a Projects Officer (Infrastructure) who will progress the future development of the town centres and strategic sites within the district	£104,275 to March 2012
To implement recommendations for a Public Sector Apprenticeship Programme following completion of the Phase 1 work	Unknown at this stage
Consultants have recently been commissioned to carry out detailed studies on a number of project areas across Shirebrook town centre as identified in the Masterplan. This will present opportunities for training (construction) and employment (finished product). A Feasibility Study has been commissioned to assess the need and demand for the development of an Enterprise Centre in Shirebrook. This will result in both training and employment opportunities in its construction and completed building.	Unknown at this stage
TOTAL	£1,054,275

LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Approved Projects	WNF Approved
<p>Bolsover Volunteering Project This project will increase the number of high quality volunteering opportunities in order to improve the confidence, capacity and skills of local people, including those who are unemployed and/or experiencing poor health. This project will benefit 250 people in a volunteering opportunity</p>	<p>£179,296 to March 2012</p>
<p>Financial Inclusion – Phase 1 The LSP has commissioned a piece of work to gain a detailed understanding of what is required across the district in relation to financial inclusion and what will best meet the needs of local people. Financial inclusion includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ savings accounts ▪ affordable loans ▪ access to free debt advice ▪ money education <p>This will result in the production of a delivery plan which will then be taken forward in Phase 2</p>	<p>£9,800 to May 2009</p>
<p>FEI – Practice Nurse Additional funding has been approved to recruit a District/Practice Nurse to work as a member of the existing Family Employment Initiative Team based in Shirebrook to help people with their health needs (health has been identified as a barrier to employment)</p>	<p>£75,116</p>
<p>TOTAL</p>	<p>£264,212</p>

Proposed Interventions	Indicative WNF and Timescale
<p>Employer engagement intervention to include engagement with JCP and FEI clients who are close to employment but need job-specific skills. This is a cross-cutting project with the CWG and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-employment gateway training course • Job-specific short courses • Additional outreach workers • Aftercare service to employers to improve employee retention 	<p>£383,000 to March 2012</p>

Proposed Interventions	Indicative WNF and Timescale
A large cross-cutting project that aims to raise the aspirations of the following target groups, through a means of innovative projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Young people that are NEET including teenage parents and those with drug/alcohol problems ▪ Young people who are in care, have been in care or are homeless ▪ School age children and their families, with a focus on year 10/11 and post 16 transition ▪ Unemployed people within the most deprived neighbourhoods 	£1,095,000 to March 2012
To create a community interest company based at Markham Vale Environment Centre that will employ and provide training to vulnerable adults with learning disabilities and mental health issues in the management of the developing green tourism resource in Bolsover & Chesterfield	£141,000 to March 2012
Additional staff resource to work within the Chief Executives and Partnership team – Funding and Appraisal Officer	£54,000 to March 2012
TOTAL	£1,673,000

ISSUES/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

Whether to agree the suspension of Contract Standing Orders 4.8.3 as set out in the report.

IMPLICATONS

Financial: Detailed in the report

Legal: The suspension of Contract Standing Orders in relation to the intervention as detailed in paragraph 13, as a tendering process would usually be required for WNF commissioned interventions under the Local Authority's Procurement procedures.

Human Resources: None

RECOMMENDATION(S) that;

Executive suspends Contract Standing Orders 4.8.3 for the reasons given above in relation to Disability Dynamics Ltd.

REASON FOR DECISION TO BE GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION

To ensure that WNF is targeted to best effect and where needed and to ensure that the tendering process does not unjustifiably distort the result.

ATTACHMENTS: **N**
FILE REFERENCE:
SOURCE DOCUMENT: