



Report of the East North East Area Manager

North East (Outer) Area Committee

Date: 27th October 2008

Subject: Community Payback Teams

Electoral Wards Affected:

Ward members consulted
(referred to in this report)

x

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Council
Function

Delegated Executive
Function available
for Call In x

Delegated Executive
Function not available for
Call In Details set out in the
report

Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of a Community Payback scheme that could be commissioned by the Area Committee and introduces the Unpaid Work District Manager from Probation Services to provide further information and answer questions.

Purpose of this report

1. The purpose of this report is to brief the Area Committee on the Community Payback scheme operated by West Yorkshire Probation Service and what could be developed in terms of a dedicated team/resource for the area. Guidance is sought from Members on whether they would like a full proposal working up through Ward Member meetings for consideration at a future Area Committee.

Background

2. This is a briefing paper for Area Committee to see whether it is felt a proposal to establish a pilot Community Payback Team for the Outer North East area should be investigated through ward member meetings and brought back to a future meeting.
3. A similar scheme has been in place in Inner and Outer East areas and has proved successful in helping provide a free labour force to assist with a range of jobs in the community. The scheme won the Howard League for Penal Reform Community Programmes Award as an “Outstanding Scheme” earlier this year.

Community Payback Team – Options Available for Consideration

4. The scheme would cost the Area Committee £15k for a year. This is in part a contribution towards the cost to Probation of employing a dedicated supervisor but is mainly the management and overhead costs associated with organising a team of offenders to undertake work in the community. For example, as well as the payroll costs of a supervisor, the offenders need checking/selecting for the right jobs, transporting to and from the work location, health and safety/risk assessments being done and training undertaken where needed.
5. What is **not** included is any additional materials or skips required for a job. This would either need to be found from a pot set aside from Wellbeing or the organisation requesting the free labour force (e.g. a local community group).
6. One option would be to try the scheme for a six month pilot, with a view to committing to an annually renewable contract should Members feel it has been successful.
7. The labour force provided would average 7 people per day, 7 hours a day, every day of the year (including weekends). Although, due to the nature of the workforce it is unlikely that everyone will turn up every day – conversely there are occasions where significantly more may be available for work. Assuming 5 people do report for work that would equate to 12,700 hours a year available to the Area Committee to use. At £10 hour that would be £127k of labour at a cost of £15k for the contract.
8. A contract would be drawn up in the form of a Service Level Agreement between the Area Committee and Probation Services. This will include an agreed referrals system and reports back to Area Committee on the amount of un-paid work that has been achieved, what jobs have been completed and examples of before/after photographs. The report will also provide information on how many offenders have been accredited for their work as part of the scheme.

9. A referral system would be agreed with Members – but probably be based on a system whereby a simple form is completed and sent initially to the Area Management Team and then to a coordinator in Probation. The referral form currently used in East is attached for information (appendix A).
10. It is anticipated that most referrals would come direct from Members and community groups/organisations. There would be publicity of the resource to local groups. Referrals could also be made from local tasking teams. The cover letter used in East for advertising the resource community groups is attached for information (appendix B).
11. The sorts of jobs that the team would typically undertake will be clearance of overgrowth (brambles etc), painting (internal and external), garden clearances and small scale landscaping. Basically, labour intensive jobs that no-one else will do or can not be afforded by groups.
12. It is possible the team could do more ambitious pieces of work – such as small scale pathways – however this may be dependent on the skills sets of those under supervision and supervising and would bring additional cost etc.

Recommendations

13. The Area Committee is asked to:
 - (a) note the report and presentation
 - (b) decide whether or not this is a scheme that should be worked up through ward member meetings and brought back to the next Area Committee meeting for approval

Background Papers

- None