

COMMUNITY RESPONSE FUND

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Councillor J Hewitson

LEAD OFFICER: M Tichford

REPORT AUTHOR: M Tichford

Summary: The Community Response Fund is a scheme to support people made redundant back into employment through training that is not funded through any other avenue. The scheme is funded by West Lakes Renaissance (WLR) but requires a 'float' to make it practicable to operate.

from Contingencies

Recommendation:	1 That £5,000 is made available to WLR/ to provide working funds for the Community Response Fund, to be repaid to the Council at the end of the scheme.
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Impact on delivering Copeland 2020 objectives: Assisting people to retrain and secure employment.

Impact on other statutory objectives (e.g. crime & disorder, LA21): Impacts have been considered but are insignificant.

Financial and human resource implications: Contribution is to be repaid but income will be lost from foregone interest for the life of the scheme. **The £5K is to be drawn from Contingencies and the balance on Contingencies prior to approval of any reports on this agenda is £212,077.**

Project & Risk Management: WLR and the Employment Support Project are project managing the initiative and have significant experience and capability in the work. The risk is minimal.

Key Decision Status

- **Financial:** No
- **Ward:** No

Other Ward Implications: None

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Community Response Fund was established in 2005 in reaction to several recent large-scale redundancy announcements. The Fund provides financial support for retraining in instances where either no other support is available or only a part of the cost can be met. The WLR Board has authorised a £50,000 fund in the first instance and it is anticipated that this will need to be extended.

- 1.2 The Employment Support Project (ESP) in Whitehaven provides most of the administration arrangements on behalf of WLR i.e. supporting applicants in completing forms, servicing the Fund Panel, issuing payments and keeping monitoring information etc. Once approved the ESP issues payments, in all but exceptional circumstances, to training and equipment suppliers rather than applicants and then invoices WLR accordingly. WLR makes monthly claims to the North West Development Agency.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Although WLR manages a multi-million pound programme it does not itself have a significant operating budget. WLR has therefore requested that the Council make a fully refundable contribution of £5,000 to provide forward funding to create a float for the Fund's account. Allerdale Borough Council has received a similar request.
- 2.2 The £5,000 would be refunded when the project ceases and although this has yet to be determined it will likely be several years hence.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The project is a valuable one and is considered worth supporting. It is recommended that £5,000 be made available to WLR for the purposes of the Community Response Fund

List of Appendices

Appendix A - <Appendix Title>

Appendix B - <Appendix Title>

List of Background Documents:

List of Consultees:

Cllrs Hewitson and Ashbrook
Director, Economic Prosperity and Sustainability
Head of Financial Service and Business Development