

Report to: Cabinet
Regeneration Panel

Date: 11 December 2008
21 January 2009

Subject: Bickershaw Family Employment Project and Evaluation
Centre

Report of: Executive Director – Environmental Services

Contact officer: Christine Bainbridge 01942 828960

Purpose / summary: To seek approval to Wigan Council managing additional revenue and capital income and expenditure which is aligned to working neighbourhoods fund (WNF) and sourced from the coalfields regeneration trust (CRT) and English partnerships (EP) to deliver the Bickershaw family employment and education centre project.

Alternative options considered and reason for selecting the one recommended: Options for the CRT or EP to manage the programme were considered. Option agreed on the basis that the project is delivering against Wigan local area agreement (LAA) targets linked to the worklessness strategy.

Recommendation / decision: That Cabinet approve the economic regeneration office (ERO) to manage the project on behalf of Wigan Council.

Key Decision: This report involves a key decision within ground(s) 4.

The decision made as a result of this report will be published within **48 hours** and cannot be actioned until **seven working days** have elapsed, i.e. before 22 December 2008

This item is included in the Forward Plan.

Risks / Implications:	The project will be delivered by the adult services department, Wigan Council and will be managed as an addition to the worklessness programme which has all the necessary financial and programme management procedures in place. As such risk will be minimised.
Financial:	Additional income ERO of £75,000 for project management fees over the next 3 years sourced from the CRT and english partnerships.
Staffing:	This income will enable ERO to maintain current staffing levels.
Policy:	N/A
Equal Opportunities - Has a Diversity Impact Assessment been conducted?	N/A
Wards affected:	Leigh West, Abram, Hindley Green, Atherleigh wards will all be impacted by the project.

Property Implications – Does the proposal involve a reduction, addition or change to the Council’s asset base or its occupation?

No

If yes, have the property implications been agreed with the Corporate Property Officer?

Does this proposal have significant implications for the Council and the local population?

A diversity impact assessment is not necessary at this stage, however, equality and diversity implications have been considered when producing this report.

Does this proposal involve a new policy or procedure or significant changes to an existing policy or procedure?

A diversity impact assessment is not necessary at this stage, however, equality and diversity implications have been considered when producing this report.

Has the Service Director - Borough Solicitor confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council’s Constitution?	Yes
Has the Service Director - Corporate Services confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council’s budget?	Yes
Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council?	No

For Cabinet reports only :

Categorisation of the report:	x
Discussion leading to a decision	
Monitoring	
Sharing for corporate understanding	

	x
Discussion	
Decision	x
Information	

Tracking/Process:

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
Regeneration 21/01/09		11/12/08	

There are no Background Papers to this Report within the meaning of Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Proper Officer Martin Kimber

Date 24 November 2008

1.0 Background:

- 1.1 The site of the former Bickershaw colliery is undergoing significant regeneration works funded through the EP coalfields programme. Aligned to this capital investment are a series of action plans which have been developed to maximise the positive impact of the regeneration on surrounding communities.
- 1.2 The employment and training action plan has been developed by ERO and ERO are leading on the delivery of interventions in the plan.
- 1.3 At a national level both EP and CRT want to align revenue resources to major coalfield capital investment projects to facilitate additional works such as those detailed in the Bickershaw action plans.
- 1.4 Links to the Wigan Council worklessness strategy are integral to the delivery of the employment and training action plan for Bickershaw.

2.0 Proposals:

- 2.1 A project to address worklessness within the communities surrounding Bickershaw and which supports delivery of the employment and training action plan has been developed by CRT in partnership with EP and Wigan Council. The family employment initiative will support local people who are workless back in to training and employment taking a holistic approach to tackling barriers to work.
- 2.2 The project also includes a site based education and training centre. This will facilitate training linked to the planned developments at Bickershaw and be a venue for a range of community development activities designed to engage people in the project and its development and promote full use of the facilities that will be on offer. This currently constitutes a small part of the project with resources identified at approximately 5% of the total current budget.
- 2.3 This project was tendered earlier this year and was won by Wigan Council adult service department, information, advice and guidance team working in partnership with other local delivery organisations.
- 2.4 Funding up to £1.1million has been approved by CRT and EP. This is predominantly revenue, though there is a small allocation of capital of approximately £90,000. Working neighbourhood fund resources of £525,000 have already been approved and aligned.
- 2.5 ERO are leading on the delivery of the Councils worklessness strategy and are managing the WNF programme.
- 2.6 The proposal is that ERO manages this project including the additional resources from EP and CRT as part of the worklessness programme. Additional funding of £75,000 from EP and CRT has been identified to fund the additional programme management work.
- 2.7 The programme management will be undertaken by existing staff in the policy and programme management team within ERO and the additional programme management funding will enable us to maintain existing staffing levels. The work will be undertaken in line with the rigorous financial and programme

management procedures established by this team and adopted in the management of other funding programmes such as single regeneration budget and European funding.

2.8 The project will be managed as part of the working neighbourhoods fund programme.

3.0 Alternative options considered and reason for the recommended option:

3.1 Options for the CRT or EP to manage the project were considered. The chosen option was agreed on the basis that the project is delivering against Wigan LAA targets linked to the worklessness strategy. ERO already has in place the necessary financial and programme management procedures to manage this.

4.0 Recommendations:

4.1 Cabinet members consider and approve the recommendation.

Martin Kimber
Director of Environmental Services
RP/ER/CB/LC/33.0P
24 November 2008