

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

22 SEPTEMBER 2011

SUBJECT:	NEIGHBOURHOOD LEARNING IN DEPRIVED COMMUNITIES
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR ANN MCLACHLAN
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report informs Cabinet about the tendering exercise and proposed allocations for Wirral Lifelong and Family Learning Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (NLDC) funding. This is an annual process. The proposed providers will deliver adult learning activity for learners age 19+, in line with the requirements of the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), who provide the grant for this work. The Lifelong and Family Learning Service will manage the subcontracts as part of their service, supporting the Council's Corporate Priorities by providing opportunities for adults to develop their skills.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

2.1 That Cabinet note the organisations listed below are offered a contract to deliver NLDC for 2011-12 academic year.

Service area	Organisation	Number of learners	Total contract £
1 Black and Minority Ethnic Groups	Wirral Multicultural Organisation	283	21,080
2 Adults with disabilities	The Women's Organisation	45	15,210
3 Disadvantaged SSOAs	University Academy	384	6,960
3 Disadvantaged SSOAs	North Birkenhead Development Trust	61	2,230
3 Disadvantaged SSOAs	Leasowe Development Trust	38	10,000
3 Disadvantaged SSOAs	Wirral CVS	96	11,800
4 Community development	JM Education/Sports	180	5,780
4 Community development	Inclusive Access	60	20,850

5 Targeted parents, families and carers	Wirral Environmental Network	20	1,400
5 Targeted parents, families and carers	Inclusive Access	84	13,170
5 Targeted parents, families and carers	Ferries Family Group	48	15,800
5 Targeted parents, families and carers	Tranmere Community Project	90	11,016
6 Adult Languages	Wirral Girls' Grammar School	51	9,945
6 Adult Languages	Wirral Multicultural Organisation	45	7,570
Total contracts			152,591

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

3.1 The priorities for NLDC are based on analysis of local needs and seek to extend and complement existing adult learning provision. An open procurement process has been used to identify providers that perform best against the agreed evaluation criteria. The recommended organisations will deliver adult learning opportunities across the identified service areas.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 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.

4.2 A full open tendering process was used to identify proposed providers. This was undertaken with full support and guidance of the Corporate Procurement Unit. 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 through the Chest. Completed Method Statements were scored using criteria outlined in the Invitation to Tender, by Lifelong and Family Learning Service staff. The initial scores were assessed by a Validation Panel, consisting of officers from the Children and Young People's Department (CYPD). Panel members were people with experience of commissioning services through their own areas of work including members of the 16-19 team who had previous experience of commissioning as LSC staff. Total scores for applications were based 50% on the method statement score and 50% on value for money score.

4.3 The commissioning process

- Tender advertised 13th June
- Closing date 29th July
- Evaluation and scoring 29th July - 12th August
- Validation Panel 16th August.

4.4 Within the tender there are six separate Service Areas for applicants to apply against, for a total of £152,700. Service areas are based on priority groups for engagement in adult learning in Wirral, as identified by the Personal and Community Learning Partnership (PCDL). These service areas continue the focus on engaging harder to reach adult learners through partnership that was identified as strength by OFSTED in the inspection of WL&FLS in January 2010. 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 for 2011-12 are as follows:

Service Area 1

Black and Minority Ethnic Groups with no or low level qualifications. BME groups with low levels of English, and not able to access other provision/ in low paid households

Service Area 2

Adults with disabilities - physical or learning disabilities, substance misuse or mental health problems who need to develop skills.

Service Area 3

Strategic Super Output Areas (including Bidston, Leasowe, Woodchurch, Seacombe, Tranmere, Birkenhead covering the 10-% most disadvantaged areas of Wirral for adults with low level skills).

Service Area 4

Community development, volunteering and capacity building to enable disadvantaged adults to participate more in their communities.

Service Area 5

Targeted parents, families and carers needing to develop their own skills to better support their children’s learning, with complex needs.

Service Area 6

Adult Languages. High quality language courses across a range of languages and at different levels.

4.5 20 organisations submitted tender documents resulting in a total of 36 tenders across all service areas. The full list of applicants is shown in Appendix 1. One other application was not passed for scoring as it was incompletely submitted.

4.6 Following the scoring process and the validation panel, the highest scoring applications were identified in each Service Area. The following contracts for NLDC for the academic year 2010 -11 are recommended.

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5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

5.1 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.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 Tendering for subcontractors to deliver NLDC was the only option considered as this has been a successful approach in previous years.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 Wirral Lifelong and Family Learning Service work with local providers of adult learning, voluntary and community groups and other services through the Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL) Partnership to identify local needs in adult learning. Local groups support the service to consult on the needs of their service users and stakeholders, for example by working through schools and children's centres the needs of parents are identified. Learner feedback is regularly collected and acted upon as part of the quality assurance processes of the service.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 Wirral Lifelong and Family Learning Service works with a wide range of voluntary, community and faith groups. There are many opportunities for partnership working in different ways. The service can offer courses to VCF client groups, they can work together to identify need, design learning and deliver learning and there are subcontracting opportunities. Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived communities funding is subcontracted annually to organisations who can reach new, harder to engage learners. There are many examples in the past 5 years of very successful activities being delivered in Wirral by VCF organisations under this funding.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

9.1 Wirral Lifelong and Family Learning Service (WL&FLS) received funding from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) for Adult Safeguarded Learning to deliver against the categories of personal and community development learning, neighbourhood learning for deprived communities and family learning, approximately £836k per year. All funding for NLDC is from SFA grant, total £179,234. Funding of £152,700 is available for revenue projects for the academic year 2011-2012 to provide new learning opportunities with a target of 450 learners. The remainder of the NLDC grant £26,534 is used towards the cost of existing staff for coordination, quality assurance and audit to ensure compliance with SFA requirements. There are no staffing, IT or asset issues.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 All subcontractors will have to be declared to the Skills Funding Agency as part of the contractual agreement for funding.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Lifelong and Family Learning play a valuable contribution to improving the skills of Wirral residents. Much of the provision is located in disadvantaged communities and encourages people back into learning and employment. OFSTED judged Wirral Lifelong and Family Learning Service to be "Outstanding" in Equality and Diversity. NLDC adult learning courses will reach some of the more disadvantaged adults in Wirral. Much of the targeted provision is located in disadvantaged communities with high unemployment and the aim is to encourage people back into learning and to take the first steps that will lead to employment. Adult learning has a major impact on child poverty by helping families to gain confidence and skills, which help them to cope better with their lives and move on towards employment. There are many examples of learners who have gone on from short courses to further learning or to work. There are clear links between areas of deprivation and those with low levels of adult qualifications. Adult learning helps to enhance social inclusion and community cohesion, by offering people the opportunity to learn together and mix with people they may not have met before, whilst at the same time developing their confidence, skills and knowledge. It also enables people to give a contribution back to their community and Wirral Lifelong and Family Learning Service encourages and supports volunteers to become involved in

learning as Learning Champions promoting learning, or Learning Buddies supporting other learners. OFSTED commented that Wirral Lifelong and Family Learning Service make a positive contribution to community cohesion in Wirral.

11.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

An EIA for the Lifelong and Family Learning Service is completed annually.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Environmental awareness is encouraged as an underpinning area in Lifelong and Family Learning. Partner projects will be encouraged to reflect this priority.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 None

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 List of all applicants for NLDC 2011-12

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet	Sept 2010

APPENDIX 1

List of all Applicants for NLDC 2011-12

1. A & L Training
2. Aspire Trust
3. Beechwood Community Trust
4. Ferries' Family Groups
5. Forum Housing
6. Inclusive Access
7. JM Education and Sport
8. Leasowe Development Trust
9. Making Faces United
10. North Birkenhead Development Trust
11. University Academy
12. Pathway First
13. Sport for Life
14. The Women's Organisation
15. Tranmere Community Project
16. Voluntary Community Action Wirral
17. Wirral Council for Voluntary Service
18. Wirral Environmental Network
19. Wirral Girls' Grammar School
20. Wirral Multicultural Centre