

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**CORPORATE SERVICES
CABINET MEMBER**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF PARTNERSHIPS AND PERFORMANCE OFFICER FOR
THE HOMELINK SERVICE**

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To approve the establishment of a Partnerships and Performance Officer for the HomeLink service
- 1.2 The key points of the report are:
 - 1.2.1 HomeLink was launched in August 2006 to take the council's generic local link service out in to people's homes.
 - 1.2.2 The service was initially funded until March 2008 by the Local Public Service Agreement 2 (LPSA2).
 - 1.2.3 When the funding expired the Customer Service division of Community Planning and Resources mainstreamed the service by realigning service priorities.
 - 1.2.4 HomeLink has been very successful in improving access to services for hard to reach groups and partnership working has been key to that success.
 - 1.2.5 A recent application for further funding under the LPSA2 reward scheme has been successful.
 - 1.2.6 The appointment of a Partnership and Performance Officer will further enhance the effectiveness of partnership working and will result in further life enhancing outcomes for local people.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 HomeLink is a home visiting and outreach project launched in August 2006. The aim of the project was to take the council's generic Local Link service in to people's homes.

- 2.2 Customers can face a range of barriers preventing them from accessing life enhancing services and benefits. Such barriers include transport problems, health problems, caring responsibilities or lack of awareness of the existence of services.
- 2.3 HomeLink was successful in achieving the targets set for it as a condition of the LPSA2 funding. The service could therefore bid for a share of the resulting reward money.
- 2.4 HomeLink comprises 1.5 FTE Customer Advisers with management support from the Brigg Local Link Customer Service Manager. The team's focus has been primarily on home visits (approx 500 per year). As a result of this activity HomeLink has made a considerable difference to people's lives. Following HomeLink assistance and signposting customers collectively are better off by £451,475 with ongoing benefit entitlements.
- 2.5 This level of impact is possible because of the effective partnerships that HomeLink has developed with a number of service providers. Key partnerships include District Nurses, Independent Living, Home from Hospital Service, Apna Sahara and the Fire Service. A personalised profile of need is linked to menus of services from a vast number of service providers in the voluntary, community and public sectors. This experienced overview and timely access to all services for customers is having a major impact on the take up of services particularly in relation to income maximisation, health, housing, well being and independence.
- 2.6 HomeLink has piloted the setting up of a Joint Working Arrangement (JWA) with Independent Living to focus efforts, maximise use of resources and share strengths and capacity wherever possible to avoid duplication and effectively measure the outcomes of the joint working. It is not possible within the capacity of the current team to establish additional partnerships, fully exploit existing partnerships and properly develop JWAs.
- 2.7 The bid for reward funding therefore was for a Partnerships and Performance Officer to monitor, promote and evaluate effective partnerships. The bid was supported by the LSP Well Being and Health Improvement Panel (WHIP) and was approved by the LSP reward panel in July 2009. The reward is initially for £37,500 until March 2010 when we will be able to bid again to continue the project in 2010/11.
- 2.8 A job description has been drawn up and evaluated at grade 8.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Option A: to accept the offer of reward funding until March 2010 and establish the post of Partnership and Performance Officer to develop and evaluate more effective partnership working within the HomeLink service. To apply for funding in 2010 to continue the post until March 2011.

3.2 Option B: to decline the funding.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 Option A: this post will enable HomeLink to actively establish new partnerships with a wider range of service providers in a co-ordinated way for the people of North Lincolnshire. Furthermore the partnerships will be robust, capacity will be maximised, the impact will be evaluated and the outcome will be better services for vulnerable people.

4.2 Option B: will mean that HomeLink will continue as it is but without the benefit of enhanced partnership working and resulting positive outcomes for vulnerable people.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 Financial

The post will be funded entirely by the LPSA2 reward funding which has already been agreed. This funding is initially until 31 March 2010 with the option to apply again for further funding for 2010/11. We have already declared an intention to bid again in 2010.

5.2 Staffing

The post will be filled by offering a secondment to staff from within a ring fence of suitably skilled and experienced officers. This will enable the work to start as soon as possible. The process will be agreed with Human Resources in line with council policies.

5.3 Property

There are no direct implications.

5.4 IT

There are no direct implications.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)

6.1 HomeLink has had considerable success in enabling access to services for a range of vulnerable and/or disadvantaged people who have found it difficult to access services using conventional means. This post will enhance and increase the partnership ethos at the core of HomeLink and in turn result in a more targeted and co-ordinated approach from a range of service providers.

6.2 Joint working maximises the ability of a number of organisations to provide intervention and low level prevention. This in turn reduces the likelihood of some customers moving further into poverty and into situations where they are at risk and may then require more costly

interventions e.g. access to acute services. HomeLink will contribute to the emerging Personalisation agenda for adult social services.

- 6.3 A partnership approach using menus of service from a range of providers results in the need for fewer individual visits from different organisations. This is better for the customer, provides better use of resources for each organisation and as there are fewer journeys is better for the environment.
- 6.4 The risks of not implementing this post is that an opportunity would be missed to enhance the service in a strategic way maximising the opportunity to work together. This in turn would miss opportunities to offer further prevention work and therefore further reduce the burden on more expensive services.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Consultation has taken place with the LSP WHIP who approved the funding bid. Existing partners such as Independent Living also support the proposal.
- 7.2 The HomeLink team has been key to the design of the post.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 To establish a fixed term post of Partnership and Performance Officer for the HomeLink service and to appoint as stated in paragraph 5.2.

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: Bid to LSP for LPSA2
Reward Funding