

# THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

## RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 3<sup>rd</sup> DECEMBER 2008

Agenda Item	
Report No	

### Report by Head of Policy & Performance Council Match funding for ESF Funding in 2009

#### **Summary:**

The Report asks Members to confirm Highland Council match funding for partner organisations applying for ESF from Highland & Islands Special Transitional Programme funding in 2009. Confirmation of match funding is required prior to the meeting of the Programme Advisory Committee in early January 2009.

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 A number of external organisations have used Highland Council funding as match funding for ESF. Invitations for the 2009 round of ESF applications were invited in October 2008. As indicated at the Resources Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> October there were suggestions that other partner funding to the organisations would change in 2009 putting the joint funding arrangements in doubt. Partners have now confirmed that they will continue funding at current levels for 2009, to be reviewed in the course of the year. On this basis Members are asked to confirm the Highland Council contributions as shown below.
- 1.2 The services provided by the organisations are an important part of the Council's Strengthening the Highlands Programme commitments to reducing poverty and assisting people into sustained employment, in particular –
- Increase the number of young people leaving school and moving into education, training or employment to 87% by the end of March 2009.
  - With our partners provide opportunities for Life Long Learning;
  - Work with the Scottish and UK Governments and partners to prevent and reduce poverty by supporting more people into sustained employment.
  - Maximising benefit from EU funding.

In turn these contribute to the Single Outcome Agreement targets of improving joint action with partners to improving employability; participation in national and local training programmes; community & social enterprise development.

## **2. PROJECT APPLICATIONS**

- 2.1 The Projects that are applying for ESF using the Council and other Partner contributions are shown in Appendix 1. The Council contributions have come from the core budgets of ECS, Social Work and local contributions through the Fairer Scotland fund in 2008 as shown. The amounts requested for 2009 from Council Services totals £464,000 The total value of the projects, if successful with Europe, will be in excess of £1.6m.

2.2 The projects shown in Appendix 1 provide a range of employability services in Highland. Some have been established for a number of years, others introduced more recently with support from the Council. The services have performed satisfactorily in meeting ESF targets and are part of a network supported and monitored by Council and Partner organisations – principally Skills Development Scotland and Jobcentre+. As indicated at the October meeting of this Committee and at the Building a Fairer & Healthier Seminar held on 18<sup>th</sup> November the range of services and providers will be reviewed as part of developing the Council’s approach to the deployment of the Fairer Scotland, EU and other funding over the next few years.

2.3 The requests for Council contributions for 2009 are summarised below -

PROJECT	Highland Council
<b>SHIRLIE Project</b> – voluntary organisation, core funding with funding partners THC; JC+ and SDS. Beneficiaries People with disabilities; school leavers and other groups.	ECS - £37,000 SW – £158,000
<b>NHS TAG (Training &amp; Guidance Unit)</b> - core funding, partners NHS & THC (SW) People recovering from mental illness.	SW - £131,000
<b>MERKINCH ENTERPRISE</b> - Local Social Economy organisation offering IT training. Local unemployed & returners	FSF - £19,000
<b>New Start Highland</b> - training & support programmes aimed at vulnerable people.	FSF - £48,000
<b>Barnardo's Works</b> - to assist young people who require additional support to access & maintain employment	FSF/SW - £60,000
<b>Workers Educational Association</b> - Step into Learning & Pre Voc Training. Migrants & Returners mainly women and deprived areas.	FSF - £11,000

2.5 The review of services will include discussions with Scottish Government and Highland & Islands Special Transitional Programme about the strategic use and targeting of EU and Partner funding. The Seminar held on 18<sup>th</sup> November outlined some of the issues to be addressed in developing a Highland Employability Strategy with a timetable of production of a draft strategy in February 2009, and the development of a joint procurement plan through 2009 for implementation by 2009/10. Joint procurement will involve aligning Council funding internally as well as with the principle partners of Jobcentre Plus; Skills Development; Higher and Further Education Institutions.

### 3. Resource implications

3.1 The Council's proposed contributions to these projects are shown in Appendix One. In each case these are contained in existing budgets. The maximum Service contributions are summarised as –

ECS	£ 37,000
Social Work	£289,000
Fairer Scotland	<u>£138,000</u> (based on 2008 contributions)
TOTAL	<u>£464,000</u>

The Fairer Scotland contributions include contributions made by local Partnerships and through 16+ Funding in 2008. Contributions will be conditional on final agreement on the level of service and all other partner funding, including ESF, are in place as shown. This will be the maximum match funding to be made available which will be calculated as a percentage of the total approved ESF project costs to ensure that Partner and Council contributions are in the proportions contained in the applications.

3.2 While agreeing funding at this stage commits the Council's funds for 2009 – not to do so will risk obtaining a further £1.2m investment in Highland employability services.

### 4. Recommendations:

Members are asked to approve funding to the organisations shown in paragraph 2.3 providing match funding for ESF applications in 2009.

Signature:

Designation: Head of Policy and Performance

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Date: 24<sup>th</sup> November 2008

## APPLICANTS FOR ESF 2009 – HIGHLAND COUNCIL MATCH FUNDING

PROJECT	Total Eligible Project Cost	ESF Request	PARTNERS	Highland Council	COMMENT
<b>SHIRLIE Project</b> - core funding based on funding partners THC; JC+ and SDS. Beneficiaries People with disabilities; school leavers.	746	300	Skills Development Scotland; JC+	ECS - £37,000 SW – £158,000	Continuation of existing Project
<b>NHS TAG (Training &amp; Guidance Unit)</b> - core funding, partners NHS & THC (SW) People recovering from mental illness	233	115	Skills Development Scotland; JC+	SW - £131,000	Continuation of existing Project
<b>MERKINCH ENTERPRISE</b> - Local Social Economy organisation offering IT training. Local unemployed & returners	68	34	Skills Development Scotland; JC+	FSF - £19,000	Continuation of existing Project funded by Merkinch Partnership
<b>New Start Highland</b> - training & support programmes	1,192	529k	Skills Development Scotland; JC+	FSF - £48,000	Continuation of existing Project assisted from Merkinch CRF in 2008. Providing Inverness wide services.
<b>Barnardo's Works</b> - to assist young people who require additional support to access & maintain employment	380	190	Skills Development Scotland; JC+	FSF/SW - £60,000	Extension of existing project working with young people who have been looked after.
<b>Workers Educational Association</b> - Step into Learning & Pre Voc Training. Migrants & Returners mainly women and deprived areas.	73	38	Skills Development Scotland	FSF - £11,000	Funded through local FSF Programmes

TOTAL £464,000