

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

14 JULY 2011

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION

Regeneration and Transport – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Smith

COMMUNITIES FUND

1. Summary

This report provides an update on the performance and progress of the Communities Fund of both the 'employability and skills' and 'enterprise' elements of the Fund. It also provides an up date of the Communities Fund allocation for the Future Jobs Fund and the Area Partnership Boards activities towards employability.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that cabinet note the report.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

There is a requirement as part of the Council's governance of the Working Neighbourhoods Fund that Cabinet receive a report on the progress of the delivery of the Communities Fund.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (**paragraph 8**) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (**paragraphs 10 and 11 of the code of conduct**).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held -

- in a case where the Member is attending a meeting (including a meeting of a select committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under statutory right or otherwise, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence as the case may be;

- in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at the meeting;

and must not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (**paragraph 12 of the Code**).

Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc; whether or not they are a Member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting (unless the interest arises solely from the Member's membership of, or position of control or management on any other body to which the Member was appointed or nominated by the Council, or on any other body exercising functions of a public nature, when the interest only needs to be declared if and when the Member speaks on the matter), and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room, subject to and in accordance with the provisions referred to above.

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SUMMARY

This report provides an update on the performance and progress of the Communities Fund of both the 'employability and skills' and 'enterprise' elements of the Fund. It also provides an up date of the Communities Fund allocation for the Future Jobs Fund and the Area Partnership Boards activities towards employability.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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DETAIL

1. The Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF) was created by Government to simplify and refocus local level funding to tackle worklessness and low levels of skills and enterprise within some of the most disadvantaged communities. The fund, part of the non ringfenced Area Based Grant (ABG), concentrates the focus of neighbourhood renewal on these core areas of regeneration.
2. Following a transition year for Neighbourhood Renewal Funded projects during 2008/09, CMT, Renaissance and Cabinet agreed to a new way of working by commissioning employability and skills provision that offers a holistic tailored individual approach for those furthest from the labour market and a package of support to increase entrepreneurial activity across the Borough.
3. An allocation of £7.2M was agreed over three years for the employability provision to focus activity on the 24 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) with a benefit claim rate of above 25%.
4. It was also agreed that £516,701 of the Communities Fund would be allocated to the Area Partnership Board to further support and continue to build on the success of devolving budgets to local communities through the Area Partnership Boards.
5. A further allocation of £2M was agreed to fund the enterprise programme and an additional £570K of European Regional Development Funding (ERDF) was secured as a result of this investment.

EMPLOYABILITY

6. Five contracts were procured through open and competitive tendering and were awarded to three organisations. The Five Lamps Organisation covering the two contract areas of parts of Thornaby and Stockton Town Centre. Newtown, Norton and Clarences Community

Resource Centres (now Know How North East) are focusing on the two contracts in Newtown and parts of Billingham and New College Durham working in the Hardwick/Ragworth areas.

7. Delivery commenced in April 2009. The Five Lamps Organisation has bases in Thornaby at South Thornaby Community Centre, the Youthy and Eldon Street and at 32 Dovecot Street in Stockton. Know How North East are now operating from four community resource centres, including Newtown and Norton Grange in Stockton and the Clarences and Low Grange in Billingham. New College Durham have based themselves at Hardwick in Partnership and also use Ragworth Neighbourhood Centre on an outreach basis.
8. Over the two years to March 2011 the Communities Fund providers have engaged with and completed action plans for 2,716 residents. This is 133% above profile. All of the providers have now exceeded their total contract values for the numbers of people engaged and action planned.
9. The Communities Fund was targeted towards those individuals furthest from the labour market, but in the early days of the contracts with no mainstream provision available and the affects of the recession there was an initial influx of short term Jobseeker Allowance (JSA) customers. However, we are still able to demonstrate how the delivery of the Communities Fund has impacted on the hardest to help. The following gives a flavour of some of the priority groups engaged:
 - 338 lone parents;
 - 157 people with a drug or alcohol issue, of which at least 52 are currently in drug treatment;
 - 288 ex-offenders, of which a minimum of 15 are either Prolific Offenders (PPO), High Crime Causers (HCC) or meet the Drug Rehabilitation Requirement (DRR);
 - 227 people with a health condition;
 - 194 residents from a black or ethnic minority community;
 - Over 300 residents have cited multiple barriers not included in the above figures.
10. Of particular interest to note is that over a quarter of people engaged, have been out of work for over two years, with 22%, nearly 600 people having been unemployed for over three years.
11. After two years of delivery 1,037 of those residents engaged have found work, which equates to a ratio of 2.6:1, an improvement since the 18 month report. This is now ahead of the providers anticipated success rate of a ratio of three or four to one. In comparison, based on figures released in March 2011 by DWP the national Flexible New Deal (FND) conversion rate is 7:1.
12. There has been a significant increase in the levels of performance in the second year of operation as providers have established themselves in their contract areas. In the first 12 months of delivery 378 people found work and in year 2 this number has risen to 659. The Five Lamps Organisation has the two largest contracts and they have achieved 675 job outcomes, which is 60% towards their targets, with the Thornaby contract leading the way with 72%. Know How North East's contracts are relatively evenly balanced and there has been a good return in the past six months taking their overall jobs total to 301, which is 50% of their contracts. New College Durham's performance has improved three-fold in the second half of the year and they have claimed 61 jobs. However, despite this improvement it only represents 22% towards their target. Retrieving evidence from employers or the successful client continues to be an issue for the providers.
13. In light of the economic climate the numbers in to work is very encouraging, particularly when taking into account the multiple barriers of the priority groups. 161 people into work

have been unemployed for over two years, of which 110 had previously been out of work for over three years.

14. In comparison with the last two years of the NRF Employment & Worklessness packages (459 jobs over two years) and the transition year of WNF (297 jobs in one year) performance to date is significantly better and continues to improve.
15. It is encouraging to note that the type of jobs people are moving into covers a wide spectrum of occupational areas from office work, building operatives, retail, care, asbestos removal, welders, riggers to dog groomers. The majority of job outcomes are full time positions, but where they are of a part time nature they are generally above 16 hours, ensuring individuals are able to claim tax credits and therefore will not be worse off in work.
16. The number of people claimed who have been sustained in employment at 26 weeks is now 401, an increase of 246 in the last six months. As a result the job retention rate is now 62%, which is a very good return compared to mainstream programmes.
17. The Lead Providers are expected to work in partnership with other public, private and voluntary and community organisations either on a formal or informal basis. The level of sub-contracting does vary across all of the contracts and new organisations are still in a position to be able to negotiate with the Lead Providers. To date over £750,000 has been paid to sub-contracting organisations, these include Hardwick in Partnership, Eastern Ravens Trust, Low Grange Community Centre, Jobs North East, Tristar Homes, Cultures CIC, CRI, Blind Voice, Turnaround Homes.
18. As reported in February 2011 it was the intention to undertake an interim evaluation of the Communities Fund which is an independent assessment of the service delivery and the impact it is having on tackling worklessness for participants and their families, increasing enterprise and the wider economic benefits. New Skills Consulting was commissioned to undertake the work which took place between February and April.
19. The interim report concluded the following:
20. "Overall, the Communities Fund is having a positive impact on levels of worklessness and enterprise activity in the borough, and the Council's investment is making a real positive difference to local people and businesses".
21. "The Programme's achievements are particularly positive given the very difficult labour market conditions in which it has been delivered. Without the support, it is likely that at least part of the modest 3% reduction in benefit claimant numbers in the target LSOAs would not have been achieved".
22. "The recession and changing labour market has had a very significant impact on the Programme. For the employability project, it has presented a major challenge as there have been far more job-ready JSA clients requesting support than was expected when the project was initially developed. It has also made it more difficult to place clients into work as there are fewer job vacancies in the market".
23. "Beneficiaries and stakeholders feel the Programme is helping to mitigate against some impacts of the recession, with most feeling that unemployment levels would be higher if the Communities Programme was not available. This is supported by evidence of the numbers of residents moving into employment and self-employment, and the high numbers reporting that they would not have achieved these positive outcomes without the support".
24. "The Programme has also been delivered cost effectively with costs per net outputs offering good value for money compared to other programmes".

25. "Furthermore, the Programme has generated an estimated minimum £0.94m direct savings to the exchequer".
26. "A recurring theme throughout the evaluation has been the very positive feedback from most beneficiaries, businesses and partners about the quality of the staff involved in delivering the Communities Fund projects. The vast majority of staff are considered to be very supportive, dedicated to helping their clients to progress, and very professional in their approach".
27. "Based on the evidence of impacts achieved to date, there is a compelling case to continue all elements of Programme and project delivery until March 2012 at least, and beyond that date if additional resources can be secured".
28. This interim report will help to start to inform an exit strategy for the funding and future delivery of employability provision in Stockton. A workshop has been arranged during June to further improve delivery and to give consideration to the recommendations in the report. The final evaluation of the Communities Fund will commence in early 2012.

FUTURE JOBS FUND

29. It was agreed by CMT and Renaissance that £650,000 of the Communities Fund would be allocated to enhance the Council's bid for Future Jobs Fund by providing employment for up to 52 weeks, a wage of £6.22 per hour and 30 hours per week. The Council's bid for 181 jobs was successful.
30. The Council worked with over 20 partners from the private, public and voluntary and community sectors to secure employment opportunities aimed at young people. As a result, 166 people aged 18-24 were employed and 15 people were over 25 years of age.
31. After the initial 26 weeks of Future Jobs Fund 162 people were still in employment. The Future Jobs Fund scheme ended in March 2011 after which 38 people were retained in employment by their Future Jobs Fund host organisation, 35 have found jobs with other employers and some others have now chosen to return to full time education. A staggering 628 pieces of accredited training was undertaken, with 80 NVQs being completed and 27 full apprenticeship frameworks.

AREA PARTNERSHIP BOARDS

32. Each Area Partnership was requested to identify a limited and deliverable set of priorities from within the framework provided by the Community Strategy and set up a sub group to commission a number of interventions to address the Area Partnership priorities.
33. The Northern Area Partnership allocated all of their funding to the Billingham Environmental Link Project (BELP). The BELP targeted people within the community who need assistance to re-engage with Education, Employment, Healthy Living and or Life Style Development. It allowed for targeted development packages for the individuals to assist tailored development and transition into employment. Over the lifetime of the project they have engaged with 55 people in total, all of whom have had tailored action plans developed; 7 of the recipients went into employment with a number of them taking further training to enhance their CV.
34. The Central Area Partnership have funded a number of different projects including support for piloting the Viva Volunteers project, support for enhanced Housing Options Officer dedicated for the Central area and a Employability Pathways programme ran by the YMCA. A proforma is also being developed for small groups in the Central area to access the remaining funding available.

35. A number of softer outcomes have been achieved through these projects including Viva successfully registered 357 potential volunteers and providing 230 opportunities with 52 successfully matched into a placement. The Employment Pathways project has successfully placed 10 full time and 24 part time young people into employment placements within the voluntary and community sector some of which were dedicated to those young people working with the Leaving Care Team. The Housing Options project has only been running for around six months but has already engaged with 184 people and helped 38 clients retain their accommodation.
36. The Eastern Area Partnership also funded a number of projects to tackle their local priorities these included the Reaching Eastern Areas Together project (REACT), Debt Advice and Support which were both funded over the three years and the Credit Union Capacity Building project.
37. The REACT project in last year alone has engaged with 367 young people and the allotment project has been a great success. The Debt Advice project has caseloaded over 300 people and dealt with debts totalling well over £1 million. The Credit Union has had an increase of 65 new accounts in the last year.
38. The Western Area Partnership commissioned Tees Achieve at the end of 2010 to coordinate some targeted work to deliver a number of taster sessions in the small pockets of the Western Area that have high levels of deprivation. They have engaged with 47 people, 39 of which have enrolled on courses of which 9 are progressing on to a family learning course to help their children with maths. Further sessions will be held in the summer of 2011. A project is also being finalised for the remaining allocation to be used for young people to access training.

WELFARE TO WORK

39. In addition to the Communities Fund there will be some significant changes in the 'welfare to work' arena. The Work Programme replaces Flexible New Deal as the Government's key welfare to work initiative, which is an integrated package of personalised support available to all people who are out of work, regardless of the benefit they claim. Two organisations Avanta and Ingeus Deloitte have been chosen to deliver across the North East and it is hoped referrals on to the programme will commence in the last week of June. Avanta have selected TNG and the Five Lamps Organisation to deliver their end to end provision in Stockton. Ingeus have subcontracted their Tees Valley delivery to Triage Central Ltd, a Scottish based provider.
40. Later this year will also see the reassessments of individuals in receipt of Incapacity Benefits (IB). The assessment will determine whether the person's health or disability limits their ability to obtain a job. If the illness has a severe effect on the ability to work the person will not be expected to work and will be in the Support Group, otherwise they will be in the Work-Related Activity Group, where they will be expected to take part in work focused interviews. A more detailed briefing paper on this and the Work Programme including the likely impact for Stockton is currently being prepared.

ENTERPRISE

41. In addition to the £2 million from the Communities Fund the Stockton Routes into Enterprise package of projects was successful in gaining £570,000 of funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). This ERDF funding was awarded as part of the wider Tees Valley Business Support package of projects. The original ERDF application included a small amount of capital expenditure but this was later deemed ineligible and so not given approval. Delays in the approval of this ERDF funding resulted in a delay to the start of the projects. Issues also arose, after approval, over the type of businesses eligible for start up support. This resulted in changes needing to be made to the delivery timescale and outputs

required for the projects, so a significant change for the Tees Valley package was submitted which was approved in March 2011. As a result the end date of the ERDF funding varies from project to project.

Enterprise Gateways

42. Enterprise Gateways have been set up in the Borough to overcome identified barriers to enterprise. These Gateways promote enterprise by providing local access to a range of enterprise support activities, including enterprise coaching, to help to increase the numbers of local people becoming self-employed. Those residents who wish to progress a business idea are able to receive intensive start up support from a business advisor through the Gateways whilst still maintaining contact with an enterprise coach as appropriate. This project started in October 2009 providing enterprise support focussed on the more disadvantaged communities of Stockton. The Enterprise Gateways are based in Thornaby, Stockton and Billingham and are being delivered by The Five Lamps organisation.
43. The contract was initially awarded to run until March 2011 with the option to extend it for a further year. The delay in getting the ERDF significant change approved meant that an interim extension of the project until the end of September 2011 had to be put in place. Now that approval has been secured and following recommendations from the interim evaluation the contract is now being continued until 31st March 2012.
44. The target outcomes for the project are to give enterprise coaching to 900 people and create 180 businesses by 31st March 2012. Up to the end of March 2011 the Enterprise Gateways have provided a minimum of 3 hours of enterprise coaching to more than 646 residents and supported the creation of 147 businesses. Of those that have received enterprise coaching: -
 - 61% are men and 39% are women
 - 15% are 18 – 24 years old and 14% are 50 + years old.
 - 81% were jobless, with nearly 28% out of work for more than a year and 12% for more than 3 years
45. The interim evaluation has indicated that the project is having a very positive impact on enterprise in the local area, both in strengthening the enterprise culture (awareness and building on existing interest), and in increasing levels of enterprise activity. It is also generating positive economic impacts, including increases in local incomes and Gross Value Added (GVA). The evaluation also found that the Enterprise Gateways project provides good value for money in terms of supporting clients to start up businesses compared to other similar programmes and is being delivered and managed effectively. The evaluation report also stated that the project is also having positive impacts on individuals, improving their self-confidence, aspirations, skills, and health and well being.
46. The interim evaluation has confirmed that demand for the project from local people is high. The recession has been an important factor in this, with more people now considering self-employment as an alternative career route. However, it is possible that demand would have been high even without the recession, as there now few other support options to turn to following the reduction in service provided by Business Link.

Enterprise Culture

47. The Enterprise Culture project started in May 2009 and will be running until July 2012. A dedicated Co-ordinator is employed to work with our schools, colleges and learning institutions to develop innovative and engaging projects. These projects give our young people the experience of setting up and running real businesses with the help of business ambassadors. A steering group consisting of local entrepreneurs has been set up to assess the feasibility of the applications received and funding is granted accordingly.

48. 11 out of the 14 secondary schools and the 2 colleges in Stockton have completed an initial self assessment that sets a baseline from which the impact of the project can be measured. To date a total of 32 intensive enterprise projects have focused on setting up real businesses within 11 schools, 1 college and 2 education providers with a total of 838 young people involved in developing and running them. A further 4 less intensive Enterprise Awareness Events involving 5 schools have been delivered to help engage institutions with the project and 2224 learners have been involved with these.
49. The interim evaluation has shown a very positive impact on the students and staff within Stockton's Education institutions. The report states that overall, schools and colleges have seen a significant improvement in the extent to which enterprise is embedded within their curriculum and 'ethos' as a direct result of engaging in the project. The evaluation recommends extending the support available through the project to younger students and this is something we are considering post ERDF funding.

Over The Threshold

50. The 'Over the Threshold' project offers support to existing small businesses to overcome key barriers such as the additional paperwork associated with VAT registration, taking on their first employee or employees who may need to have special checks to do a particular job, accessing training or the tools and knowledge to be able to submit tenders for contracts. The project is run in partnership with Business & Enterprise North East (BENE) and is initially contracted to run until July 2011 with an extension to March 2012. The project involves a Business Adviser working more intensively with businesses to offer support and to provide access to other advisors with financial support if more specialist assistance is required.
51. The initial target for the project is that by July 2011, 70 businesses are given intensive assistance, this means either 2 days support from the Adviser or funded specialist support in excess of £1,000, or a mixture of both. The project started in April 2010 and up to the end of March 2011 85 clients have been assisted through the project of which 41 have received intensive support.
52. Although there has been little interest in help with VAT registration, many of the businesses have had help with employing people and human resources issues. Procurement is another high priority for small businesses and the help provided with this has included a programme of 6 workshops which were well received by those who attended.
53. Discussions with clients have established that marketing and selling are two other areas of difficulty. To address this a series of e-marketing workshops are taking place to help clients understand the plethora of electronic marketing tools and decide which are the most appropriate for their businesses. An innovative sales workshop is also currently being arranged.
54. The interim evaluation has shown that the project is delivering significant benefits for many of the businesses supported. The intended target businesses are being engaged but the project would benefit from increased marketing activity to increase the numbers participating. The one-to-one mentoring is highly regarded by beneficiaries and overall the intensive support generates greater outcomes and impacts than non-intensive support. Similarly businesses accessing workshops in isolation derive less benefit than those also accessing other support measures. The partnership model has strengths but some aspects could be improved and discussions are taking place with BENE to address these recommendations.

Start-up Business Grants

55. This grant scheme supports new businesses in the Borough and is available to businesses that are in the process of starting up. The grant is up to a £1,000 and primarily available for capital costs such as equipment and applicants are expected to be receiving support through the Enterprise Gateways or another Enterprise Agency.
56. The Communities Fund could not be matched to ERDF due to eligibility issues. Up to the end of March 2011 a total of 146 new businesses have been supported. The majority of people have set up as sole traders (82%) and were previously unemployed (68%), 24% were employed when they applied for support but most of these were in part time jobs, the remainder had recently just started the business. 73% were men and 27% women business owners and the majority (86%) were operating from home. The main business activities are plumbers, electricians, tillers, painting & decorating and the like. Other popular activities include property maintenance, gardening, cleaning and some creative businesses.
57. The interim evaluation found that the grant fund has played an important role in business start-up, helping some businesses to start that otherwise could not have and making the process easier, quicker and less risky for many more. It has also had a positive impact on job creation with each new business creating 1.3 jobs on average.

Digital City Business

58. Digital City Business is a regeneration project originally grounded on Teesside University's expertise in digital media and digital technology. £170,000 of Communities Fund has been provided as match funding to a Tees Valley wide Digital City Business Project that has successfully secured £1.7m of project funding primarily comprised of ERDF, Single Programme and Middlesbrough Council funding. The overarching project objective is to create and manage a range of services, initiatives and activities that will continue to foster, support and stimulate the creation a self-sustaining, vibrant and successful digital media, digital technology and the creative sector in the Tees Valley.
59. Stockton's contribution is ring fenced and for use only against activities for Stockton. It will see the expertise of Digital City Business applied to delivering a range of specialist services tailored to the needs of Stockton's creative businesses and entrepreneurs. Due to delays in the awarding of ERDF monies the project has only recently started is currently underway to look at extending project activity into 2012/13. Referred to as the Stockton Satellite project initial progress has seen a locally based business woman and fashion designer recruited to the part time post of Stockton Animateur, a role that involves meeting and networking with a range of Stockton businesses with the aim of co-ordinating a range of specialist support to aid company growth and develop the wider creative sector. Operating from Stockton Business Centre work is on-going undertaking business diagnostics with local companies in order to determine packages of business support that best meet their business growth aims.

CASE STUDIES

60. Case studies demonstrating the positive impact that the Communities Fund employability & skills and enterprise programmes have had on the lives of local people are attached to this report as **appendices 1 to 6**.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

61. A breakdown of the funding allocated by project or contract and the spend to date is given below.

PROJECT	ALLOCATION	SPEND TO DATE
EMPLOYABILITY		
New College Durham – Hardwick and Ragworth	£ 995,178	£ 511,714
Know How North East - Newtown	£1,214,757	£ 855,630
Know How North East - Billingham	£1,023,512	£ 769,487
Five Lamps - Thornaby	£1,558,288	£ 951,534
Five Lamps – Town Centre	£2,408,264	£1,418,277
Future Jobs Fund	£ 650,000	Final claim being prepared.
AREA PARTNERSHIP BOARDS		
Central	£ 274,216	£ 267,142
Northern	£ 72,765	£ 72,765
Western	£ 55,361	£ 44,320
Eastern	£ 114,359	£ 114,359
ENTERPRISE		
Routes into Enterprise		
Enterprise Gateways	£1,176,900	£ 514,000
Enterprise Culture	£ 383,455	£ 116,331
Over the Threshold	£ 330,000	£ 146,947
Start Up Business Grants	£ 225,000	£ 105,000
Digital City Businesses	£ 170,000	Allocation committed, payment schedule to be agreed

There was a contribution of £535,000 from the Communities Fund towards the Council's savings in 2010-2011.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

62. There are no legal implications as part of this report.

RISK ASSESSMENT

63. This matter is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and those proposed within the delivery plan for the Communities Fund will be sufficiently robust and rigorous to control and reduce the level of risk. However, the delivery of job outcomes and sustainable outcomes will also be governed by external forces such as the growth of the economy and changes to the local labour market.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

64. The priority theme directly linked to the worklessness agenda is Economic Regeneration & Transport. The Partnership aims to bring more people into employment, strengthen our knowledge base, promote a more entrepreneurial culture and strengthen key industrial clusters.
65. The key ambition at the heart of this vision is 'a strong local economy with better jobs and improved employability'.
66. However, the Communities Fund touches a number of other areas of the Sustainable Community Strategy as it is recognised that a co-ordinated multi-agency approach is required to achieve the long term objectives of moving more people in to work, improving

the skill levels of local people and increasing the level of entrepreneurial activity across the Borough.

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

67. This report has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment and has been judged to have a positive impact. No remedial actions are required.

CORPORATE PARENTING

68. Looked after children are identified as one of the key priority groups for support from the Communities Fund.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

69. Extensive consultation with key stakeholders took place to secure support for this delivery model and the open and competitive procurement process. The Stockton Employability Consortium in line with some of the recommendations of the Select Scrutiny Review has agreed the vulnerable groups that should be supported and the principles and criteria for the development of the Communities Fund delivery plan. This includes representatives from Jobcentre Plus, Learning Skills Council, North East Employer Coalition, PCT, CESC (STEPS & Drugs Action Team), Housing, Tristar Homes, Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder and representatives from the Voluntary and Community Sector, including Catalyst and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Economic Development. The approach builds upon the previous successful partnership arrangements in the Borough and strengthens both the LSP and community role in working together to deliver the employability agenda.

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Education related? No

Background Papers

WNF Lead Providers monthly and quarterly monitoring returns.
Interim Evaluation of Stockton Communities Fund Programme Report.

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors: All

Property Not applicable