



Policy and Resources Committee - 8 November 2010

Groundwork North Northamptonshire

Summary

This report asks Members to decide on funding support for Groundwork North Northamptonshire for work on community development and regeneration projects in East Northamptonshire

Attachment(s)

None

1 Background

- 1.1 Groundwork North Northamptonshire (Groundwork) was established in 2005 to support community regeneration projects and operate as a local trust within the Groundwork UK organisation.
- 1.2 At its meeting 20 December 2004 (minute 317 refers) the former Resources Committee gave approval for a 6-year Service Level Agreement to be established with Groundwork, with £25,000 per annum sponsorship funding.
- 1.3 Groundwork has been a key partner in our Area Based Initiatives (ABIs) working closely with our Community Development Officers (CDO). It provides the practical and 'hands on' support through its community development workers, who have specialist skills to support youth and environmental projects.
- 1.4 At its meeting on 17 September 2007 (minute 137 refers), the Policy and Resources Committee approved an extension of the ABI programme in two other areas. This involved an increase in funding by a further £25,000 (project funding) to support the additional work needed.

2 Current funding arrangements

- 2.1 Groundwork receives core funding from the following district and county councils to support its management function: -

Local council	£ amount in 2010/11
Corby Borough	20,000
East Northamptonshire	25,000
Kettering Borough	5,000
Northamptonshire County	20,000

Concern has been raised as to whether the current core sponsorship levels are equitable and Groundwork is mindful to address this as part of securing future sponsorship support. Kettering Borough Council believes it provides various in kind support to Groundwork as part of its projects and consequently gives a much lower amount in core funding.

- 2.2 In addition to the £25,000 core funding, Groundwork receives a further £25,000 in project funding to support its work in the ABIs. All of the funding is governed by a Service Level Agreement that will terminate on 31 March 2011.

3 Progress and achievements with the current SLA

3.1 Groundwork took the lead on a number of key achievements with the first ABI project in Rushden Pemberton, which concluded in December 2008. These include:-

- The re-development of a piece of waste land to create a Pocket Park and improvements to a local play area using its environmental and landscaping resources. Groundwork was able to draw in additional funding for this through the 'Breathing Spaces' fund.
- Managed the construction of the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) at the Pemberton Centre and through its outreach youth workers provided coaching sessions and sports activities to divert young people from committing anti-social behaviour.

In the current ABI projects it is able to use its skilled workers to: -

- Respond to young people wanting improved facilities and activities in the Irthlingborough John Pyel area. It has utilised its Youth Team to engage young people across the area and develop a Youth Club to support this.
- Engage local residents in the re-use of a redundant garage site in the Rushden Hayden area. A community-led 'skip gardening' project has emerged from this.

3.2 Rushden Hayden ABI has a Residents' Group called Hayden FLAG, which is developing its programme of activities. The intensive work is due to complete July 2011 and it is felt important that Groundwork continues to support this work.

3.3 Progress with the Irthlingborough John Pyel ABI suffered with changes in the Council's Community Development Officers co-ordinating the project. However Groundwork was able to provide additional support during the gaps when a CDO was not present. This project is due to complete late 2011.

3.4 In addition to the ABIs, Groundwork's Executive Director is a Board member of ENable (Local Strategic Partnership) and leads on the community engagement priority in the Sustainable Communities Strategy. As an organisation Groundwork is well placed to support future developments around the localism and Big Society agendas.

4 Options for further support

4.1 The position of other councils in Northamptonshire regarding future funding for Groundwork is not known. However Groundwork is extending its operating area to the whole of Northamptonshire. If it can secure additional sponsorship funding, it believes a more equitable balance, likely to be in the region of £10,000 per council, could be achieved.

4.2 Taking into account our current position with the ABIs and the developments around localism and big society, the options available for further support to Groundwork are:

Option	Potential impacts	Financial implications
Option 1 (proposed) Short term funding with a 1-year SLA	Groundwork would be able to provide support in the latter stages of each ABI project and retain a presence in East Northamptonshire to support any future projects around localism and big society.	Provision will be needed in the 2011/12 budget for: Proposed core funding £10,000 Proposed project funding £10,000 Budget saving for 2011/12 - £30,000

Option 2 - Discontinue with funding beyond 31 March 2011	Groundwork's support role in our ABI work beyond 31 March 2011 would cease Groundwork would almost certainly withdraw from East Northamptonshire, thus losing skilled resources to support future community regeneration around the localism and big society agendas	No further budget provision would be needed
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4.4 It is felt that option 1 will retain a support role from Groundwork during the year for the ABI projects and the developments with localism and big society. The reduction of the core funding is in-line with Groundwork's intension to get more councils on board. Reducing the project funding reflects the tailing off of the intensive work in the ABIs. There will also be a saving of £30,000 in 2011/12.

4.5 If Members are minded to approve option 1 its current SLA will be extended to run 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012. Given that the long-term plans for community regeneration are to be developed, provision will be added to the SLA for the recovery of any funding should Groundwork's role cease at anytime during the year.

5 Recommendations

Members are recommended to approve:

1. Extending Groundwork's current SLA by 1-year to run 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012 with the provisions set out in 4.5 above.
2. That funding for Groundwork in 2011/12 is set at £10,000 core and £10,000 project, with provision made in the 2011/12 budget.

Implications:		
Corporate Outcomes or Other Policy/Priority/Strategy		
Good Quality of Life	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Good Reputation <input type="checkbox"/>
Good Value for Money	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	High Quality Service Delivery <input type="checkbox"/>
Effective Partnership Working	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Strong Community Leadership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Effective Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knowledge of our Customers and Communities <input type="checkbox"/>
Employees and Members with the Right Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours		<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:		<input type="checkbox"/>
Decision(s) would be outside the budget or policy framework and require full Council approval		<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial	There are no financial implications at this stage	<input type="checkbox"/>
	There will be financial implications – see paragraph 4.2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	There is provision within existing budget	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Decisions may give rise to additional expenditure at a later date	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Decisions may have potential for income generation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Risk Management	An assessment has been carried out and there are no material risks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Material risks exist and these are recorded at Risk Register Reference - inherent risk score - residual risk score -	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff	There are no additional staffing implications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Additional staff will be required – see paragraph	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equalities and	There will be no impact on equality (race, age, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation) or human rights implications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Human Rights	There will be an impact on equality (see categories above) or human rights implications – see paragraph <input type="checkbox"/>				
Legal	Power: Local Government Act 2000				
	Other considerations:				
Background Papers:					
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Date: 15 October 2010					
CFO		MO		CX	

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