

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORT**

To: REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE	Subject: NLP Employability Service – Specialist Job Brokerage Fund (North Lanarkshire’s Working Engagement Fund)	
From: HEAD OF REGENERATION SERVICES		
Date: 17 February 2010	Ref: 1489	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval to tender for the award of 12 contracts through the North Lanarkshire Partnership (NLP) Specialist Job Brokerage Fund. The fund awards contracts to organisations for the delivery of employability services, specifically focussing on the hardest to reach client groups within North Lanarkshire

2. Background

- 2.1 The Specialist Job Brokerage Fund is a flexible one year funding allocation of £300,000 to help deliver on targets for the NLP Employability Service. The fund will look to award twelve contracts with a value of £25,000 each over the period until March 2011.
- 2.2 The fund will look to encourage applications from voluntary and third sector organisations for the delivery of employability services for the hardest to reach unemployed residents within North Lanarkshire. Best Value guidance for local authorities specifically required consideration to be given to the role that voluntary and third sector organisations can play in providing goods and services to, and on behalf of Councils.

3. Progress with current Job Brokerage Fund contracts

- 3.1 The Specialist Job Brokerage Fund was tendered in 2008/09 for delivery of Employability focused services aimed at the hardest to reach client groups within North Lanarkshire and resulted in the award of sixteen contracts to third sector organisations. The Specialist Job Brokerage Fund aims to increase referrals into the NLP employability service and improve service delivery across the model, through utilising the particular expertise and experience of the voluntary and third sectors. Through the contracts awarded, targets for the engagement of hardest to reach client groups were 370 individuals across the sixteen projects. To date 363 individuals have been referred through the Job Brokerage Fund.
- 3.2 While the activity associated with the award of the 2008/09 Specialist Job Brokerage Fund has not fully completed, the current results provide a sound justification for repeating this tender process to cover activity in 2010/2011. As a new initiative the following positive benefits have been realised:
- Achievement of overall objective of creating 370 referrals into mainstream employability services from the most hard to reach unemployed residents.
 - A number of additional positive outcomes for participants.
 - A positive response from the voluntary sector on the process and method involved in procuring these services

As a result the North Lanarkshire Partnership is seeking to repeat the tender process carried out in 2009, with some minor changes to the tender specification based on the experience of the past 12 months. The fund will be renamed the North Lanarkshire’s Working Engagement Fund in order to better describe the objectives of the fund.

4. Timescale for tender process

4.1 The proposed timescale for the tender process is set out below:

Date	Activity
22/2/2010	Advert and invitation to tender issued
22/3/2010	Tender return date
1/4/2010	Evaluation of tenders completed
6/4/2010	Contract Award

5. Funding

Funding is included in phase 2 of North Lanarkshire's Working. The Scottish Government have agreed the award of funds and the detail of this is included in a separate committee report. The tendering of the contract is subject to the approval of the award by North Lanarkshire Council and the North Lanarkshire Partnership.

6. Recommendations

Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and approve:-

- i) Approve the tender process for the award of twelve contracts to undertake the delivery of employability services up to a maximum total value of £300k as outlined in this report.



Maureen McConachie
Head of Regeneration Services

Local Government Access to Information Act: for further information on this report please contact Vivienne Sawers, Economic Development Officer, (01698 302198)