

EAST AYRSHIRE

COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP BOARD: 23 SEPTEMBER 2010

**COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP- EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND (ESF) PRIORITY 5
FUNDING APPLICATION 2011-2013**

**Report By Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services,
East Ayrshire Council**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board with information relating to the next round of European Funding applications and the proposed bid under the auspices of the CPP.
- 1.2 To inform the CPP Board that it had been necessary within a very short timescale to prepare and submit a Stage 1 application by 20 August 2010, providing basic outlines of the proposed CPP application for European Social Fund (ESF) Priority 5 funding.
- 1.3 To inform the CPP Board that, following assessment, the Scottish Government confirmed on 6 September 2010 that the East Ayrshire CPP application can now proceed to the second stage of the process, which requires a complete application to be submitted by no later than 12.00 noon on Friday 24 September 2010.
- 1.4 To seek approval to proceed with the detailed CPP Stage 2 application to the Scottish Government for ESF funding for the period 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2013.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The impact of the current global economic crisis on Lowlands and Uplands Scotland (LUPS) has been significant and has led to the addition of the new ESF Priority 5 to the European Social Fund programmes. This priority makes a radical change to the current ESF programme and is established to address critical issues around “creating a strategic skills pipeline for future jobs and a reinvigorated economy for Scotland”. The new priority will encompass all remaining balance funds from the current ESF priorities 1, 2 and 3, offering an opportunity to concentrate on the creation of new access structures and plans for the future.
- 2.2 The overall aim of Priority 5 is to equip individuals with the core, transferable and vocational competencies and skills they require to enter and progress within the labour market, and to prepare them for the job opportunities of the future through a demand led strategic skills led pipeline approach that is sensitive to the differing opportunities and needs within the various parts of the LUPS area.
- 2.3 The Stage 1 application submitted was an outline proposal only and was not binding to continue to Stage 2.

3. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

3.1 As with the current Community Planning Partnership ESF/ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) Improving Opportunities project, the new CPP Priority 5 project will be managed by East Ayrshire Council's (EAC) Skills Development and Employability Service and will include the following partners (where * denotes a new partner):

- Skills Development Scotland
- Jobcentre Plus*
- Apex Scotland*
- yipworld.com*
- Volunteer Centre*
- Centrestage*
- NHS Ayrshire and Arran*
- The Prince's Trust*
- The Zone*
- The Wise Group
- Workers' Educational Association (WEA)
- EAC More Choices More Chances*
- EAC Community Learning and Development*
- EAC Early Years*
- EAC Libraries*
- East Ayrshire Woodlands
- East Ayrshire Carers Centre*.

3.2 This is an extension of the partnership arrangements that currently exist and includes an extended role for the Third Sector.

3.3 Kilmarnock College and Ayr College are delivery partners in the current approved ESF CPP Improving Opportunities Project, which concludes on 30 June 2011. Following a review by the Scottish Government, it has been agreed that all college activity will be funded within a bid led by the Scottish Funding Council under the new Priority 5 funding model. Activity to be delivered by colleges will be included within local strategic skills pipelines. Colleges will continue to be a key strategic partner and deliver opportunities for unemployed people and young people at risk of becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) who live in East Ayrshire; however, the activity will be funded within the Scottish Funding Council bid.

3.4 The ESF grant will provide valuable financial support to all partners involved, helping them to provide additional services within the proposed strategic skills pipeline.

3.5 The strategic skills pipeline involves a five stage approach to delivering employability services as follows:

1. Referral and Engagement
2. Barrier Removal
3. Vocational Activity
4. Employer Support, Engagement and Job Matching
5. In Work Aftercare and Skills Development.

3.6 The enhanced partnership detailed at 3.1 brings new partners and additional employability activities into the CPP bid for funding. The ESF grant will also allow for capacity building in the Third Sector organisations involved.

4. FINANCE

- 4.1 The estimated project costs for the two year period is **£7,341,400** and the ESF grant sought is **£3,303,630**, reflecting a 45% grant funding intervention rate.
- 4.2 Match funding across the partnership of **£4,037,770** is required and discussion with all partners has confirmed this total.

5. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 The project enhances the delivery of the outcomes of the Community Plan theme of Delivering Community Regeneration.
- 5.2 It supports both National and Local Outcomes, including developing employability initiatives; supporting the social economy; and improving development and employability.
- 5.3 The strategic skills pipeline approach allows for local solutions for local needs, delivering skills required where opportunities for employment exist.
- 5.4 Young people, including those in the More Choices More Chances (MCMC) cohort, single and lone parents, people coming off Incapacity Benefit and other long term unemployed people have been identified as those most in need of support in East Ayrshire.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The Community Planning Partnership Board is requested to:
 - i) note the action already taken to lodge an interest in Stage 1 of the Priority 5 bid;
 - ii) confirm approval for East Ayrshire Council's Skills Development and Employability Service to proceed with the detailed Stage 2 ESF application on behalf of the Community Planning Partnership;
 - iii) note the proposed partners included in the project; and
 - iv) otherwise note the content of this report.

Elizabeth Morton
Depute Chief Executive/
Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services
East Ayrshire Council
9 September 2010