

Report to: **Executive**
Date: **22 November 2005**
Report of: **Executive Member for Organisational Development**
Subject: **North East District Councils Capacity Building Funding**
Ward: **All**

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To inform Members of a successful bid from North East Councils for capacity building funding to deliver a programme of Officer and Member development across the District Councils in Durham and Northumberland, and further to obtain approval for Easington to be the host employer for the post of Project Coordinator to facilitate implementation of the programme.

2.0 Consultation

The collaborative group of Northumberland and Durham District Councils, which formulated the successful bid, is co-chaired by Bill Batey of Alnwick, and our own Chief Executive. Our Authority has therefore played a key role in successfully obtaining this funding and Management Team are keen to progress implementation of the programme. The relevant Trade Unions have also been consulted.

3.0 Background

3.1 During 2004, a collaborative group consisting of the District Councils in Northumberland and Durham came together to consider issues in relation to Organisational Development, management of change and capacity building, specifically relevant to District Councils in County Durham and Northumberland. The group agreed to develop a bid to the regional capacity building fund to support joint working for the Districts on these issues.

3.2 A bid was developed over a period of months, including wide consultation, and was agreed for submission by all 13 District Councils. In September 2005, the group were informed that the bid had been approved as the first scheme to be funded from the region's £5.4m allocation for improvement funding

3.3 This is very good news for the Districts and is an opportunity to drive forward with our own Organisational Development Programme, making use of these wider initiatives and training where appropriate.

The approved bid covers the key themes of:-

- Building Capacity
- Improving Leadership Skills
- Improving Service Delivery
- Improving Community Engagement and Well-being

A programme of officer and member development is envisaged, totalling an approved expenditure of £554,400 over a three year period. This does not need to be matched by District contributions as it has been argued that this will be achieved by engagement and commitment to the programme itself.

4.0 Development of the programme

- 4.1 A full-time Project Coordinator whose role will be to implement the Capacity Building Initiative and ensure full engagement by all Districts in the Region will coordinate the Programme.

Easington has offered to act as both the contract holder and employer of the Project Coordinator because of our capacity and capability as an excellent council. Hosting this post also fits firmly with our own commitment to, and activities around 'Developing the Organisation' and 'Increasing the Influence of the Organisation'. The post of Project Coordinator has been evaluated using our scheme, and would be advertised as a Grade 12 post. The cost to the Council for hosting this position would be £47,330, although as already indicated, this money would be claimed back from the Capacity Fund. The post would be offered on a 3 year fixed term contract basis. The Job Description and Person Specification for the post are shown as Appendix "A" to this report.

It has been agreed by the Group of District Authorities that all liabilities in relation to both employment and redundancy costs would be met through the partnership arrangement. It has also been agreed that any additional/set up costs involved in the employment of the Project Coordinator post will be met through the external funding arrangements.

5.0 Recruitment Programme

- 5.1 As the position of Project Coordinator will be part of the Council's Establishment, recruitment for the post will be carried out in accordance with the Authority's agreed Recruitment and Selection procedure.
- 5.2 As it is approaching December and the Christmas break which is historically a difficult time to advertise, it is requested that in order for recruitment to commence immediately to avoid advertising just before Christmas, the report should not be subject to the "call – in" process and that this requirement be waived on this occasion.

6.0 The Capacity Building programme

- 6.1 Once appointed, the Project Coordinator will work with the Board overseeing the Capacity Building programme, to agree the delivery process. Once this has been determined, Members will be informed as to how the training and development identified will fit into our Council's requirements and what the delivery mechanisms will be.

7.0 Implications

7.1 Financial Implications

This report has no direct financial implications, as all costs associated with the employment of the Project Coordinator will be met through the external funding arrangements.

7.2 Legal Implications

This report has no direct legal implications, other than the usual liabilities associated with employment.

7.3 Policy Implications

This report has no direct policy implications.

7.4 **Risk Implications**

A risk assessment has been carried out.

8.0 **Communications**

This report has no direct communications implications.

9.0 **Corporate Implications**

9.1 **Corporate Plan and Priorities**

The Capacity Building programme will fit into priority two, Striving for Excellence in the Workplace, and with the Organisational Development Strategy.

9.2 **Service Plans**

See above.

9.3 **Performance Management and Scrutiny**

This report has no direct performance management implications.

9.4 **Sustainability**

There are no sustainability implications.

9.5 **Expenditure related to 'well-being' powers**

There are no direct well being implications.

9.6 **Human Resource Implications**

There are no HR implications.

9.7 **Information Technology**

There are no I.T. implications.

9.8 **Equality and Diversity**

There are no direct Equality and Diversity implications.

9.9 **Crime and Disorder**

There are no direct crime and disorder implications.

9.10 **Human Rights**

There are no human rights implications.

9.11 **Social Inclusion**

There are no direct social inclusion implications.

9.12 **Procurement**

There are no specific procurement issues.

10 Recommendations

- 10.1 Members of the Executive are asked to note the information in relation to the Capacity Building Funding
- 10.2 Members are further asked to agree to the Authority hosting the post of Project Coordinator on a three year fixed term contract basis
- 10.3 In addition, due to the constraints of advertising vacancies in December, Members are asked for the “call in” process to be waived on this occasion, to allow for recruitment to begin immediately.

Background Papers

Submission of the Durham and Northumberland Districts – Capacity Building Funding

Job Title: North East Districts Improvement Through Partnership - Project Co-ordinator

Grade : 12

Reporting To: The post will be part of the Corporate Development Unit and will report to the Assistant Chief Executive

Brief Outline of Duties:

The Project Co-ordinator will work alongside other North East agencies to both contribute to and benefit from the baseline council self-assessments supported by the Audit Commission, and the anticipated survey of frontline experience and improvement priorities. The District Councils are keen to build capacity through collaboration, particularly to support the improvement of those in the CPA poor and weak categories, and the Project Co-ordinator will be integral in facilitating this process.

The programme incorporates opportunities for mentoring, shadowing and coaching to ensure strong cultural exchange across councils and to maximise the numbers and levels of both members and managers who can access the programme.

Principal Duties:

- Develop and deliver an integrated programme of learning interventions for members and managers with options for councils to share programmes or access elements within their councils – action learning, workshops, accelerated improvement consortia, mentoring, coaching, secondments, job swaps, shadowing, to complement the programme developing across the region and ensure that the particular need of District Councils are met.
- Develop effective relationships with all 13 District Councils. Develop effective communications building on existing networks. Ensure stakeholders and partners are fully engaged and committed, including building relationships with other authorities and the Improvement Partnership.
- Produce business cases for each element of the programme and procure the most appropriate solution, including the specification of requirement and tender documentation as appropriate.
- For each element in the programme, develop project documentation and ensure projects are managed to the agreed project management standards.
- Brokering access to relevant national and local leadership project and performance management programmes and ensuring links are made. Ensuring the programme facilitates the National Agenda as set out in the Pay and Workforce Strategy.
- Report to the District Capacity Board and any project boards as appropriate, including regular progress of deliverables and outcomes.
- Identify an appropriate evaluation process which will ensure the outcomes of the partnership can be clearly measured and demonstrated. Work with each council to develop a baseline diagnostic of needs. Develop and maintaining a record of Organisational Development work throughout the life of the bid.
- Assist with the development and implementation of a marketing strategy for the partnership.

- Manage the partnership budget and produce regular monitoring reports to the partnership board.
- Manage and negotiate with suppliers and providers
- Develop and deliver elements of the programme as appropriate, using change management interventions which reflect the current learning around best practice to support the local authorities.
- Any other duties commensurate with grade

	Essential	Desirable	Evaluation
Education / Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educated to Degree or equivalent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relevant management qualification • Project Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application Form/Interview
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 years senior management experience in the public sector or similar • demonstrable experience in the management of complex projects • demonstrable experience of managing change in a complex environment • delivery of a wide range of training and facilitation techniques • working in a multi-agency partnership • working at senior level with officers and elected members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • marketing and promotion • research and evaluation • knowledge of Action Learning • procurement of external providers • budget management • organisational development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment process
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • excellent communication skills in writing, speaking and listening • excellent interpersonal skills • ability to work across all levels in an organisation and with a wide range of organisations • presentation skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of ICT, in particular MS-Office • negotiating and influencing skills • working with elected members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection process/Interview
Personal Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flexible approach to work • ability to travel all over County Durham and the County of Northumberland • self motivated • ability to motivate others 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview

Project Coordinator – Person Specification