

MAYOR AND CABINET

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| Report Title | New Cross Gate New Deal for Communities – 170 Works Project | |
| Key Decision | Yes | Item No. 11 |
| Ward | New Cross and Telegraph Hill | |
| Contributors | Executive Director for Regeneration/Head of Law/Chief Executive NDC | |
| Class | Part 1 | Date: 14 March 2007 |

1. Summary

- 1.1 The report gives details of the proposed 170 Works Project. Full details of the project are contained within the New Cross Gate NDC Project Application Form (Stage Two Appraisal) attached as Appendix One.
- 1.2 As the Accountable Body for the New Cross Gate NDC programme the Council needs to be satisfied that the 170 Works Project is fit for purpose.
- 1.3 The 170 Works Project forms an integral part of the New Cross Gate NDC Employment & Enterprise Theme Strategy 2006 – 2011, and the associated Floor Target Action Plan.
- 1.4 Furthermore the 170 Works Project has been drafted into the New Cross Gate NDC Delivery Plan for 2007/08 (Year 7) which details the first phase of the project to be delivered this financial year.

2. Purpose of the report

- 2.1 This report provides details of the New Cross Gate NDC 170 Works Project.
- 2.2 The Mayor and Cabinet requires that all New Cross Gate NDC Project's above £500,000 need to be presented to Mayor and Cabinet for approval subject to GOL approval.
- 2.3 The London Borough of Lewisham is the Accountable Body for the New Cross Gate New Deal for Communities Programme and as such it needs to ensure that the Delivery Plan is in accordance with NDC objectives and financial regulations that govern the NDC programme. It also needs to have confidence that the project is well thought out and deliverable.

- 2.4 This report seeks approval for recommendations as detailed under paragraph four.

3. Policy Context

- 3.1 The purpose of the New Cross Gate NDC funding is to maximise inward investment and external funding to secure the physical, social, economic and environmental regeneration of the New Cross Gate area of the Borough.
- 3.2 The NDC seeks to work in partnership with the community, private, public and voluntary sector agencies to secure regeneration and neighbourhood renewal for the local area.

4. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Mayor:

- 4.1 Approves the submission of the New Cross Gate NDC 170 Works Project and the project cost of £688,767 subject to GOL approval.
- 4.2 Delegates authority to the Executive Director for Regeneration to sign the contract between London Borough of Lewisham and the contractor.

5. Background

- 5.1 The central aim for the 170 Works Project is to deliver a fit for purpose, core local employment and training service for New Cross Gate residents. It has been developed in conjunction with the NDC Employment and Enterprise Theme with a view to building significantly on the previous “Gate Agency” model that operated from the high street premises at 137 New Cross Road. The project will contribute directly to the following core NDC strategic outcomes:

EM1: Increase the percentage of New Cross Gate residents in employment to the borough average;

ED2: Increase the take-up of post-16 learning and training;

CD2: Increase the number of community groups and organisations directly involved with the delivery of services in the NDC area.

- 5.2 The project will be delivered by 170 Community Project, a key third sector agency within the New Cross Gate area, and will comprise a number of significant strands in order to meet the diverse needs of the local community. It will be delivered using a positive partnership model of working which has been designed to ensure all of the relevant local and regional strategic and delivery agencies pool resources to achieve shared outcomes.
- 5.3 The Project has been developed around the delivery of a set of core services that include the following:

- Careers Guidance – this involves an in-depth process that will provide a thorough analysis of a client's interests, skills and goals. It includes a scoping exercise with the client regarding the education, training or employment routes that they could progress to. The guidance service will encompass vocational jobsearch support, psychometric testing, interview techniques, mock interviews and CV Counselling;
- Entry to employment programmes - fast-track and long-term support comprising of jobsearch workshops delivered with private and public Human Resource specialists;
- Job-brokerage - including a dedicated worker to liaise with employers and link local residents to the appropriate vacancy opportunities. This post will work closely with the Employer Engagement Team from Job Centre Plus;
- The IAG worker will facilitate access to resources for jobsearch – i.e. computers, job-vacancy bulletins and newspapers. A comprehensive database providing a “screen and match” facility for job-vacancies and client tracking will be maintained and updated by the IAG worker;
- Information and support on accessing volunteering opportunities and work placements will be provided by a Skills Development Worker;
- Specialist advice for school leavers and young people. This will link with the local Connexions service, Princes Trust, Creative Training Opportunities for young people, local Secondary schools and sixth form colleges;
- Back to work benefit/debt advice - raising awareness of entitlements particularly for lone parents and disabled residents;
- Dedicated outreach work to promote the services to disadvantaged communities and which will deliver the service at the most accessible community venues;
- Signposting to a business support, advice and mentoring service. This will encompass support to small local employers who need advice regarding good employment practice and legislation.

5.4 These services will be delivered primarily through the 170 Works Project Team (details included in the Stage 2 Appraisal appendices), but they will work in partnership the key agencies to assist with that delivery where appropriate. Examples of key partnerships include:

- Working closely with the Employer Engagement Team from Jobcentre Plus on linking up local people to emerging vacancies;
- Job brokerage through alliances with Opening Doors, Jobnet, REED Employment, and Lewisham Council amongst others. Immediate priorities include the huge opportunities emerging from the East London Line Extension programme – active partnerships are evolving with Transport for London, Balfour Beatty, and Southern Rail;
- Key partnerships around back-to-work benefits advice will take place with Jobcentre Plus (Lone Parent Advisors and Disability Employment Advisors), Lewisham Advice Forum, Advice UK, and the Shaw Trust

(working specifically with NDC and 170 Works on Incapacity Benefit interventions);

- An example of partnership regarding careers guidance is that the London East Advice Partnership (LEAP) will refer clients living in the NDC area who approach Learn Direct for assistance to 170 Works and it has been agreed that LEAP will provide the project appropriate careers guidance materials and resources. Other partnerships that will centre on this guidance include Hatfield Skills Training Centre (170 Community Project), Training Access Project (NDC), Opening Doors, and Lewisham College.
- 5.5 170 Works will have sufficient staff resources to enable workers on the project to network effectively with the aforementioned projects. The project's client tracking system will ensure that client feedback is obtained on levels of client satisfaction with referral agencies. This information will be evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that the project is working in partnership with organisations that are providing an adequate quality of service to residents. The project will also obtain feedback from organisations it works with on their overall level of satisfaction with 170 Works
- 5.6 Existing providers of IAG relating to employment within the NDC area are generally project-based and are disconnected from major progression pathways into employment. This project proposes setting up a central identifiable hub of expertise in relation employment advice and brokerage. A major strength of 170 Works is that it will link community sector knowledge and flexibility in responding to client's needs with statutory and mainstream providers thereby maximising opportunities for residents.
- 5.7 The project will work according to the Matrix Standard. 170 have held the Matrix Quality Mark since 2003. The Matrix standard is the national quality standard for any organisation that delivers information, advice and/or guidance on learning and work. It was introduced to ensure that information, advice and guidance services funded by the government are of a high standard. The Matrix standard consists of eight elements, four focused on how a service is delivered and four focused on how a service is managed. It stipulates good practice requirements in relation to staff qualifications, work and organisational policies/ procedures and referral mechanisms
- 5.8 The target groups for this project have been identified from a combination of the needs as perceived by 170 Community Project during their previous employment-based service provision and data from the recent NDC Employment and Enterprise Strategy Review. The groups are:
- Lone Parents;
 - Refugees;
 - Local people with disabilities/long-term limiting illness;

- Over 50's;
- Young People, esp. those *not in education or training* (NEET);
- BME Groups;
- Long-term unemployed;
- Residents with ESOL/Basic Skills Needs.

The project will recognise that individuals in each of the above groups have a wide range of skills, backgrounds and circumstances. With appropriate guidance and support we will aim to assist them to achieve their aspirations. The project will use all relevant local data that is appropriate to target these groups as effectively as possible. The team will also inform and influence partners in terms of addressing resources appropriately.

There are numerous documents and sources of data that clearly demonstrate the need for this project and provide the context for its appraisal. The vision for the Employment Theme from the original 10 year NDC Delivery Plan is "*New Cross Gate will be a vibrant, thriving place, with a sustainable and diverse economy and jobs and training opportunities for local people, particularly the most disadvantaged*" (Aiming High for New Cross Gate, March 2001).

The 170 Works Project fits well with the original vision as outlined above. The project seeks to target specific groups and will use its expertise and knowledge of the local communities that has been built up and developed by 170 Community Project over the past three decades. The 170 Works Project Team has been designed to offer a comprehensive and seamless service to these target clients – a service which encompasses employer liaison, information, advice and guidance, skills development and benefits advice.

5.9 The development of this project has included a comprehensive analysis of the lessons learned from the previous "core" NDC employment project – the "Gate Employment & Enterprise Agency" which was operated in-house and directly employed three posts – an Employment Advisor, Business Advisor, and Social Enterprise Officer. Specifically the 170 Works Project has directly addressed the key issues outlined in the evaluation, including the core areas around:

- Lack of clarity regarding staff roles and responsibilities;
- The need for a more coherent system of referral links;
- A more comprehensive procedure for tracking beneficiary progress;
- The necessity to implement a robust programme of outreach work to reach the most disadvantaged groups in the area.

5.10 A full Employment and Enterprise Strategy Review was carried out during the summer of 2006 and the subsequent strategy and action plan was presented to the NDC Board in late 2006. A number of key interventions were recommended including:

- Training to get people job ready (essential)
- Employment advice and information (essential)
- Local labour initiatives (important)
- Employment support (important)
- Discretionary fund (desirable)

The 170 Works project has been designed to fully implement the above interventions, and will have a multi-skilled team able to contribute positively to the main strategic outcome. It has adopted the core target groups as identified during the Review and has been developed to directly address the key barriers identified. This project has also taken full note of the contents of the revised Employment and Enterprise Strategy 2006-11 and has been assembled so that it shares its priorities and strategic directions.

This project fits well with the current outline strategy for addressing the LAA Economic Development and Enterprise Targets as outlined in the final report (Dec 2006) compiled by Ancer Spa Consultants. The first priority of the strategy is to focus on an “Integrated Employment Support Programme” which should have a focus on the following:

- Focused engagement to access the hard to reach
- Information, advice and guidance
- Pastoral support
- ESOL and basic skills
- Work preparation courses
- Vocational skills training
- Job placement
- Tracking support to onward progression

These activities are intended to focus on the first “key stream” of the LAA Economic and Enterprise block: “Increase employment rates in the most disadvantaged areas and for the most disadvantaged groups”. Both NDC representatives and 170 Works will seek to maximise the potential benefits of engaging as closely as possible with this LAA Block as it develops – the 170 Works project has the potential to become a valuable grass-roots voice in terms of influencing and improving policy at a local level from its experience gained in New Cross Gate.

- 5.11 The 170 Works Project will be addressing issues with the advantage of having a comprehensive set of data and statistics that provide a good picture of the current profile of its clients. That data includes information taken from the NDC MORI Household Survey carried out every two years (2006 being the most recent), and statistics from the Social Disadvantage Research Centre (SDRC) at Oxford University, which provides local worklessness data to the 39 NDCs nationally. The most recent data confirms that the NDC area has particular issues around incapacity benefit claimant levels, the long-term nature of

unemployment for many clients, and the number of householders defined as “economically active”, which shows a sharp drop since 2004 and compares unfavourably with the comparable national rate. The Stage 2 Appraisal Form includes a more detailed picture of the profiled client base.

- 5.12 The project has great potential in terms of developing a social enterprise arm focusing on recruitment and consultancy services that could (long-term) potentially subsidise the guidance and employability skills arm of the project. 170 Community project are looking to adopt recruitment agency model called “Slivers of Time” This model, championed by DCLG (Department for Communities and Local Government) and rolled out in neighbouring Newham, provides a golden opportunity for the 170 Works Project in terms of sustainability and impact. It is a web-based system whereby local people (“sellers”) are identified and after vetting, join a recruitment pool of people that have relatively small spaces of time in which they are available for work (hence “slivers of time”). The project will seek to develop key strategic partnerships and identify any opportunities to become a partner in future mid and large-scale bidding opportunities such as LEGI or Invest to Save (ISB). The Project Manager will also investigate the potential for bidding for other complementary funding (for example, from LEAP) that will enable the project to work with clients from a wider catchment area (e.g. the North or whole of the Borough, or a collaboration with neighbouring Boroughs), as well as identify the possibility of key partners delivering frontline services alongside the 170 Works Project Team (where appropriate).

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The London Borough of Lewisham (LBL) is acting in the capacity of the Accountable Body for the NDC programme. The LBL undertakes to maintain effective arrangements for safeguarding public money, including the maintenance of a clear line of responsibility and accountability for receipt and payment of the associated funds. Income and expenditure is managed through LBL's financial management system and is subject to the Council's Constitution, including financial regulations and Contract Procedure Rules.
- 6.2 A robust project appraisal process ensures that proposed projects contribute to meeting the objectives and outcomes set out in the Delivery Plan, that there is clear and demonstrable accountability and that projects' represent good value for money and protects the public interest.
- 6.3 The Executive Director for Resources staff are involved in undertaking stage two project appraisals.
- 6.4 There are no growth commitments to the LBL arising from this project. Once funding is agreed the cost of the project will be met entirely from

Government grant funding and should have no specific cost implications for the LBL.

- 6.5 New Cross Gate NDC contribution towards the project cost over the project over the next three years is £688,767 and will be met from NDC–revenue grant monies and contained within the overall agreed cost of the programme.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 The Council is the Accountable Body in this NDC programme, which means that while the Council acts in that role on behalf of the Partnership, the legal liability remains that of the Council. As the Accountable Body, the Council is responsible for ensuring the proper use of NDC funds in accordance with the terms of grant and requirements of GOL. The Council has duties to ensure that there are in place robust project appraisal, financial, monitoring and other procedures.
- 7.2 As the Accountable Body, the Council has to enter into legally binding project agreements with the delivery agents, which will deliver the programme set out in the annual delivery plan. The delegation of authority sought in this report is intended to put in place administrative arrangements to assist with this. The Council's Constitution still needs to be complied with, in relation (for example) to approval of contractual arrangements not delegated in accordance with this report.
- 7.3 The Council's powers to participate in the New Cross Gate NDC programme are primarily those contained in section two of the Local Government Act 2000. This power allows the Council to do anything considered likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the social, economic or environmental wellbeing of their area.
- 7.4 The NDC guidance requires consideration to be given by the Partnership to the way in which their relationship to the Accountable Body is structured, and that structure would usually deal with issues such as voting rights, conflicts of interest and so on. These issues have been dealt with by the Terms and Reference which govern the NDC Partnership and which the Accountable Body have agreed.

8. Crime and Disorder implications

- 8.1 None directly from this project.

9. Equalities Implications

- 9.1 The main aims of the NDC programme are to address inequalities in service provision and amongst groups / individuals within the New Cross Gate area.

9.2 The NDC promotes equal opportunities and all organisations that work with the NDC must have policies and procedures in place that address equalities and diversity.

10. Environmental Implications

10.1 The NDC Programme under the Housing and Environment theme has a strategic priority to create safer, greener and cleaner public spaces.

10.2 All projects are assessed in light of energy / waste management systems or sustainable design and how any negative effects are minimised. Projects under this theme complement or directly promote the Councils Environmental Objectives.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The 170 Works Project Application - Stage 2 (approved at the 22/01/07 Appraisal Panel) is attached for information at Appendix One. The New Cross Gate Employment & Enterprise Theme Strategy 2006 – 2011 is also attached for information at Appendix Two. Any enquiries on either of these documents can be directed to Matt Parsonage – Employment & Enterprise Programme Manager at New Cross Gate NDC (Regeneration Directorate) extension 49305.

The 2007-8 Delivery Plan (Year 7) is currently in draft form but can be accessed for information purposes through Clive Wilson – Chief Executive of New Cross Gate NDC (Regeneration Directorate) extension 43824.

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