

REPORT TO: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GROUP ON 13 AUGUST 2009

SUBJECT: BETTER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PILOT

BY: COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1. The report seeks to inform members of the Community Engagement Group on the successful bid submitted by the Partnership for a Better Community Engagement Pilot.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Community Engagement Group supports the development of the Moray Better Community Engagement local demonstration project.**
- 2.2 **Accepts regular progress reports from the newly established Steering Group.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Following discussion with the chair of The Community Engagement Group on the opportunity offered by the Scottish Government to bid to be part of a Better Community Engagement programme a bid was prepared and submitted to the Scottish Government.
- 3.2 As part of the government strategy to improve community empowerment the Government has made an investment in the development of an integrated programme to develop skills, learning and networking in relation to community empowerment and engagement.
- 3.3 The model for delivery of this project is a national development programme which will operate through a small number of local demonstration projects. Learning materials and programmes based on the Better Community Engagement Framework will be developed, to meet the needs of that delivering community engagement in local areas.
- 3.4 In May 2009, through a competitive process, Moray was chosen to host and develop a local demonstration project. Of the 26 applications received, Moray was one of 10 chosen from across Scotland.
- 3.5 The main purpose of the Moray bid is to better enable strategic development of agencies or projects, which currently provide community engagement training for staff to develop a range of learning products and tools, specific to local needs, but that could be used or adapted for use on a national basis.

- 3.6 At a local level, to better enable strategic development of the local demonstration project, it is expected that there will be input from local stakeholder organisations such as, the Community Planning Partnership, Community Health Partnership or Community Learning and Development Partnership. It is expected that such partnerships would have a sponsorship role, to support development of the local demonstration project. This would facilitate shared ownership of the project aims.
- 3.7 To support national level involvement in the project, an Advisory Group will be established, with representation from relevant stakeholders. The Advisory Group will provide advice and support to the strategic development of the project.
- 3.8 The Scottish Government has recruited a consultancy agency to support the national scheme. At a local level, 28 days consultancy time has been allocated to Moray until March 2011.
- 3.9 In July 2009, initial meetings took place with local organisations involved in community engagement and a further meeting took place with community based groups such as Area Forums, Community Councils, Village Hall Committees, Lhanbryde Community Challenge, Strathisla Regeneration Partnership etc.
- 3.10 It was agreed by those attending the meetings that the following activity should be progressed:
- Action planning covering the period highlighted above.
 - Training Need and Resource Analysis
 - Developing and testing of training materials and programme
 - Establishment of systems and structures for local sustainability Of community engagement training/support programmes
 - The establishment of a local community based steering group To oversee developments.
 - Regular progress reports to the Community Engagement Group
- 3.11 Regular reports on the progress of the pilot programme will be provided to the community engagement group

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Single Outcome Agreement

This initiative will contribute to National Outcome 11 in the Single Outcome Agreement; “we have strong resilient communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others” and to National Outcome 15; “our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people’s needs”.

(b) Policy and Legal

The Local Government Scotland Act 2003 requires that the community Planning Partnership engage with community bodies and organisations as part of the Community Planning process. In April 2008 the Scottish Government (SG) and Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) issued a joint statement of commitment to community empowerment.

(c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)

Any costs can be made from existing budgets. The work of the Local Demonstration Project will be supported by the staff of the Community Support Unit.

(d) Consultations

Those consulted include the Chair of the Community Engagement Group, Moray Area Forum, Joint Community Council, MVSO, Lhanbryde Challenge, Strathisla Regeneration Partnership, Moray Federation of Village Hall Committees, Health and Social Care Partnership, LEAD Scotland, Moray Equalities Forum have been made aware of the pilot.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 That following discussion with the Chair of the Community Engagement Group a bid for Moray to participate as a pilot in the Better Community Engagement Pilot has been successful and this report seeks to inform the Community Engagement Group of the bid and its progress.

Author of Report: Ian Todd, Community Support Unit Manager
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Background Papers: Expression of Interest Application to Scottish Government.

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