

Subject: Procurement of Community Involvement and Engagement Strategy

Status: For publication

Report to: The Cabinet

Date: 7th June 2006

Report of: Head of Community and Partnerships

Portfolio

Holder: Cabinet Member for Customer Services

Key Decision: NO

Forward Plan General Exception Special Urgency "X" In Relevant Box

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval to award the contract to develop the Rossendale Community Involvement and Engagement Strategy to the Community Network for Rossendale through its business arm REAL.

2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 2.1 The matters discussed in this report are linked to and support the following corporate priorities:
- Delivering the District Vision, particularly as it relates to creating a community engaged and involved in delivering the future of the Valley.

3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:
- If we do not develop a robust CI&ES we will not have a strategic approach to working with our communities to understand their priorities and thus shape our services in response.
 - If we choose to engage with any organization other than the community network to deliver this piece of work we may miss some of the key issues that the local community know and understand best.

- If we do chose the Community Network to develop this strategy on our behalf there is a slight risk that community expectations may be raised or that they may be unable to deliver as there is no proven track record of this type of work, however, this is mitigated by the fact that they are bringing on board a specialized consultant who has vast experience in this type of work.

4. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

- 4.1 It is important for the Council to engage with the local communities of Rossendale in a meaningful way which satisfies the way in which they would like to be engaged and achieves our objectives of understanding the issues of our local communities. In this was we are better able to shape and influence local services to ensure that the needs of our residents are taken account of.
- 4.2 The Corporate Improvement Plan seeks delivery of the Strategy by September 2006. To develop such a strategy would require a great deal of local expertise and knowledge which could not be bought in from outside the Borough.
- 4.3 The only experts in the local community are the local community themselves and as such they are the best placed to decide how they would wish to be consulted, involved and engaged in Council and partner business.
- 4.4 To this end it is proposed to contract with the local community network for them to deliver on behalf of the Council a community involvement and engagement strategy which will set the context and framework in which the Council will listen to and act upon the concerns of local communities.
- 4.5 Because there is only one community network in the Borough who are the best placed to develop this strategic approach members are asked to agree to the waiving of standing orders, accepting that the tendering is unrealistic in this instance.
- 4.6 The total cost of the work will not exceed £30,000 this being the budget allocated to this piece of work by Council. Much of the cost of this work will be kept within Rossendale thus helping to develop local community empowerment and social capital.

5. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

- 5.1 As part of the 06/07 budget approval the Council allocated £30,000 from its Change Management Reserve to fund the development of a community engagement strategy.
- 5.2 Council standing orders normally require at least three written quotations for medium value contracts (£6,000 - £30,000). Contract Procedure Rules also state the rare circumstances in which Procedure Rules will not apply.

6. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

- 6.1 The Contract standing orders provide in paragraph 19.1 (iii) that in cases when the Head of Service in consultation with the Corporate Director considers it desirable in the best interests of the Council that a tender is invited for execution of work from someone selected by us. Then such should be reported to internal audit and reported to the appropriate Committee, in this case the Cabinet. This report seeks the approval of the Cabinet to the application of an exception to the normal procedure rules

7. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

- 7.1 The community network is representative of the communities of Rossendale. The strategy will provide information to shape services to meet the individual different needs of residents across Rossendale.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The use of the community network for Rossendale to develop the community involvement and engagement strategy for the Council is the most practicable approach to this piece of work within the budget allowed and the timeframe set out in the Corporate Improvement Plan.

9. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 9.1 It is recommended that cabinet agrees to waive standing orders to allow the community network for Rossendale to be appointed to carry out the community involvement and engagement strategy development

That the Head of Community and Partnerships is delegated to agree the SLA in conjunction with the Head of Legal Services and to monitor the contract.

10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

Lead member, Leader, Community Network, Salford City Council, Salford Partnership,

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Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Corporate improvement plan	Web site