

AGENDA ITEM 7

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

15th DECEMBER 2015

RCT TOGETHER PROCESS – EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

REPORT OF GROUP DIRECTOR, CORPORATE & FRONTLINE SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE DEPUTY LEADER.

AUTHOR(S): Debra Hanney, Community Asset Development Officer, (01443) 425715/744546 / Emma Wilkins, Cabinet Business Officer.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides Members with the recommendations of the Voluntary Sector Liaison Steering Group in respect of Progressing the identified Expressions of Interest for further consideration.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Endorse the Expressions of Interest already identified by the Voluntary Sector Liaison Steering Group (as identified in Appendix A of the report) and that the Expressions of Interest be considered further for Community Asset and Service Transfers and the initial submitting Organisation be invited to submit a detailed Business Plan, with promotion of the EOI on the 30 day Window of Opportunity on the RCT Together webpage.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The need to progress the Expressions of Interest received and identified for further consideration, and to allow publication of the EOIs to allow other organisations a fair and equitable opportunity to submit their own proposals, which could enable complementary and collaborative approaches in maximising use of Council Assets.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The RCT Together Approach for progressing Community Asset Transfers was launched on 25th March 2015.
- 4.2 To date eighty two Expressions of Interest have been received from a variety of existing and newly established community and voluntary groups with proposals ranging from taking over a small paddling pool to taking on the partial leasehold of a Leisure Centre. We have also received a number of service transfer requests for which we have yet to fully consider as to their suitability and viability.
- 4.3 Working collaboratively with RCT Officers from the Community Asset and Service Transfer Panel and members of the Voluntary Sector Liaison Steering Group (A Cabinet Steering group created under the Leaders Scheme of Delegation) we have been looking to refine the current Community Asset Transfer processes in line with good practice and guidance obtained from the Welsh Government, and other local authority areas, and also to reflect the service transfer requests we have received.

5 EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

- 5.1 The Expressions of interest received to date have been considered by the Community Asset and Transfer Panel on the 23rd November and the Voluntary Sector Liaison Steering Group during its meeting on the 8th December. The Expressions of Interest recommended to Cabinet for progression by the Voluntary Sector Liaison Steering Group are attached as Appendix A of this report.
- 5.2 With Cabinet Committee approval, these recommendations will be promoted through the 'Window of Opportunity'. Here all RCT Together Expressions of Interest proposals for Community Asset and Service Transfers that have received agreement to progress to the Business Plan stage will then be promoted for a 30 day period to allow other Community and Voluntary Organisations a fair and equitable opportunity to submit their own proposals, which could enable complementary and collaborative approaches in maximising use of Council Assets.
- 5.3 Promotion of the Expressions of Interest would be in respect of publication on the RCT Together webpage, Sell2Wales / online Journal European Union (OJEU) and the websites of the Voluntary Sector Members, sitting on the Voluntary Sector Liaison Steering Group.

6 COMMUNITY ENABLING FUND

- 6.1 At the Council meeting on the 25th March, 2015 it was agreed that a Community Enabling Fund of £0.100M be created to support communities to come together and actively participate in delivering of services.
- 6.2 Applications will be considered from non profit distributing voluntary and community groups or companies for activities, services and facilities which benefit residents within Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- 6.3 The maximum amount to be awarded to a project is £10,000.
- 6.4 To date eight applications from the Community Enabling Fund have been awarded amounting to £62076.25 approved spend. One application has been declined and the organisation has been signposted to alternative funding options.

7 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed at this time, as the report is only seeking endorsement to take forward Expressions of Interest received. Further detailed analysis of each of the EOIs taken forward will be undertaken by officers with the applicants, including full Business Plan proposals, which would highlight if there were any equality implications.
- 7.2 Once Cabinet has endorsed the progression of any EOI's to a Business Plan Stage then Officers would undertake the appropriate individual Equality Impact Assessment.

8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Consultation has been taken forward through the Community Asset and Transfer Panel and the Voluntary Sector Liaison Steering Group. Publication of the Expressions of Interest on the RCT Together Website will further allow other Community and Voluntary Organisations a fair and equitable opportunity to submit their own proposals, which could enable complementary and collaborative approaches in maximising use of Council Assets.

9 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 9.1 If a community asset transfer is identified as a preferred course of action for the future of a property, further analysis would need to be

undertaken by officers in respect of any potential VAT issues, plus revenue and capital costs, that may be required in order to facilitate a transfer as well as the opportunity cost of any potential disposal proceeds which could be used for re investment in service delivery.

- 9.2 Where a transfer is proposed, for either empty buildings or for buildings from which services are currently delivered, it should be noted that completion of a transfer could be a lengthy process and there could be financial implications directly arising from holding the properties and from implementation of the process.
- 9.3 Due diligence on the suitability of the successful applicant and their business plan as well as their ability to raise investment will need to be undertaken in order to ensure that proposals are achievable, and where there is a requirement for council services to be delivered that this is able to continue in the long term.
- 9.4 Progression of EOI's to a Business Plan stage will also provide the sufficient level of detail needed to determine the level of financial savings/benefits each individual proposal can evidence via a Community Asset or Service Transfer.

10 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 10.1 The Council has a legal obligation to obtain the best consideration reasonably obtainable from its land disposals in accordance with section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972. Pursuant to the General Disposal Consent (Wales) 2003 the Council has power to dispose of land at undervalue of up to two million pounds if it considers that the disposal is in the interests of the economic social or environmental well being of its area, taking account of its Community Strategy.

11 LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/ SIP.

- 11.1 Making Best use of the Budget - RCT Together is the Council's forward-thinking approach to engaging with its residents and communities about how they can work together to explore alternative delivery models, which could maintain services and facilities in the future. This means making best use of Council buildings and encouraging working in partnership with others, where this will be of benefit. '
- 11.2 Applicants are asked in their EOI's to make any links between their proposals and Council plans / priorities, so this information is available on an individual case basis as well as for the wider RCT Together approach. Individual Expressions of Interest can be provided with this

document (See brief summary of Expressions of Interest attached in Appendix A).

12 CONCLUSION

- 12.1 Appendix A outlines a summary of the Expressions of Interest, which would be promoted on the RCT Together Webpage at the earliest opportunity ensuring the principles of openness, fairness and transparency are complied with. These timelines would also satisfy any potential Procurement/OJEU considerations, reducing the risk of challenge. In conjunction with this, the Organisation who submitted the original Expression of Interest will be asked to submit a Business Plan.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity.

Contact Officer

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Appendix A**RCT Together - Expressions of Interest**

- **Organisation advised to submit a Business Plan**
- **Expression of Interest promoted via Window Of Opportunity**

Organisation	Llanharan Community Development Project Ltd (EOI 81)
Asset or Service	Tonyrefail Four Season Activity Centre – 33 Heol Y Glyn, Tonyrefail, CF39 8LL
Background	<p>The group are proposing an asset and service transfer on Tonyrefail Four Seasons Activity centre where they have been working in since February 2015 to ensure that the service can continue to be delivered to families in Tonyrefail and the wider community. We currently provide a team of staff to run the provision and deal with all the bookings and ensure we are adhering to policies and procedures and CSSIW regulations.</p> <p>The group have years of experience of working within communities and delivering childcare services. In order to sustain the service they feel it would be in the best interest of the community to develop the provision by increasing registration, by refurbishment of the building which would ultimately enhance the provision being provided.</p> <p>Extending the provision to provide a wraparound care, with a flexible service to working parents and parents/carers who require the service to attend training/education. Developing a comprehensive volunteer programme for local community citizens in partnership with voluntary organisations based in Tonyrefail, up-skilling and training individuals to work alongside experienced practitioners and training providers to make them more employable and giving them experience of working with childcare.</p> <p>Based on current statistics there is a lack of affordable childcare for children aged 5 years+ as the majority of childcare available is for pre-school to age 5yrs and if its available is not catered for the older child, therefore Four Seasons Activity Centre would be providing a tailored childcare provision.</p> <p>The walking bus service is an integral part of the provision and would continue and with increased registered places would enhance the provision and provide sustainability of service.</p> <p>We aim to work in partnership with the local schools providing childcare for parents during inset days and also working with them to develop a homework club for children to access who are in our care. Four Seasons has the potential to become a centre of excellence working with schools, third sector provision, local authority and other childcare providers. We aim to deliver specialised childcare training in partnership with Play Wales, YMCA College Wales whereby a comprehensive programme can be delivered to the community and private sectors to increase revenue</p>
CEF Requested	Yes for structural refurbishment of the building on order to increase registration for children to access the service, this would be essential in order to generate sufficient income from registered places and increase staffing to meet the ratio of children accessing the service.

CAST Recommendations	<p>RCT Early Years team looking for this to be an active asset and service transfer before 1/4/16.</p> <p>Progress to Business plan stage but organisation needs to demonstrate and be clear on financial sustainability as no future subsidy will be in place post March 2016.</p> <p>TUPE will apply if an active transfer is sought.</p> <p>Provide up to date information on current state of building and running costs for service as soon as possible.</p> <p>Advise to match fund Community Enabling Fund with Welsh Church Act and Enterprise Support Fund</p>
VSLSG Recommendation	<p>Progress to Business Plan stage but support to be offered to strengthen management structure via VSLSG partners.</p> <p>TUPE – advice from VSLSG is the group can restructure after transfer but these intentions need to be made clear from the start.</p> <p>NB. Need to ensure RCT staff are protected and supported.</p> <p>Funding – need to demonstrate they have sourced and secured other funding prior to accessing Community Enabling Fund.</p>

NB. Where possible RCT Council will favour complementary and collaborative proposals which demonstrate maximising the use and sustainability of community assets and services.

Groups will be advised in writing if their Expressions of Interest can be progressed (or not) to the Business Plan Stage.

APPENDIX B**COMMUNITY ENABLING FUND****APPROVED PROJECTS**

Ref	Organisation	Grant Approved	Signposted to other Funding
1	Muni Arts Centre	£10,000	
2	Valleys Kids	£10,000	
3	Friends of Ferndale	£10,000	
4	Treherbert Regeneration Ltd	£3001.25	
5	Camau Cyntaf I Ddysgu (1 st Steps to Learning)	£5465	
6	Arts Factory Ltd		£4000
7	Too Good To Waste	£9450	
8	Beddau and Tynant Community Library	£4160	
9	Cynon Valley Museum Trust	£10,000	
	Total Committed Spend to date	£62076.25	£4000

APPLICATIONS SEEKING APPROVAL THIS MONTH

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