

New Cross Gate NDC/Trust – Employment and Enterprise Strategy

Review date Jan 2013

Introduction

New Cross Gate will be a vibrant, thriving place with a sustainable and diverse economy with jobs and training opportunities for local people, particularly the most disadvantaged.

The New Cross Gate Trust Employment and Enterprise Forward Strategy sets out to demonstrate how the Trust hopes to continue to build on the successful foundation that has been laid from the Employment and Enterprise Theme of the NDC Programme. The vision statement for this theme, set out above, will remain the same, in that local residents will continue to receive support in accessing opportunities to appropriate training and employment. This strategy aims to demonstrate how New Cross Gate Trust hopes to support continued local provision for local people. It will also highlight how the Trust proposes to encourage and facilitate the continuation of community – based social enterprise, business and employment support services.

The prevention of Worklessness and tackling child poverty amongst working aged people remains a high priority for national, regional and local government. Worklessness has a negative impact on not only individuals and families, but will also have an overall effect on communities in terms of low economic output, increased poverty, crime and health. The Employment and Enterprise Strategy of 2006 – 2011 reported that New Cross Gate is amongst the 30% most deprived areas in the country for employment, with a high proportion of residents being long-term unemployed and incapacity claimants. A review of the revised 2001 'Aiming High for New Cross Gate' Delivery Plan, highlighted that historical problems of high unemployment, low incomes, and a need for employment and benefit advice, access to jobs and low aspirations. A call to address four key areas, such as Development of a Skills Programme, Provision of a local labour agency, Address of barriers to employment and development of the a business competitive scheme. In 2006 a rapid review of the Employment and Enterprise Strategy was undertaken to identify key areas of work that needed to be improved. It was identified that there was need for an increase in IT skills training provision and the fostering of links with the private sector and the job market. The review recognised that there was potential for key projects within this theme to achieve outcomes once the NDC capital projects came into fruition.

Most recently Communities and Local Government have commissioned an evaluation of the NDC Programmes in operation nationally. The Understanding and Tackling Worklessness Evaluation Report, breaks worklessness into two key groups that of (1) – Jobseekers Allowance and (2) Incapacity Benefit/ Sever Disablement Allowance claimants.

The reports suggests an overall reduction in unemployment rates and an increase in economic activity in the areas where the NDC programme have

been implemented. Some of this success is attributed to the strengthened relationship that the designated wards have been supported in establishing with their particular local authority, therefore increase of access to services being provided. The report also suggests that overall that NDC worklessness projects appear to have had a positive impact and benefits for those that have been successfully engaged.

The Trust will inevitably have fewer resources to deploy on this theme than the NDC had available. We feel though that by encouraging efficiencies and targeting our efforts we can still make an impact to raise levels of employment and enterprise. We will be encouraging organisations that we currently fund to work closely together and, where possible, co-locate. Such efficiencies and a clear sustainability strategy, possibly through community enterprise, will be a pre-requisite to further Trust funding. We envisage though that we will be able to fund at least one local post and to continue our strategic role in co-ordinating the Skills 2 Work Forum.

We will require organisations that we do fund to concentrate on providing added value - unless under contract we and they should not duplicate statutory provision. We will concentrate on providing additional services such as ensuring local people have the right skills for jobs that are available and have the aspirations towards employment. We will co-ordinate with local employers to plan ahead for skills needs and seek to influence education partners to deliver the right post-16 vocational support.

Trustees and staff will act as ambassadors for the area, maintaining a presence on strategic boards and advocating New Cross Gate as an area for business to locate. We won't be just helping people into available jobs but encouraging new local employment opportunities.

2. Review of Work

2.1 Strategic Outcomes

The Trust will continue to work to achieve the current strategic outcomes which are:

EM1 Increase the percentage of New Cross Gate residents in employment to the borough average

EM2 Increase the level of economic activity within the NDC area

2.2 Projects

With regards challenging the worklessness agenda, NDC's nationally have deployed similar strategic approaches, by way of using local and national data sources as well as that of local intelligence. And have similarly sought to implement community based initiatives with an emphasis on Training,

Information, Advice and Guidance and job brokerage facilities for residents actively looking to return to the labour market.

Projects that are currently being funded by the NDC to achieve these strategic outcomes are working to the following objectives which are outlined below:

- Training to get people job ready
 - Employment advice and information
 - Local labour initiatives
 - Employment support
 - Attract new business and enterprise
 - Support for local business and enterprise
 - Utilise development opportunities to provide and attract premises for new business and social enterprise.
1. 170 Works Project is the core local employment and training service for the New Cross Gate area, delivered by 170 Community Project , which is the main community organisation in the local area. The project offers a range of services such as career guidance, job brokerage, IAG (information, advice and guidance), access to training, job search facilities. As a community - based service 170 works has been very successful in placing long-term unemployed into part-time and fulltime employment. Targeted outreach, tailored work plans and the job –brokerage element in delivery has been key to this success. 170 Works have built effective partnership relationship with other agencies, such as Opening Doors, Deptford Job Centre, and North Downing Training Project and have taken a collaborative approach to provide an effective service for their clients. 170 have an existing referral agreement with Deptford JCP in that clients attending JCP that reside in the NXG area are referred to 170 Works, for an assessment and placement to employment. This service is currently being delivered free of charge. For sustainability, it would be ideal for 170 Works to formalise this relationship and explore the possibility of being commissioned for this service.
 2. The aim of IDEA (Inclusive Development in Enterprise for All) project is to develop enterprise awareness and associated skills, attitudes and behaviour amongst all NDC residents, particularly the most socially excluded and marginalised groups (women, members of BME communities, low-income earners, incapacity benefit claimants, those in the informal economy and young people Not in Employment, Education or Training [NEET]). The project is delivered by the local community organisation, BHC (Building Healthier Communities) and is in its second phase of delivery. The project has established effective partnerships with existing training providers and community support services allowing for seamless transition between local training/advice services. The project has successfully supported the development of 29 business start ups, and continues to successfully engage local residents, promoting and stimulating activity in local entrepreneurship.

3. The Credit Union project was designed to address the social disharmony and inequalities that have been created as a result of the way that current financial systems are operating. This project is part funded through the Big Lottery fund, and also services the Deptford area. The project's overall aim is to transform the use of financial systems into an informed activity that delivers social and economic benefits. Working towards comprehensive financial inclusion to those currently excluded, particularly those on low incomes. Much focus has been placed on raising awareness to and engaging young people in the local schools and colleges with regards to promoting financial competence and knowhow from a young age.

4. Hatfield Skills Training Centre is a community based programme which delivers accessible and accredited IT training for local residents of New Cross Gate. It provides a range of courses such as ECDL, CLAIT, e-Equals Computerised Accounting Level 2 and EDCC (Electronic Digital Competence Certificate). The project has been in delivery for four years and has provided a service to over 850 local residents and has been successful in assisting local residents into work by increasing their skill-sets once training needs have been identified. And providing support in terms of their personal and professional development. The service attracts a wide range of users and as such proven itself to be a popular and well utilised community resource.

3. Aims and Targets

3.1 Resources

Maximisation on the employment opportunities that have been born through immediate developments in the New Cross Gate area, wider Lewisham and the neighbouring boroughs will be a strong focus for our local services; providing support for local residents to receive appropriate training and be employment ready.

Within the NDC and the surrounding areas there are several developments which are taking place, which will generate opportunities for a local labour. The Trust is therefore keen to ensure local residents are able to take advantage of the opportunities that may come from this. For this to be realised, it will be of paramount importance that projects and services who work within the employment field ensure that local residents have the appropriate skill sets and qualifications necessary to meet the criteria relevant to the to make up the labour force that will be involved in the development.

- NDC Centre is the flagship project for the Environment and Housing theme for the programme. The NDC Centre will be a multi-function facility, providing a variety of services for the local community and will also focus for inward investment. Opportunities to attract new business into the area, will create employment opportunities for local residents.

The construction of the Centre itself, promises to present employment opportunities both during and after which should not be missed. The trust is therefore keen to ensure that negotiations with the successful developers take place to ensure that use of local labour will be explored.

- The East London Line extension is being overseen by LOROL (London Over-ground Rail Operations Ltd). The extension of the line will create job opportunities for local people. To date two job vacancies have been advertised locally, Trainee Train Drivers and Customer Host positions. 170 works have worked in collaboration with LOROL, hosting open day events and job fairs which have been well attended by local residents. This has proven to be a successful exercise in that 170 works are able to ascertain what the requirements for the post are and so prepare clients to apply for the positions.
- Skills 2 Work Networking group will be a valuable resource for this theme as it provides a forum of exchange and intelligence from local and statutory employment and economic development agencies. This networking group will be accessible to the Trust and will be able to provide information with regards to services that are being provided locally and also identifying gaps in services which could be delivered by local agencies.

3.2 Milestones

The realisation of this strategy is dependent on the achievement of key milestones

- Access to external funding opportunities to secure core funding to enable continuation of service
- Continuation of Skills 2 Work Partnership and its transition from an information sharing network to a more responsive network which could be a gateway for joint funding opportunities and formation of complementary/ additional service provision
- Mainstreaming of services into the Lewisham Economic Development Service
- Creation of job opportunities and effective training packages/ programmes in construction and engineering to encourage local labour
- Securing commissioning opportunities for services and exploring of any income generating activities that are presented.
- Build services capacity to job match people to right vacancies

4. Partnerships and Links

The Trust will continue to work in partnership with key local and strategic agencies in order to enhance and promote employment and training opportunities for the local people in the New Cross Gate area.

Successful negotiation with LA partners is key to sustainability of the core projects within this theme. At present the Chair of the Trust is a member of the Economic Development Board and will be advantageous to seek membership on other strategic boards within Lewisham in order to keep New Cross Gate on the agenda. Discussions are already taking place to encourage the council to assume some degree of responsibility for ensuring that local projects are being supported especially until such time when the Trust is able to have access to income generated through local development.

Further, continued partnership work with partners such as JCP, LOROL, and LSP will continue to ensure that services are able to take advantage of any opportunities that arise.

5. Management

The Trust will continue to work with existing projects to achieve the current NDC strategic objectives in the Employment and Enterprise theme, and will contribute to the Lewisham Economic Development Strategy. The Trust will have responsibility for maintaining and developing partnerships at a strategic level which will be necessary for effective delivery of projects and achievement of desired strategic outcomes.

The officer appointed to the theme will be responsible for monitoring and delivery of projects and also that of reviewing the strategy. This officer will be responsible for :

- Examining the scope for volorgs to work more closely with statutory agencies in order for projects to have more impact and to secure core funding
- Widening remit of services beyond the New Cross Gate geographic area
- Trust involvement on LSP, LAA and other strategic boards
- Development of employer –led employment and training programmes
- Commissioning and mainstreaming opportunities for current services
- Development and sustainability of the Skills 2 Work Network

6. Marketing

The Trust is keen to establish and market itself as being an ambassador to not only bring employers and business to New Cross Gate but also to support them in being able to successful advertise and recruit to their nature of business.

Marketing of projects/services will be undertaken through raising awareness at job fairs locally and with external partners. Other means used will be that of the Gate Post, NDC website, Skills to Work

7. Budget and Funding

It is foreseen that until 2013 the Trust will have a secured annual income of £200K and will not be able to offer substantial contribution of funding to projects. Core funding proposes therefore to be a real challenge for existing projects. This strategy is based on a funding budget of £50K from Trust resources until the NDC Centre has been completed.

The limited funds accessible through the Trust will mean that projects will have to consider the feasibility of continued delivery of services akin to current organisational structures. With a significantly reduced budget the Trust can only make a commitment to funding a full/ part-time post for one of the projects. The funding will also be used to support a project manager, who will be responsible for delivery of the theme activities. This officer will be responsible for supporting projects in making the transition from being grant awarded services to becoming income generating/ commission - based services.

An immediate priority for the Trust over the next year will be that of capacity building for the projects to ensure that they are able to attract external funding. NDC staffs are working with individual projects with regards to their sustainability. Projects that are associated as a result of being delivered through the same organisations are being encouraged to look at establishing partnerships with services within Lewisham and neighbouring boroughs in order to submit partnership bids to funding agencies.

Element	Objective	Details	Lead	Timetable
Partnership working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mainstreaming of training and employment service provision To have an effective information sharing network with partner providers Representation on boards at a strategic level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work in partnership with current projects in delivery to secure mainstreaming opportunities Skills 2 Work forum to be held quarterly, attended by training and employment service providers Ensure that there is Trust representation at a strategic level, by way of attendance to LSP, LAA, Economic Development board Attendance to JCP 	Trust Officer	February 2010
			Trust Officer/ Employment or Training provider	Quarterly
			Trust Officer	January 2010
			Trust Officer	On-going
Training and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local awareness raising of employment and training opportunities To co-ordinate local job and training fairs with local and external partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the Gate Post, website and partnership activities to raise awareness of Training and Employment opportunities in the NXG. Delivery of job/training fairs where employers will be encouraged to attend and promote opportunities Identify training needs / skill-sets needed for vacancies 	Trust officer/ Projects	On-going
			Trust officer/ employer Liaison officer	Quarterly and also when opportunities arise
Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To have sustainable projects beyond NDC programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support projects with development and implementation of sustainability plans To identify and support projects with external funding bids 		On-going