

Subject:	NESTA Creative Councils Bid	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	1 st December 2011
Report of:	Head of Health, Housing & Regeneration	Portfolio Holder:	Regeneration
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Community Impact Assessment:	Required:	Yes	Attached: Yes
Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Required:	No	Attached: No
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1.	RECOMMENDATION(S)
1.1	That Members approve the development of the 'Community Animators Phase 2' programme to be rolled out across Rossendale.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To advise Members of the outcome of the NESTA Creative Council's bid and seek approval for the development of the 'Community Animators Phase 2' programme to be rolled out across Rossendale.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:
- **A healthy and successful Rossendale** – supporting vibrant communities and a strong economy.
 - **Responsive and value for money local services** – responding to and meeting the different needs of customers and improving the cost effectiveness of services.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 All the issues raised and the recommendations in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:
- This proposed development is fully funded externally by NESTA and hence there is no financial risk to Rossendale Borough Council
 - Risk is limited at the moment as the project is in its development stage. Once the project moves forward to implementation the risks are reputational and operational. Reputational in that the trained community animators could be seen as representing the Council and operational in that sufficient staff time will need to be available to manage the project.

5. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

- 5.1 The bid submitted to NESTA aimed to build on the success of an innovative pilot project that ran in Bacup last year which was delivered in partnership with local community organisations.
- 5.2 The project was known as Community Animators and proved to be very effective in helping long term unemployed back to work, increasing skills and confidence amongst participating individuals and improving access to services.

- 5.3 The original pilot project recruited 11 people from the target community of Bacup to work as community animators. They were given training to help them engage with the target group of long term unemployed in new and innovative ways providing them with the information, support and mentoring to enable them to take their first steps towards employment and training.
- 5.4 The Community Animators role was to help local people identify their personal barriers to gaining work in a non-judgemental and supportive way. They then encouraged and supported people to overcome these barriers by signposting them to the local services, agencies and organisations who could provide them with the advice, training and support they needed.
- 5.5 The local challenge that we were seeking to address with this project was the entrenched and persistent long term unemployment situation amongst certain groups and in certain areas of Rossendale.
- 5.6 The Community Animators project provides a tailored flexible and individualized brokerage service which fills a gap in mainstream provision of employment services. It can provide support over a longer time frame and is not so output driven. It is based in and owned by the community. It is voluntary and holistic in nature carrying no compulsion to participate and catering to a wide variety of needs. Finally it provides an easily replicable delivery model.
- 5.7 The NESTA – Creative Councils bid was based upon the Community Animators scheme and was selected as one of 17 out of 137 applications that went forward to the Creative Councils workshop in Birmingham held on 12-14th September where we were invited to work up the idea in more depth and present it to a panel of experts.
- 5.8 The panel of experts liked the idea and earmarked £30,000 (in two tranches) and 5 days professional support to take our idea forward and develop our new prototype between now and March 2012.
- 5.9 In November, a more detailed proposal was submitted to NESTA who have confirmed that £10,000 will be allocated in the first tranche of funding to undertake more exploratory work on the viability of the project. The second tranche of £20,000 will follow in January 2012 once the initial viability testing has been proven.
- 5.9 This initial funding would then be used to develop a pilot programme in two geographical areas -Haslingden and Waterfoot, which would test and inform the model and provide the practical details required for future stages.
- 5.10 Once our new approach is fully developed and operational we will be allowed to apply to NESTA for a larger sum to run the developed initiative over a longer period or we can ask for their support to apply elsewhere.
- 5.11 It is hoped that our new approach, which will involve a more direct relationship between ourselves and each areas “Community Animators” will lead to an improvement in how we deliver services and our new evaluation model will give us a better insight into identifying needs in the community.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

6. SECTION 151 OFFICER

6.1 All financial implications are noted in the report above

7. MONITORING OFFICER

7.1 No additional comments to add.

8. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND POLICY (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

8.1 No human resources implications arising from the report.

9. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

9.1 Portfolio holder for Health, Housing and Regeneration
Management Team
Leader of the Council

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 The original 'pilot' in Bacup focused on worklessness. However the NESTA panel of experts have recommended that the remit for the new project is widened to include health and wellbeing issues, personal development and income maximisation.

10.2 The further development of the project leading to a potential second phase is a real opportunity for the Council to improve the wellbeing and employment prospects of vulnerable communities in Rossendale

No background papers