



Report to: Cabinet

Subject: Project Approvals – Nottinghamshire Improvement and Efficiency Group

Date: 5 November 2009

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report updates members on the most recent round of funding considered by the Nottinghamshire Improvement and Efficiency Group (NIEG). The report identifies that significant support has been received for funding schemes involving this authority.

A previously NIEG funded scheme for reviewing single person discounts in respect of Council Tax has now been completed. This review was initiated by this authority and final results show that additional income of £1.85m was identified as a result of reviewing discounts to Council Tax payers across Nottinghamshire. Details of the review are contained in the report.

2. BACKGROUND

The NIEG was established as the Nottinghamshire Sub Region for the East Midlands Regional and Improvement and Efficiency Partnership. Its main remit is to produce and promote efficiency savings, service improvement and capacity building within its members. In this role it has £2.9m of Regional Improvement and Efficiency Programme monies to distribute to projects within Nottinghamshire over the next 3 years. Councillor J Parr is the Council's member that sits on the NIEG with a role to act as champion for developing projects within the Council and acting as the link between the Council, the NIEG and the work of the East Midlands REIP.

Recently the NIEG were informed by the East Midlands RIEP that an additional £500,000 of funding has been made available to the NIEG to fund capital projects.

3. CAPITAL PROJECTS APPROVED BY NIEG

A range of submissions were made to the NIEG for capital funding. Of the eleven submitted project proposals two did not meet the eligibility criteria and were rejected. Of the remaining nine projects, NIEG recommend seven for approval and one for ring fenced funds subject to development.

The NIEG approved at its meeting on 2 October the programme presented below for submission to the East Midlands RIEP for final approval.

Project	Funding Requested	Funding Recommended	Delivery Timeline
Recommended for approval			
Choice Based Lettings*	£60,000	£50,000	August 2010
Accident Reduction Data Software	£49,500	£49,500	December 2010
CCTV Central Networking	£160,000	£160,000	November 2010
NI 195 Software*	£19,312 (for 5)	£19,312	April 2010
Fleet Management Software*	£95,000	£95,000	April 2010
Implementing a modern website*	£120,000 (for 3)	£120,000	June 2010
Waste Management System*	£250,000	£200,000	April 2010
		£693,812	

* Schemes led or involving GBC

The NIEG recognise that there is a need to ensure projects are scalable. The figures presented are to enable the initial partners to proceed. From discussions within NIEG, it became apparent that other partners may be interested in joining some of the partnerships. There is an acceptance that where other partners wish to join at a later date, there may be further requests to extend the funding for these projects.

The NIEG also ask for support to ring fence £200,000 for piloting customer service partnerships, subject to future acceptable business cases being submitted to NIEG.

SINGLE PERSON DISCOUNT REVIEW

In November 2008, the Single Person Discount Review received funding of £205,125 for all partners to employ NorthgateArinso to undertake reviews of persons claiming single person discount on their Council Tax. Experian were used by NorthgateArinso to provide data intelligence and the tender was awarded on the basis of a charged fee per discount cancelled as result of the review. The funding request was based on an estimate that 5% of cancellations would be identified. The project was more successful than anticipated with 5.5% of discounts being cancelled resulting in an overspend of £26,175, for which an additional funding bid is being supported by the NIEG.

The project consisted of all the Borough and District Councils and achieved £1.85m of savings from cancelled discounts. The success of the project has been reported in the Nottingham Evening Post. There have also been national stories in the news for this type of work. Nottingham City Council was not part of the original partnership, but would now like the opportunity to gain from the success of this project.

It is estimated that an investment of £140,000 to undertake a review of Nottingham City Council single person discounts will realise a saving of £800,000. One of the project eligibility criteria when assessing submissions is the opportunity for projects to be scalable for others to join. This would appear to be an ideal opportunity to extend this very successful project to other partners and the NIEG has recommended that this further funding be supported.

A case study of the project undertaken by Gedling Borough Council will shortly be made available on the East Midlands RIEP website and the project has already attracted interest in other parts of the country.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to note the contents of this report.