

COMMUNITY & SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

18 JUNE 2014

REPORT OF HEAD OF COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

WHEELS TO WORK (W2W) PROGRESS AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform members on the progress of Wheels 2 Work Scheme and gain approval for the purchase of capital items amounting to £86K associated with delivering the Wheels to Work programme and in fulfilment of the allocated LSTF funding from Leicestershire County Council to Melton Borough Council.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That members note the progress of the W2W scheme and its development into one of the biggest W2W schemes in the country**
- 2.2 **That members approve the Project Mandate and Business Case attached as Appendices A & B respectively and recommend to the Policy, Finance & Administration Committee inclusion into the 2014/15 Capital Programme.**

3.0 KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The Wheels 2 Work (W2W) scheme, currently administered by Leicestershire County Council with Melton Borough Council as scheme partners, helps individuals overcome transport barriers that prevent them from accessing or maintaining employment or training, for example, young people living in rural areas or shift workers who do not have the use of a car or do not have convenient access to public transport.
- 3.2 The W2W scheme was launched over 8 years ago and has provided vehicles including motor scooters and electric scooters to more than 400 people. Since then, the scheme has expanded to include a training and storage facility at the council's workshop unit [name of unit], Compulsory Basic Training (CBT), scooter servicing and maintenance as well as local transport advice.
- 3.3 Melton Borough Council has joined the national Wheels 2 Work association that was established with funding from the Department of Transport. The association provides an opportunity to learn from others and to benchmark. The key developments since 2013 are as follows:
- New W2W website, a range of traditional and digital marketing and publicity has also been undertaken including: leaflet and poster distribution, social media campaigns, press releases and attendance at selected events and job fairs;
 - Good practice from national W2W guide has been successfully embedded into the local W2W scheme;
 - Participated in regional benchmarking exercise on costs and subsidy levels;
 - Completed a procurement exercise, in line with Melton's commitment to the Small Business Friendly Charter, leading to local suppliers being sourced to provide protective equipment, maintenance and servicing contracts to support the delivering the scheme.

3.4 Current Position

The Council has 148 scooters for hire. The latest situation is that 130 scooters are currently

on hire. Approximately 40 applications were received last month and this is expected to rise over the summer months.

Based on the first year data applications peak in May to August and again in October. The key issue is that we are unable to meet current demand as all scooters are hired out. As such the W2W scheme proposes to purchase 45 scooters (25 replacements and 20 new) and a van to assist with the delivery and collection of scooters in fulfilment of the W2W programme.

The costs associated with purchasing capital items, including vehicles, will be met in full by the LSTF programme funding managed by Leicestershire County Council. The LSTF funds are administered by Leicestershire County Council as the managing authority of the W2W Scheme covering Melton Borough as Scheme partners.

- 3.5 Clients currently pay on average £12.50 a week for the use of a scooter and they can keep the vehicle for a period of up to six months. The emphasis is on helping people to get established in a job or on a training course and they are encouraged to make their own arrangements for transport in the longer term.
- 3.6 To this end, the scheme proposes to make available for purchase by the W2W clients the current stock of 25 scooters and to work with local credit unions, for example, to arrange loans for clients to buy their moped at the end of the loan period if they wish to do so. This helps the client to save and to access a loan at a low interest rate and from a reputable source.
- 3.7 It is the view of Leicestershire County Council Scheme Manager that the purchase of proposed capital items is in accordance with the grant conditions and agreed vision for delivering the W2W programme.

4.0 POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are clear links to priorities within the corporate plan:
 - Support people and businesses through the economic downturn
 - Improving the well-being of vulnerable people
 - Improve quality of life for people living in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods
 - Meet the Economic needs of Borough

5.0 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The proposed purchases in support of the W2W project can be met from the LSTF Capital programme administered by Leicestershire County Council. It is proposed that this should be £86,000 for FY 2014/15.
- 5.2 At this stage, it is difficult to estimate the future requirement for capital and revenue funding and this will need to be reviewed on an annual basis in light of the availability of funding from other sources, such as the Big Lottery Reaching Communities Fund and any changes in the level of need for the project's services.
- 5.3 An exit strategy for 2015 and beyond is being developed. The scheme will be monitored to ensure the effective use of resources and that the level of output is consistent with the available funding. More generally, this is part of a range of initiatives that is being developed by the Council to help increase and sustain local employment and training.

9.2 ...

10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

10.1 There are significant environmental gains with reduced car journeys and carbon emissions through the use of electric scooters, bicycles and mopeds as a consequence of promoting and participating in the W2W scheme.

11.0 CONSULTATION

11.1 Extensive consultation has been undertaken with scheme partners, W2W clients, and other key stakeholders regarding delivery of the W2W programme.

12.0 WARDS AFFECTED

12.1 All wards are affected.

Contact Officer Rob Bindloss

Date: 29 May 2014

Appendices : Appendix A- Project Mandate
 Appendix B- Business Case

Background Papers: None

Reference : X : Committees\CSA\2014.15\180614\HR- W2W scheme progress