

***Excerpt from the Minutes of Meeting of the  
Tendering Committee held on 6 September 2011***

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**EXTENSION TO PERIOD OF CONTRACT FOR DELIVERY OF COMMUNITY  
PLANNING PARTNERSHIP (CPP) – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SERVICES**

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Tendering Committee held on 2 August 2011 (Page XXX refers), a report was re-submitted by the Chief Executive seeking approval to extend by nine months the period contracted for Organisation Development Services (ODS) to provide further support for community engagement in Community Planning, and setting out the reasons for this request.

Having heard the Manager, Community Planning and Policy, in explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, Councillor J. McColl, seconded by Councillor Brown, moved:-

The Committee agrees:-

- (1) that approval be given to extend the contract with ODS for just over nine months, until 30 June 2012; and
- (2) that a report should be submitted to a future meeting of the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee, significantly in advance of 30 June 2012, requesting that the Committee makes a policy decision in respect of the future support which should be provided for community engagement services.

After discussion and having heard the Manager, Community Planning and Policy, in answer to further questions from Members, as an amendment, Councillor Calvert moved:-

That the Committee agrees:-

- (1) to refuse to sanction the extension of the contract;
- (2) to note that the approval of the extension of the contract would require a policy decision to be taken in respect of the future support which should be provided for community engagement services; and
- (3) that in view of (2) above, the report should be remitted to the meeting of the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee to be held on 21 September 2011.

At this point in the meeting, Councillor J. McColl withdrew his motion and seconded Councillor Calvert's amendment.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed the amendment by Councillor Calvert. Councillor Bolla, having failed to obtain a seconder for a proposed motion, asked that his dissent be recorded in respect of this item.

Note: Councillor J. McColl entered the meeting during consideration of this item.

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**WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL****Report by the Chief Executive****Corporate and Efficient Governance : 21 September 2011**

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**Subject:      Extension to period of Contract for delivery of Community Planning Partnership (CPP) - Community Engagement Services**

**1.      Purpose**

- 1.1**      This report seeks committee approval for an extension of nine months to the period contracted for Organisational Development and Support (ODS) to provide further support for community engagement in Community Planning, and sets out the reasons for this request.
- 1.2**      The report was considered by the Tendering Committee at its meeting of 6 September 2011, where it was decided not to sanction the extension at that time. Committee referred the report to the Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee for a decision, as it felt the extension was a policy matter that it was not appropriate for Tendering Committee to decide on.

**2.      Background**

- 2.1**      The contract for delivery of these services was awarded to ODS at the Tendering Committee of May 2010. A key deciding factor, along with the competencies needed, was the highly competitive pricing of their bid. The contract was for 16 months and will come to an end on 12 October, 2011. It was originally intended that, following evaluation, the deliverables would be reviewed and the contract redrafted and put out for tender again.
- 2.2**      The contract deliverables include:
- Coordinating CPP partner engagement
  - Clarifying the scope of engagement activities
  - Capacity building for Community Forums
  - Community Forums as link to the wider community
  - Developing Community Forums
  - Building relationships
  - Managing the interface between all relevant engagement structures
  - Administrative support for Community Forums

### 3. Main Issues

**3.1** When the original tender was awarded, it was expected that on-going work to support Community Forums would be needed beyond that period, though the precise nature and extent of continued support was not fully known. It is now evident that, though considerable progress has been made, more work is required to achieve some of the original objectives outlined at 2.2. It is also considered important to maintain continuity of service provision at this crucial stage of development, as opposed to re-tendering. Three key areas which need further time for development are:

- Building up the membership of Community Forums. This work was complicated by the collapse of the original Vale of Leven Forum resulting in the need to set up a new Forum for the area. It was important to ensure that local people themselves determined who participated in their forum, and some new residents not previously active in their community are now involved. This created a need for additional intensive training and development to allow these individuals to participate in CPP thematic groups and other structures. This was an unforeseen challenge that affected progress in this area.
- Building up the capacity of community forum members generally to participate in community planning processes, for example to act as a local platform for Council and its CPP partners to engage with communities.
- Building the capacity of Thematic Groups in relation to community engagement so that officers can ensure and support effective participation from local residents.

**3.2** ODS workers have invested a great deal in the important aspect of building relationships with community members. Relationships built on trust between ODS and community forum members are essential to the future progress of these forums, and it is essential we build on that investment.

**3.3** In addition, good progress is being made as follows:

Coordinating CPP partner engagement/clarifying the scope of engagement activities - ODS facilitated a series of sessions to produce a Joint Community Engagement Action Plan which was approved at the CPP Strategic Board in August 2011. The evaluation of the development process for this shows that 100% (9/9) of respondents agreed the aims of the sessions were clear and that 100% (9/9) agreed their views were taken into account in developing the plan. 89% (8/9) agree the final partner engagement plan reflects what was agreed in the sessions (one was unable to comment because of coming into the process mid-way). 44% (4/9) rated ODS' facilitation of the sessions as very good, and 56% (5/9) as good.

- Capacity Building for Forums – a comprehensive learning plan for Forum members is now in place that was developed with the involvement of community forum members. 73% (11) felt they were involved very well, well

or adequately and 27% (4) felt they were very poorly involved (though of the latter one has attended only once and another hasn't attended during 2011 when this took place).

- Community Forums as a link to the wider community – Dumbarton and Clydebank Forums have been involved in a research project to make contact with groups within their local communities and find out how these groups would like to be involved with the Community Forum.
- Developing Community Forums – extensive work has taken place to publicise meetings in the press and issue press releases, promoting awareness of Community Forums. Publicity materials have also been produced and distributed. The research project referred to above also contributes to raising awareness of the Forums.
  - Clydebank - since ODS was appointed, 7 new people have joined Clydebank Forum. 2 people who previously received information but did not attend meetings have requested that their names be removed from the membership list.
  - Dumbarton - since ODS was appointed, Dumbarton Forum has secured one new active member who is now a Thematic Group representative.
  - Vale of Leven Forum - the Vale of Leven Forum has been re-established. Committee members have been appointed, and representatives elected to the Strategic Group and five of the six Thematic Groups. The new Forum membership has increased rapidly from the initial 12 at re-establishment to 34 at present.
- Building Relationships is a very important feature of the work. ODS workers are getting to know members of the Forum and supporting them in the context of Forums and Thematic Groups. Asked "Since August 2010, do you agree there is evidence of more positive and informed relationships between Community Planning partner organisations and Community Forum members?", 57% (12) agree a lot or a little, 29% (6) disagree and 14% (3) are unsure.
- Administrative support for Community Forums is in place and the level of support given varies, depending on the need of the individual Forums. Administrative Support is rated as very good, good or adequate by 80% (16) and poor or very poor (4) by 20%.

**3.4** The points above demonstrate that a good start has been made by ODS, but there is still plenty to achieve as the specific evaluation points referred to at 3.3 show.

**3.5** Any extension of contract with ODS will be at the same rates as the original agreement, in the region of £27,464 for nine months. There appeared to be a misunderstanding at the Tendering 204 that the rates would increase for the extension. This is not the case.

#### **4. People Implications**

4.1 There are no people implications.

## **5. Financial Implications**

5.1 The budget is available to cover this extension.

## **6. Risk Analysis**

6.1 There is a risk that if continuity of service is not maintained at this point in time, the progress we have made may be undermined, and future progress may be more difficult to achieve. Relationships with community residents are threatened by a withdrawal of this service at this time.

6.2 In addition, a new tender exercise would create a gap in support at a critical time in the development of new approaches to community engagement and would be unnecessarily expensive in staff resource terms. There is a clear risk that costs of community engagement will increase if the ODS contract is not extended at this time.

6.3 At a previous meeting of the Community Participation Committee, a commitment was made for Community Forums to play a role in the Council's public consultation on its budget. An agreement has been reached with ODS to support and assist forums in playing this increased role. ODS has agreed to provide support and facilitation for Community Forums to host public consultation sessions in November, on the Council's budget 2012/13. This is a significant additional process of consultation, as there will also be wider public consultation on the budget in January 2012 similar to the successful events held in January 2011. There is a considerable risk that failure to extend this contract will mean that Community Forums will be unable to carry out this role.

## **7. Equalities, Health & Human Rights Impact Assessment (EIA)**

7.1 An equality impact assessment is not judged necessary in relation to this paper.

## **8. Strategic Assessment**

8.1 The retention of ODS is needed to ensure that meaningful community engagement in community planning is supported. This relates particularly to Social and Economic Regeneration and to Fit for Purpose Services.

## **9. Conclusions and Recommendations**

- 9.1** Though progress is being made, there is still considerable development and support required in relation to supporting community engagement in community planning, particularly around building up the membership and capacity of Community Forums.
- 9.2** The evaluation at this stage points to above average performance by ODS. It is important to build on the progress made and maintain the continuity of arrangements.
- 9.3** Taking the above into account, it is recommended that an extension of contract is given to ODS for just over nine months, until 30 June, 2012. This timescale will allow for further evaluation and for assessment of the future direction of community engagement.

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**David McMillan**  
**Chief Executive**  
**Date: 20 September 2011**

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**Appendices:** None

**Background Papers:** Tender for delivery of Community Planning Partnership -  
Community Engagement Services Tendering Committee: 26  
May 2010  
Joint Community Engagement Action Plan Evaluation  
Evaluating the Community Engagement Support provided to  
Community Forums

**Wards Affected:** All wards