

# WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 25<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2009

## REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

### INSPIRING COMMUNITIES

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#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The New Opportunities white paper announced over £10m to support the Inspiring Communities programme. An invitation to apply for up to £450,000 per neighbourhood was sent to 64 upper tier local authorities. Wirral was amongst those invited to bid into this competitive process to initially identify 15 neighbourhoods. Central government strongly discouraged more than one application per authority. Three bids were submitted for consideration, one from Millennium Training and Education Centre (MTEC LTD), Hair Training and Education Centre (HTEC LTD), Leasowe Women's Centre (LWC) on behalf of Birkenhead, Tranmere and Leasowe Appendix A, another from Leasowe Community Homes, Appendix B and the third from Together Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder, Appendix C. Together Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder was identified as the body to submit the preferred bid working in partnership with the Children and Young Peoples Department. In identifying them as the preferred bidder the following criteria was applied.

- Compliance with pre-qualifying criteria.
- Quality of programme.
- Evidence of integration with CYPD.
- Single neighbourhood vision.
- Extent of neighbourhood partnership.
- Capacity to deliver

The bids were scored by the Children and Young People's Department. The methodology, criteria, bids, judgements and scoring were shared with the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Lifelong Learning, the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Agreement has been reached with all three bidders for further discussions to take place about areas for development in preparation for any future opportunities to bid and for joint working opportunities. It should be noted that the extremely tight time-scale set out for this submission did not assist the process.

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 The key purpose of the Inspiring Communities Grant Programme is captured in the following extract:

"We will invest in local schemes which will get local communities behind the talented youngsters in their midst. We want neighbourhoods to take pride in the achievements of their young people. And we want Britain's next generation of small business owners, teachers, accountants, lawyers, designers, engineers, surgeons, public servants and community leaders to remember the helping hands, words of encouragement and practical support that came from their neighbourhoods and helped them on the road to success ."

(Inspiring Communities Grant Programme Foreword 2009-p5)

The programme is intended to focus on 11-14 year olds in deprived neighbourhoods. The principal outcome sought is an improvement in the educational attainment of young people within the neighbourhood.

This should cover both the individual improvements of pupils and also the narrowing of the achievement gap between pupils eligible for free schools meals and their peers. Key measures to be monitored for all participating neighbourhoods will be:

- Teacher assessments of individual attainments at key stage 3
- Proportion of pupils achieving five or more A\*-GCSEs (or equivalent) including English and Maths
- Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers

However it was recognised that achieving these outcomes within a two year window may be difficult and therefore other outcomes such as attendance or involvement of young people in structured activities outside of school should be included in the programme.

To be eligible for the programme the neighbourhood must:

Be in an area of high deprivation

Have a population of 5000-1000 residents

Be large enough to support strong partnership working with wide buy in, yet small enough to retain strong recognised local identity

Applications must be sent on behalf of a neighbourhood partnership who have terms of reference

Must have a local campaign leader

Must have representation from the local authority a local secondary school and a third sector organisation

- 1.2 The Inspiring Communities programme is made up of three main phases. The first is the application phase. Successful applicants will then enter the second full design phase where they will with some financial and specialist support develop a final coasted programme of activities. Activities will then be delivered in the third phase.

Applicants were requested to demonstrate how they would use the budgets to support all of the following activities :-

- initiatives designed to raise the aspirations of young people in the neighbourhood, which are chosen, designed and/or commissioned locally, and fit under the four core aims to:
  - broaden young people's horizons
  - provide advice and inspiration to young people
  - raise parents' own aspirations and self-confidence

- develop strong social networks in communities.
- a community pledge on youth achievement:
  - a public declaration of the shared vision of the local Inspiring Communities programme, in the interests of local young people. This should take the form of a tangible long-term practical outcome, as decided by the community, for example *“we want to reach the point where 30 members of our community make it to university each year”*.
  - it should provide a positive vision, under which the programme of activities sits, and demonstrate to local young people that their community believes they have the potential to succeed.

If neighbourhoods wish to formalise this pledge in time, they may wish to look to work with local authorities on a community contract.
- community twinning activities:
  - activities to link diverse groups and communities, giving young people (and potentially the wider community) opportunities to experience different settings and ways of life. Activities should provide opportunities for meaningful interaction between people.
- co-ordination of the campaign, including:
  - staff (We advise at least one full time equivalent programme co-ordinator be funded, who will support the partnership, administer and programme manage local delivery and liaise with the national evaluators and other support organisations. The campaign leader’s costs can also be covered from this funding, as can relevant staff training.)
  - wider logistical support (eg to fund consultative events, management of website).

The submission for this programme is attached as Appendix A. It has been produced after a short consultation, if successful further detailed planning and preparation would be required.

## **2. The Submissions and their Evaluations**

### **2.1 Submissions were received from three organisations or partnerships.**

- Submission A: was made by a partnership of MTEC Ltd, HTEC Ltd and LWC. It relates to the Leasowe Neighbourhood. It is attached as Appendix A.
- Submission B: was made by Leasowe Community Homes. It also relates to the Leasowe neighbourhood and is attached at Appendix B.
- Submission C: was made by a partnership of Tranmere Together, Involve North West and Wirral Youth Service. It relates to the Tranmere and Rock Ferry neighbourhood and is attached as Appendix C.

- 2.2 Submissions were evaluated by officers on a scale of 0 (fails to meet) to 3 (meets fully) against six criteria. The criteria were:
- i) Compliance with the criteria set out by DCSF as a pre-qualification standard.
  - ii) Quality of the programme planned
  - iii) Evidence of integration with Wirral 's Children and Young People's Plan.
  - iv) Presentation of a single, coherent neighbourhood vision.
  - v) Extent of the partnership within the neighbourhood.
  - vi) Capacity to deliver.

A summary of the scoring can be found at Appendix D.

- 2.3 There was broad compliance but two bids, those from Leasowe, were found not to fully meet the pre-qualification criteria.
- 2.4 The proposals made in Submission C were evaluated as extensive and of high quality. Those in Submissions A and B were much more limited in scope. Those in Submissions A and B were judged to have the potential for high quality but were presently underdeveloped.
- 2.5 There was a marked difference between submissions in relation to a single neighbourhood vision and the extent of the neighbourhood partnership. Submission C showed a strong partnership. It was founded on the Tranmere Together Neighbourhood Management Partnership which indicated strong involvement of Police, Wirral Youth Service, the third sector and NHS Wirral. Both local schools serving the area had a strong involvement in forming the plans and delivering the programme.

Submissions A and B did not demonstrate these features. Both originate from groups in Leasowe that are housed in Leasowe Millenium Centre and yet they showed no evidence of collaboration. They had been advised that this would weaken their submissions. Submission B had gained endorsement from the secondary school serving the area, Wallasey School and there may be scope to build this partnership further. Submission A gained endorsement from Odershaw School but this school, based in Liscard, admits only 1% of the target group from the relevant neighbourhood. Furthermore, the submission emphasised the links with Holy Cross RC Presbytery which is in Bidston. It was not clear that there was a coherent neighbourhood vision.

- 2.6 It was judged that the partnership around Submission C had considerable capacity and expertise on which to draw. That it was not scored at the maximum is a reflection of the high ambition which it demonstrates. Submission A and B had more limited partnerships available to them.
- 2.7 The timescale imposed by DCSF was very restricted and undoubtedly led to difficulties for the organisations concerned. Advice was given by officers to all three bidders before, during and after the process. A commitment has to be given to continue to work with them in preparation for any second round of bidding. It has been emphasised that a single neighbourhood vision cannot be demonstrated by two rival bids.
- 2.8 The timescale also made it impossible to gain approval from Cabinet prior to submission. DCSF made it clear that they wanted only one bid per LA and would regard it as a point of weakness if any LA made more than one submission. The three submissions were shared with the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and

Lifelong Learning, the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and the Chair of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee after the process of officer scoring had been completed.

- 2.9 Evaluation showed clearly that Submission C, from Tranmere and Rock Ferry, was the one most likely to gain DCSF support.

### **3. Financial Implications**

- 3.1 If successful the Council would be the accountable body for up to £175,000 in 2009-10 and up to £275,000 in 2010-2011.

### **4. Staffing Implications**

- 4.1 Staff would be appointed to the Together Management Pathfinder.

### **5. Equal Opportunities Implications**

- 5.1 The aim of this programme is to narrow the gap.

### **6. Community Safety Implications**

- 6.1 None arise directly out of this submission although indirectly by engaging young people in positive activities this could impact on issues of youth nuisance.

### **7. Local Agenda 21 Implications**

- 7.1 None arise directly out of this report.

### **8. Planning Implications**

- 8.1 None arise directly out of this report.

### **9. Anti-poverty Implications**

- 9.1 This programme is aimed at the most deprived wards of the Borough.

### **10. Social Inclusion Implications**

- 10.1 If successful a detailed project plan would be produced which would include the identification of a cohort of young people against set criteria.

### **11. Local Member Support Implications**

- 11.1 This submission is of relevance to members in the Tranmere ward. Other submissions related to Leasowe and Moreton East.

### **12. Background Papers**

- 12.1 Inspiring Communities Grant Programme Community and Local Government Cabinet Office and Department for Children, Schools and Families – April 2009

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That

- (1) The bid produced by Together Management Pathfinder and its partnership group is endorsed as Wirral's preferred bid.
- (2) Officers continue to work with unsuccessful bidders with a view to developing proposals for a possible future round.

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