

# WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET - 23 SEPTEMBER 2010

## REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

### NEIGHBOURHOOD LEARNING IN DEPRIVED COMMUNITIES

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#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report makes recommendations to Cabinet for approval to commission Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (NLDC). The proposed providers will provide adult learning activity for "hard to reach" learners age 19+, in line with the requirements for the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), who provide the grant for this work.

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 Wirral Lifelong and Family Learning Service (WL&FLS) received funding from the Skills Funding Agency for Adult Safeguarded Learning split into categories of personal and community development learning, neighbourhood learning for deprived communities and family learning. NLDC delivery will be contracted to other organisations following the commissioning process. These programmes should target groups of learners and encourage progression, especially to Level 2. Projects should engage new learners from deprived areas/ disadvantaged groups by offering effective learning/ courses and complement other local provision. Preferred projects involve partnership and show how progression will be encouraged. Organisations needed to demonstrate in their application how they would go out to reach specific groups of learners, and how they will encourage and provide progression opportunities, and encourage learners to pursue further activity. All NLDC projects will be subject to Skills Funding Agency quality criteria and would be in scope for inspection by OFSTED. They will need to follow Wirral Lifelong and Family Learning Service quality procedures
- 1.2 In line with council policy a commissioning process was used to identify prospective providers. The procurement process consisted of an on-line advertisement through The Chest procurement site. This was followed by an invitation to prospective providers to submit a Method statement and a completed Questionnaire on line again through the Chest. Completed Method statements were scored using criteria outlined in the Invitation to Tender, by officers from the Children and Young People's Department (CYPD) and a representative of Wirral Metropolitan College. The initial scores were assessed by a Validation Panel, consisting of Head of Branch Learning and Achievement and representatives of the Service Steering Group. Panel members were people with experience of commissioning services through their own areas of work including: Quality Assurance Manager Sure Start Support Team and members of the 16-19 team who had previous experience of commissioning as LSC staff. A Voluntary Sector Representative was invited to be part of the panel but the timescale precluded their attendance. Total scores for applications were based 90% on the method statement score and 10% on value for money score.
- 1.3 The commissioning process
  - Tender advertised 22<sup>nd</sup> July
  - Closing date 20<sup>th</sup> August
  - Evaluation and scoring 25<sup>th</sup> August
  - Validation Panel 26<sup>th</sup> August.

- 1.4 Within the tender there are seven separate Service Areas for applicants to apply against, based on the priority groups for engagement in adult learning in Wirral, as identified by the Personal and Community Learning Partnership (PCDL) Plan 2010. These service areas continue the focus on engaging harder to reach adult learners through partnership that was identified as strength by OFSTED in the January 2010 inspection of WL&FLS. OFSTED graded all areas of WL&FLS as “Good” including community development which incorporates NLDC and the Service was awarded “Outstanding” for Equality and Diversity.

The Service Areas are as follows:

- 1 Black and Minority Ethnic Groups with no or low level qualifications.
  - 2 Adults with disabilities (physical or learning disabilities, or mental health problems who need to develop skills).
  - 3 Strategic Super Output Areas (Bidston, Leasowe, Woodchurch, Seacombe, Tranmere, Birkenhead covering the 10% most disadvantaged areas of Wirral for adults with low level skills).
  - 4 Community development and capacity building for the VCF Sector
  - 5 Targeted parents, families and carers, with complex needs, needing to develop their own skills to better support their children’s learning.
  - 6 Adults who are disengaged from work, community or family life, for whom learning and skills development are a prerequisite to reintegration.
  - 7 Learners with complex needs e.g. at risk families (substance misuse/ex-offenders).
- 1.5 20 tender documents were received. The full list of applicants is shown in Appendix 1. Two additional applications were not passed for scoring as they were submitted incorrectly.
- 1.6 Following the scoring process and the validation panel, the highest scoring applications were identified. In Service Areas 2, 6 and 7 applications did not score as highly so none of the activities are recommended for contract, whereas in Service Area 3 several applications scored highly so more than one is recommended to achieve a range of activity. The following contracts for NLDC for the academic year 2010 -11 are recommended.

Service area	Organisation	Number of learners	Total Cost £
1	Wirral Multicultural Organisation	168	27759
3	Wallasey School	90	15001
3	North Birkenhead Development Trust	78	13156
3	3Es	50	18898
3	Prenton High School	180	16650
3	Wirral CVS	60	12850
4	Inclusive Access	45	16728
5	Ferries Family Group	36	11304
	<b>Total</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>132346</b>
	unallocated		20354

- 1.7 As there was not a sufficiently highly scoring application for Service Area 2 learners with disabilities and this is an area that is a high priority for adult learning in Wirral it is recommended that the remainder of the funding, £20354, be retained for this area and activities for learners with disabilities be provided through the Council’s Adult Learning Centres. It is likely that beneficiaries from Service Areas 6 and 7 will be engaged through the other funded activities. Appropriate feedback will be offered to unsuccessful bidders.

**2. Risk Assessment**

There is risk that subcontractors will not deliver the service. This will be minimised by close working with all projects and regular monitoring and quality meetings undertaken by WL&FLS staff.

**3. Financial Implications**

Wirral Lifelong and Family Learning Service (WL&FLS) received funding from the Skills Funding Agency for Adult Safeguarded Learning split into categories of personal and community development learning, neighbourhood learning for deprived communities and family learning, approximately £876k per year. All funding for NLDC is from SFA grant, total £179181. Funding of £152,700 is available for revenue projects for the academic year 2010 -2011 to provide new learning opportunities with a target of 450 learners. The remainder of the NLDC grant £26481 is used for coordination, quality assurance and audit to ensure compliance with SFA requirements.

**4. Staffing Implications**

There are no staffing implications. The cost of staff to coordinate and quality assure the programme is covered from within the SFA grant.

**5. Equal Opportunities Implications/Health Impact Assessment**

NLDC programmes are aimed at engaging hard to reach new adult learners. The programme is to complement and work with other adult learning provision in Wirral to activity promote equality of opportunity. The OFSTED inspection of Wirral Lifelong and Family Learning Service judged the service to be outstanding for equality and diversity, with particularly effective initiatives to support people from diverse backgrounds. A diverse range of adult learning opportunities will be maintained to meet local needs through this programme. Adult learning has proven health benefits and many of the target learners will benefit in multiple ways from engaging with learning eg through increased self confidence, awareness of more healthy lifestyle, ability to make decisions and interact more confidently with other people.

**6. Community Safety Implications**

No implications

**7. Local Agenda 21 Implications**

Adult learning plays a valuable role in the well-being of the community through developing the skills and confidence of adults to become involved in their communities.

**8. Planning Implications**

No implications

**9. Anti-poverty Implications**

Much of the provision is located in disadvantaged communities and encourages people back into learning and employment. Adult learning has a major impact on child poverty and there are clear links between areas of deprivation and those with low levels of adult qualifications.

**10. Social Inclusion Implications**

Adult learning contributes to social inclusion and community cohesion in Wirral as reported by OFSTED

**11. Local Member Support Implications**

Lifelong learning can benefit adults in all wards, although the majority of learners for NLDC will come from the areas of higher deprivation.

## 12. Background Papers

Skills Funding Agency Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities Guidance 2010/11- Requirements for Funding

### RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet approve that

- (1) the organisations listed below are offered a contract to deliver NLDC for 2010-11 academic year.

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1	Wirral Multicultural Organisation	168	27759
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	unallocated		20354

- (2) the unallocated funding is used to provide activity for learners with disabilities through the Council's Adult Learning Centres.

**Howard Cooper**  
**Director of Children's Services**

## Appendix 1

### List of all Applicants NLDC 2010-11 applicants

<b>SA</b>	<b>Service Areas (SAs) applied for</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
1 1	<b>BME with low qualifications</b>	3Es Wirral Multi Cultural Organisation
2 2	<b>Adults with disabilities</b>	Activate Training Ltd Soap Box Films
3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3	<b>Disadvantaged SSOAs</b>	3Es DAM Training and Security Leasowe Development Trust North Birkenhead Development Trust NEET Futures CIC Prenton High School Wallasey School Wirral CVS Wirral Environmental Network
4 4 4 4 4	<b>Community capacity building for VCF</b>	Finite Productions Inclusive Access VCAW St Helens CVS Ferries Family Groups
5 5	<b>Targeted parents and families</b>	Ferries Family Groups Aspire Trust
6 6	<b>Adults disengaged from work, community, family life</b>	Activate Training Fairbridge Merseyside
7 7	<b>Learners with complex needs eg substance misuse</b>	Finite Productions Forum Housing Association