

European Commission: Call for Proposals for Social Policy Innovations Supporting Reforms in Social Services**Report by Mary Smith, Director Education Communities and Economy****1 Purpose of Report**

To request agreement from Council to submit a proposal under the above European commission funding stream as a partner with The Improvement Service for Scottish Local Government, The University of Edinburgh and the Midlothian Community Planning Partnership.

2 Background

- 2.1** Midlothian Council recently held a seminar with the Improvement Service at which members of the administration and senior managers considered priorities for improvement. As part of this session, the expectations of the national delivery group for community planning of Scottish Government, COSLA, Third Sector and Improvement Service towards achieving a reduced gap in the life outcomes experienced by residents of the most socio-economically disadvantaged geographies of Scotland with national average was discussed. There was agreement that the council as the coordinator of community planning had a lead role in supporting this aim.
- 2.2** Following this event, the Improvement Service approached the Council to offer the opportunity in partnership with them, the University of Edinburgh (as an evaluation agency) and other members of the Community Planning Partnership to submit a bid to the European Commission innovation fund for Social Policy Innovations Supporting Reforms in Social Services (public/education). The deadline for submission was set as 28 August. Only one national demonstration project is likely to succeed from Scotland, and a total value of up to 3 million Euros over a 3 year project period is potentially available.
- 2.3** A draft proposal has been prepared in this limited timeframe, and has been approved in principle at the community planning working group for discussion at the CPP Board. The bid draft sets out:
- an intention to adopt a co- production approach to working with local residents
 - sub projects focussed on the existing results of neighbourhood planning in the three target areas of Woodburn, Mayfield and Gorebridge
 - 4 individual 'outcome gap closing actions' , linked to the Single Midlothian plan outcomes and approaches as follows:
 - Localising access to customer transactions with public and community services in Mayfield through a 'one stop shop' access point in Mayfield Library- reducing the gap in local access as part of a capacity building approach.

- Developing locally accessible economic development/ employability services – reducing the economic outcome gap in a co- productive approach.
- Developing local ‘preventive’ health and care condition management approaches - reducing the health outcome gap in a co- productive approach.
- Developing early years interventions reducing the educational attainment gap in a co- productive approach.

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource

Council match funding of £200,000 is required to access funding of £800,000. This will provide a total project budget of £1,000,000 over a three year period.

The Council's match funding can be met from existing staffing and operational budgets. The staffing and other resources identified will be dedicated to the project for its duration.

3.2 Risk

The challenge of closing the outcome gap without additional resources is significant and risk of failing can be ameliorated by this project. Previous area based approaches across Scotland to reducing outcome gaps have not been sufficiently successful, either as a result of trying to address only one of the complex of interrelated multiple deprivation issues by single agencies, or as a result of failing to take sufficient account of local people's own strengths and preferred approaches, or by failing to work directly enough with families/ individuals most affected by disadvantage. The innovation fund proposal provides an opportunity to address these risks.

3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ✓ ☐ **Community safety**
- ✓ ☐ **Adult health, care and housing**
- ✓ ☐ **Getting it right for every Midlothian child**
- ✓ ☐ **Improving opportunities in Midlothian**
- ✓ ☐ **Sustainable growth**
- ✓ ☐ **Business transformation and Best Value**

3.4 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

The proposal aims is to address all three priorities using the three approaches of prevention, capacity building/ co- production and localising access.

3.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

With the support of Edinburgh University as an evaluation partner, and working in partnership with the Improvement Service, measurement of impact will be built into the proposal from the outset. Success criteria will include at their core any reductions in outcome gaps experienced by these areas against Midlothian averages.

3.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach

See above

3.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

See above

3.8 Ensuring Equalities

Reducing outcome gaps will benefit all members of equality protected characteristic groups resident in these areas, an equality impact assessment will be undertaken within each element of the co – production design stage. Evaluation processes will include assessment of actual impact achieved on equality groups.

3.9 Supporting Sustainable Development

Reducing outcome gaps and localising or appropriate channel shift in access to services will reduce barriers to access, travel journeys and the carbon impact of these; reduce unnecessary transactions and failure demand to conserving resources and increase the social and economic sustainability of the three target communities.

3.10 IT Issues

New technologies and information technology development will be required to support localising access to transactions.

4 Recommendations

Council is requested to approve and support the submission of this proposal as outlined above.

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