

ANGUS COUNCIL**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE****20 NOVEMBER 1997****SUBJECT: NEW DEAL - WELFARE TO WORK - ENVIRONMENT TASK FORCE****REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, TRANSPORT & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Abstract: This report seeks Committee approval for the Council to contract with Employment Services for the New Deal - Environment Task Force option on behalf of an Angus consortium.

1 RECOMMENDATION

1.1 It is recommended that the Committee agree to authorise:

- a) Angus Council participation in the New Deal - Environment Task Force, Angus Consortium; and
- b) appropriate officials to prepare a bid on behalf of Angus Council to contract, as lead agency, with the Employment Service on behalf of the Consortium.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 With reference to Article 11 of the Economic Development Committee meeting held on 21 August 1997, Report 825/97 provided information on the Government's New Deal initiative and approval was given to join the design/strategy group for Tayside. Agreement, in principle, was given for Angus Council Training Services to participate in the delivery of suitable programmes and projects on a self-financing basis as part of the "Pathfinder" scheme to be launched in January 1998.
- 2.2 The Council has subsequently participated in a number of working groups assisting the Employment Service in the design, development and delivery of the New Deal with specific regard to Angus needs. Consideration is being given currently to potential participation by the Council in three of the four options available to New Deal clients, namely: Employer subsidy, Education and Training and Environmental Task Force. The provision of specialist input by appropriate Council services during the Gateway process (prior to clients being referred to options) is also being examined.
- 2.3 A number of corporate New Deal working groups have been established internally to consider the overall development of New Deal and the options as follows:
 - Corporate Co-ordination group
 - Gateway option sub-group
 - Employment option sub-group
 - Environmental Task Force option sub-group

- 2.4 The Employment Service recently issued the Environmental Task Force Tender Proposal Form which must be completed by the consortium and returned by 28 November 1997.

3 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 At a meeting of the Tayside Design/Strategy Group the Employment Service indicated that the preferred way forward for the development of the Environment Task Force option in Tayside would be for the establishment of consortiums in Angus, Dundee and Perth & Kinross. It was suggested that the Councils in each of the areas could be the lead partner for contracting, management and administration purposes. If this could not be agreed, a system of competitive tendering for projects throughout Tayside would be required.
- 3.2 The role of the lead partner in the consortium is to provide a communication link between the Employment Service and consortium members. The lead partner will be responsible for ensuring that the administration and payment systems operate effectively and timeously.
- 3.3 The Employment Service will pay a fee for the management and administration of the contract. The fee will be based on an amount per start on the Environment Task Force. The Employment Service have estimated that 68 participants will start on the Environment Task Force in 1998.
- 3.4 A meeting of the key external players in the Environment Task Force in Angus was held on 11 November 1997. At this meeting all members endorsed the proposal for the Council to lead the consortium. The consortium members include - Angus College, MI Technologies (a local training provider), Angus Housing Association, Tayside Recyclers Ltd and D J Laing.
- 3.5 The Council New Deal Co-ordination group endorsed the proposal for the Council to lead the consortium in Angus and to participate in the Environment Task Force. Following consultation through the Environment Task Force group several Council departments are currently developing suitable project proposals for submission within the Tender Proposal Form. The projects include insulation, recycling/refurbishment, energy and water conservation and rural initiatives designed to benefit local communities. It was noted, however, that these projects would only be undertaken on a self-financing basis utilising New Deal resources plus other sources of funding eg European and Millennium funding.
- 3.6 During consideration of Report 825/97 by the Economic Development Committee, concerns were rightly expressed regarding the question of job substitution eg work currently undertaken by Council departments such as Contract Services. It has subsequently been agreed however, that the projects being considered by the Council should be additional to, or will enhance, planned project work.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The management of the consortium will require input both at a senior and administrative level, however this will be contained within existing resources in Training Services. The fee for the management of the contract will provide additional revenue for Training Services.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Chief Executive and Directors of Finance and Law & Administration have been consulted and are in agreement with the terms of this report.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 It is thought that the Council are the most appropriate organisation to lead the Angus Environment Task Force consortium given the focus of the initiative on environmental improvements and community development. Managing the consortium will give the Council an overview of the development of the initiative in Angus and a key role in shaping the strategy for future developments.

NOTE

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

AA/DV/LP/MR

18 November 1997

Alex Anderson
Director of Planning, Transport & Economic Development

