

WEST AREA COMMITTEE

3rd July 2008

REGENERATION ISSUES REPORT: FEEDBACK ON PROJECTS PREVIOUSLY FUNDED THROUGH STRATEGIC INITIATIVES BUDGET (SIB)

Report of the Chief Executive (Acting)

1.0 Purpose Of The Report

1.1 This report provides information to the Area Committee on expenditure from the Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB) on projects it has previously funded

2.0 Background

2.1 Each Regeneration Framework area has been allocated a minimum of £200,000 per annum over the last thirteen years. Over this period, therefore, the Framework area has been allocated a minimum of £2,732,920 in this way.

2.2 In order that the Area Committee can be kept informed of progress on projects it has previously funded as part of the SIB monitoring process, a programme of report backs has been scheduled.

3.0 Purpose of the Feedback Reports

3.1 The aim of the reports are to inform the Area Committee how the money it has been allocated through SIB has been used, how successful it has been in achieving its original objectives, and how the project will continue. Specifically, the reports have been asked to address the following key questions:

- How has the money has been used? How much was capital and revenue?
- What were the outcomes of the project? How has it helped to achieve the objectives identified in the original submission? Are there any statistics that will support the outcomes?
- What other funding the SIB allocation helped to attract?
- What are the key lessons learnt? What difference has the project made in comparison to other areas that did not have such funding? What added value did the project provide? Are there implications for existing service provision?

- Does the project need to continue? Has it come to its natural end? If not, how will it be funded? Has it been considered for mainstream funding? Have other funding sources been approached?
- 3.2 Once the presentation has been completed, Elected Members will be invited to ask any questions or offer comments concerning the project.
- 4.0 Feedback to this Committee**
- 4.1 At this Committee meeting, the following feedback report will be presented:
- Pallion Action Group's Outreach Welfare Rights Project, which was awarded £21,067 in April 2006.
- 4.2 An extract from the original application is attached as Annex 1.
- 5.0 Recommendations**
- 5.1 That this report be noted.

Background Papers

Strategic Initiatives Budget (SIB): Regeneration Issues Reports to previous Area Committees

Regeneration Framework Files, West

Outreach Welfare Rights Project

PROJECT TITLE: OUTREACH WELFARE RIGHTS PROJECT

SIB Requested:

Section 1: Application Requirements

1.1: Please note that this application will be presented to the relevant Area Committee for its consideration when determining your SIB Grant Application. The Agenda and the Minutes of the Area Committee Meeting will be available for inspection by members of the public. Please therefore ensure that your organisation is agreeable to the content of the information that is set out in the form.

The Application Form should be provided in either electronic (e-mail or floppy disc) or typed format.

If you have a problem with returning this form in either electronic or typed format, please contact the appropriate Area Regeneration Officer. Contact / address details are provided on the covering letter and in the Guidance Notes and Criteria and Project Guidelines

Please note that a representative of your organisation must be available to attend the pre-agenda and main committee meeting(s) to which this application is presented, as they may be required to answer questions. Failure to attend the meeting(s) may result in your application being deferred or rejected. Dates and Venues of future meetings are provided as supporting information.

1.2 Which Area Regeneration Framework(s) does the project cover? (please tick)

Coalfield	<input type="checkbox"/>	East	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	North	<input type="checkbox"/>
Washington	<input type="checkbox"/>	West	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	South	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 2: Sponsor Details

2.1 Name of Lead Organisation / Group

Pallion Action Group

2.2 Address of Lead Organisation / Group:

5 Eastmoor Road, Pallion, Sunderland, Tyne & Wear, SR4 6QW

2.3 Contact Name for Project:

Doreen Buckingham

2.4 Position in Organisation:

Centre Manager

2.5 Tel. Number: 0191 514 2011	2.6 Fax Number: 0191 565 7496	2.7 E-mail Address: pag5uk@yahoo.co.uk
2.8 Day to Day Contact Name / Details (if different to 2.3 above): N/A		
2.9 Legal Status of Organisation: Registered Charity Limited by Guarantee	2.10 Registered Charity Number (if applicable): 1064481	

Section 3 : Project Details

3.1 Project Title: (Please re-state title as per front sheet)

Outreach Welfare Rights Project

3.2 Project Start Date:

1st April 2006

3.3 Project End Date:

31st March 2007

3.4 Please describe the project:

The overall objective of the Project is to improve the quality of life for local residents in the targeted areas by increasing benefit take up and maximising personal and family incomes. The Project aims to support all with financial literacy, prioritising debt and managing their income.

The project aims to deliver an Outreach Welfare Rights Information and Advice Service that is accessible to all within five communities of the City of Sunderland.

The five outreach venues will be Pallion Action Group, Ford Surestart, Pennywell Community Centre, Millfield Health Centre and Hendon. The project is staffed by experienced welfare rights workers. In addition to the regular weekly advice sessions at each venue in Ford, Pallion, Pennywell, Millfield and Hendon, the team of one senior advice worker, one assistant advice worker and finance administrator, will provide information and awareness sessions on new benefits and benefits appropriate to specific groups.

Residents making enquiries as to how to access the service may have their enquiry dealt with over the telephone, with advice given directly. Otherwise, an appointment can be made for the client to see an advisor. Home visits may be appropriate for those with mobility problems.

3.5 What service does the organisation currently provide and how will this be complemented by the project?

The project benefits from the experience of the professional advice-giving of the senior advice worker, gained from 10 years plus of providing a service to Specialist Level of Community Legal Service Quality Mark.

The pilot project has become well established within the community, forging links with the local community networks and also statutory agencies to reach the target audiences within the community.

To date, the project has enabled approximately 200 residents to access information and services to improve their financial wellbeing. Within 10 months of the project operating, approximately £155,000 has been returned to the area in new claims and backdated benefits, to regenerate the local economy via its residents accessing the project.

7.5 What are the financial implications for the project should it not receive SIB funding?

- Downsize the outreach service available to the community
- Withdraw the service from the community

If funding from SIB was to be unsuccessful, the outreach welfare rights service, which has been a great success for the past year, would not continue. This would mean the exit of a now well-established and much needed service that has been provided for the community.

Trust and relationships with members of community would cease.

The proven benefits to the residents and to the community for the period January to October 2005 are as follows:

- During the past year, approximately 200 people have benefited from this service.
- The monetary gain for the community is approximately £155,000 in new claims and backdated benefits for the ten months operations to date. This money has benefited the overall economy of the area, giving people more to spend in their community.
- Over 70 home visits have benefited people who have disabilities or are house bound in some way.
- The senior advice worker has represented approximately 20 members of the community at tribunals.

If the project ceased to exist, this would no longer happen. The withdrawal of the service provided by the project would put even more pressure on the very few advice services that remain within the City of Sunderland.

Outreach Welfare Rights Project is the only service in the community providing a free, independent and confidential advice service in the area at Quality Mark level.

Feedback from clients already indicates how surprised and pleased residents are with our service: "I cannot thank you enough for all you have done for me". Currently, our service feedback forms from clients report 'very good' service and no complaints have been received.

7.6 When SIB expenditure is complete, how do you intend to continue this project?

Outreach Welfare Rights Project currently meets the requirements of the Community Legal Service Quality Mark standard for General Help with Casework in Welfare Benefits

The project is moving towards attaining Specialist Mark by excelling at its service, maintaining expertise and continuing professional development and ensuring it is able to provide the expert level of service required. This will strengthen the position of the project to apply for CLS funding from the CLS commission.

7.7 Provide a profile of projected costs:

Funding Source	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	Total Cost
SIB :				
Coalfield				
East		14,045		14,045
North				
South				
West		21,067		21,067
Washington				
Other Sources:				
1) Northern Rock		35,112		35,112
2) Surestart		24,780		24,780
Total Cost:		95,004		95,004

7.8 Please provide details of any 'in-kind funding (e.g Peppercorn rents), if included within the 'Other Sources' of funding shown above.

N/A

7.9 Please provide a breakdown of the Total cost to show the main areas of expenditure:

Please see attached Expenditure Budget for 2006-07