

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE – 1 NOVEMBER 2006

EXTENSION OF MEDIATION SERVICE CONTRACT

Report by the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The report seeks approval for the extension of the contract with SACRO to provide Mediation Services for Neighbour Disputes and Homelessness.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Following on from the successful bid for BSSAC (Building Safe Strong Attractive Communities) funding in 2004, the Council placed a tender for the provision of independent Mediation Services for Neighbour Disputes. It was decided to incorporate Homeless mediation into the contract, recognising the benefits that negotiating the return of young people to supportive families can offer to both the young person and to the community, in general.
- 2.2 The term of the contract was for one year with a single year extension. The successful bidder was SACRO and the contract commenced on 1 December 2004. The single year extension was agreed and the contract is, therefore, due to terminate on 30 November 2006.
- 2.3 The contract is paid for with BSSAC funding which has been agreed until March 2007, with additional funding until March 2008 being dependent upon satisfactory progress being made towards achieving the targets established in the Outcome Agreement. It is anticipated that the targets within the Outcome Agreement will be met and that the additional funding will be confirmed.

3. EXTENDING THE CONTRACT

- 3.1 The Mediation Service plays a prominent role in tackling antisocial behaviour and forms an important part of the Antisocial Behaviour Strategy. Accordingly, we would seek to continue to offer an independent Mediation Service.
- 3.2 In view of the fact that funding can only be anticipated until March 2008, and given the specialist nature of the service and that there are comparatively few organisations which can offer this service, it is proposed that the existing contract should be extended until March 2008, in accordance with section 9.3 of the Council's Standing Orders Relating to Contracts.
- 3.3 The contractor has indicated that they would be prepared to continue to provide this service on the same terms and conditions with an increase being restricted to the annual rate of inflation.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The continued provision of the service would be funded from the BSSAC financial allocation from the Scottish Executive. The annual cost of this service is £60,000. The extension to the contract would add an additional cost of the level of Retail Price Index as at 30 November 2006.

5. POLICY/ LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The provision of an independent Mediation Service forms part of the Council's Antisocial Behaviour Strategy.

6. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The provision of an independent Mediation Service contributes to Community Safety objectives set out in the Community Plan.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 It is recommended that Members:

- (i) agree that the existing Mediation Services contract with SACRO be extended until 31 March 2008.

William Stafford
Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

CMCA/LA
9 October 2006

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Neighbourhood Disputes/Homeless Mediation Service Contract PS/04/42
2. Corporate Governance Committee 8 June – Review of the Council's Standing Orders Relating to Contracts.

Members wishing further information should contact Gerry Darroch, Housing Services Manager on 01563 554873.

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