

**STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS**

**PROFORMA**

Cabinet Meeting .....6th September 2012

1. Title of Item/Report

Social Fund Localisation

2. Record of the Decision

Members considered a report that outlined the Government's plans to localise elements of the Department of Work and Pension's administered Social Fund to local authorities from April 2013 and proposed an approach for the design and delivery of a local scheme for the borough.

Members were provided with indicative figures for funding for the programme and administrative costs. Members were informed of an options appraisal relating to the delivery of a pilot of the local social fund and noted that it was proposed to run a pilot scheme for the first 15 months to gather intelligence to inform and refine any local scheme for the Borough going forward.

Cabinet noted key principles that would underpin the design of the local provision which would form the basis of any procurement exercise to deliver the scheme. A fundamental principle would be that the scheme would be largely based upon need and would follow the same eligibility criteria as the existing scheme.

Members were provided with information relating to the pilot scheme's evaluation, consultation and communication.

Members agreed that evaluation of the pilot should take place after 3 months with a report to Cabinet. It was noted that local ward members would have a role in sign posting constituents to any third sector deliverer.

RESOLVED that

1. the social fund delivery be commissioned from the third sector on the basis of a 15 month pilot.

2. access to the scheme be based upon need and largely follow the same

eligibility criteria as the existing Social Fund scheme.

3. the design principles outlined in the report be approved.

4. the consultation and communication approach be noted.

3. Reasons for the Decision

There was a lack of robust data around demand, client groups, usage across the borough, what the loans/grants are used for coupled with tight timescales for developing provision. Running a pilot scheme for the first 15 months would allow time to gather intelligence to inform and refine any local scheme for the Borough going forward. The pilot would need to start by January 2013 to give the opportunity to set up and test the system before it become operational in April, 2013. There was stronger experience of running discretionary schemes and the capacity within the voluntary sector in the borough to do so than there was within the local authority.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

Councillors Mrs McCoy and Nelson declared a personal interest in the item entitled Social Fund Localisation as they were members of the Stockton and District Advice and Information Service.

6. Details of any Dispensations

Not applicable

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight on Friday 14 September 2012

Proper Officer  
10 September 2012