

**AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET**

**Name of Committee** Warwick Area Committee

**Date of Committee** 13 Sept 2005

**Report Title** Social Inclusion Fund 2006/07 – Funding Proposal – Portuguese Community Support Worker

**Summary** This report seeks continuing financial support in 2006/7 for the Portuguese Community Support Worker funded by Warwick Area Committee in 2005/6.

**For further information please contact:**

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**Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?** No.

**Background papers**

**CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-** Details to be specified

- Other Committees  .....
- Local Member(s)  Cllrs. Boad, Haywood and Randev as Area Committee funding sub group.  
Cllrs Boad, Goode, Naylor and Singh as Cllrs in the Sydenham, Lillington and Brunswick areas.
- Other Elected Members  .....
- Cabinet Member  .....
- Chief Executive  .....
- Legal  David Carter
- Finance  Dave Preece, Finance Officer
- Other Chief Officers  .....

- District Councils  .....
- Health Authority  .....
- Police  .....
- Other Bodies/Individuals  .....

**FINAL DECISION YES**

**SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:**

Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee  .....
- To Council  .....
- To Cabinet  .....
- To an O & S Committee  .....
- To an Area Committee  .....
- Further Consultation  .....

## Agenda No

### Warwick Area Committee – 13th September 2005.

### Social Inclusion Fund Proposal – 2006/07 – Portuguese Community Support Worker

### Report of the County Solicitor and Assistant Chief Executive

#### Recommendation

That Members approve the funding proposals set out in section 2.1 below.

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In July 2004 this committee allocated a sum of £20,000 from the Social Inclusion Fund to appoint a Portuguese Community Support Worker and to undertake associated research into the needs of the Portuguese Community locally. £10,000 of this was subsequently re-allocated to other purposes because the project did not commence until Spring 2005. In July 2005 this committee allocated a further £15,000 to carry the work of the project through to the end of 2005/6. This gives a total project budget in 2005/06 of £25,000. This report now seeks to commit funding to this post in 2006/7 in order to provide a greater degree of confidence for the support worker about ongoing commitment to the project and to provide evidence of commitment that will enable negotiations to take place with other potential funding partners about contributions from other agencies towards the cost of the project.
- 1.2 The project is currently funded by Warwick Area Committee, and managed by CVS Warwick District. The project is directed by a steering group in which the WCC Chief Executive's Department plays a lead role.
- 1.3 In committing to this project, the Social Inclusion Fund 2006/7 (assuming a £50,000 allocation as in previous years) will all be committed, assuming that projects go ahead as planned. The other two commitments next year comprise £8,000 to the Policy for Older People Support Worker post and £20,000 to the Warwick District Welfare Rights Group.

**2. Social Inclusion Fund Proposal**  
**2.1 Portuguese Community Support Worker.**

**a) Description of Project**

**Portuguese Community Research Project**

A detailed report of the operation of this project to date is attached at Appendix 1. A great deal has been achieved in the 5 months since the support worker was appointed. Key aspects of the work undertaken so far include:

- Close working with Champion School (potentially to be enhanced through the Extended Schools programme) is the key to raising the attainment of Portuguese children who are progressing into secondary education.
- Formation of a Portuguese Association
- Developing a volunteer base from within the Portuguese community to support other community members
- Close working with Warwickshire Welfare Rights and Advice Service (WWRAS) on the needs of the Portuguese community.
- Up to the end of July 2005, 89 items of casework taken up on behalf of members of the Portuguese community

**b) Applicant**

Peter Hunter, WCC Warwick Area Manager

**c) Amount of Funding Sought**

Up to £22,000 from the Social Inclusion Fund allocation in 2006/07.

**d) Total Cost of the Project**

The total cost of running this project is £22,000 mostly allocated to salaries (20 hours per week) plus oncosts.

**e) Appraisal**

The proposal meets the cohesive community objectives of the Community Plan and is an agreed Community Plan action.

**f) Recommendation**

Approve the allocation of £22,000 from the Social Inclusion Fund in 2006/07 to enable this initiative to continue.

DAVID CARTER  
County Solicitor and Assistant  
Chief Executive  
Shire Hall  
Warwick

27 June 2005

## Appendix A

### Warwick District Portuguese Support Research Project July 2005 Findings to Date

#### 1 .Background and methodology

The principle purpose of the project is to research

- the extent of the Portuguese population In Warwick District;
- the specific needs of that community and
- to provide recommendations on the improvement of service provision by statutory agencies and business to meet those needs where possible.

The research will be a mixture of quantitative data collected by a survey, and of qualitative data collected through case studies.

#### 1.1 Project Management

Mario Jaco was appointed as Portuguese support worker on a 20 hour week from the beginning of April 2005, and employed by Warwick Council of Voluntary Service

The project steering group acts as an advisory body, and brings in new members to assist in solving problems arising from the research findings. In order to make real changes the two local authorities and the primary care trust will be informed of the findings and recommendations with regular updates. Regular members include WCC, WDC, CAB, the local medical centre, community workers and CVS. There is now a new partnership with the local schools, and a possible Extended Schools Programme is being developed to support home school liaison to Portuguese families.

Emerging areas of interest to the steering group include

- Housing
- Education-children and young people, as well as the necessity for more English classes for adults
- Benefit/work advice
- Social needs
- Health issues
- Tax & national insurance issues.

#### 1.2 The Warwick District Portuguese Community

The Portuguese community is largely from Oporto where the manufacturing base collapsed and steady employment through established firms was lost. Numeracy and literacy skills in the mother tongue are generally low.

In the first three months of the project it has been evident that Portuguese families have desperately needed an advocate, trained in translation and interpretation skills, to assist in obtaining their basic rights to services. For example, with low/and frequently no levels of written or spoken English letters from the authorities went unread. This lead to a family patiently waiting on the housing list for 4 years, who

were not actually 'on the list' as the rules for annually re-applying was not understood by them.

Many agencies depend on Language Line which is expensive and Statutory and voluntary agencies have little or no budget to pay for translation and interpretation services. It is of limited use, as it is a telephone line which is little use in complex housing, medical and benefit enquiries. This is a catch 22 situation as these agencies have a general duty under the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) to get rid of unlawful discrimination, promote equal opportunities and promote good relations between people of different racial groups. Specifically the arrangements for meeting this duty include 'making sure the public have access to information and services'.

The project had not advertised locally in the first two months, but word of mouth brought 62 cases to Mario. Of these cases many have aspects of discrimination in them which are possibly in breach of the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000)

## 2. Client Base

By the end of July, Mario had logged 89 case histories. The presenting problem is identified below, but it has been the experience of the project that individuals coming for help have 'a carrier bagful' of problems. For every presenting problem, it has taken an average of 3 hours of Mario's time. In addition he has escorted many clients to medical appointments, CAB and the Job Centre

Housing	28
Financial	12
Welfare & Benefits	10
Education	7
Employer issues	6
Inland Revenue (NINO)	6
Health/GP	5
General advice	4
Racism/harassment	4
Mental health	3
ID	2
Assistance with Job Application	2

### 3. Key themes

English classes have been used by some Portuguese, but for them there has been no progression -with courses repeating curriculum. Many Portuguese work shifts and often at more than one employer, which has led to difficulties in allocating time to learning English. This is particularly so among young men.

**Employment:** The Job Centre Plus has an approach to the issuing of National Insurance numbers (NINO) which is not as laid down in government guidelines. Discrepancy exists between rates of pay, apparently for the same job for workers with the same experience.

**Education:** good links have been established with the local schools, and every effort is being made to raise educational attainment, and to provide cultural support

**Health:** translation and interpretation services at Warwick hospital and the medical Centre have been patchy, and Mario has had to attend many consultations. There is evidence that children and young people have been removed from school to attend an appointment as translator for a parent. Mario has sourced Portuguese materials on immunizations and the MMR to encourage parents of under fives to go to the clinic. There is evidence of employers 'being awkward' when medical appointments are necessary. The Portuguese have to book in advance to ensure translation services are provided, this is not always satisfactory. Links have now been made with Warwick Hospital PALS, where Portuguese is now the second most requested language support service.

**Racism and racial harassment** have been evident on the estate against children and families and within statutory services. The project has good links with the County Race Equality Partnership.

### 4. The Survey

The initial survey has been filled in by an additional 42 Portuguese individuals; Thirteen of which have been in England for less than 2 years; Eighteen between 2 and 4 years; and eleven having lived here for more than 4 years. The returns indicate that there are difficulties faced by those who have been here a long time, as well as those recently arrived.

A fuller report on this will be available in the autumn, but in asking 'what is your biggest need?' Housing, education and employment support and advice were all at about 50% of all respondents.

The question was put 'What sort of help do you think is required for your community?' and 37 respondents indicated translation services, 26 education support and 21 creche/childcare.

### 5. The proposed way forward is

- to support the extended Schools Provisions bid which will raise attainment of Portuguese children, and cultural support for them and their families
- to form a Portuguese Association to support social needs
- To train volunteers as support workers to undertake some hospital/GP visits as required. We will be running a 'bespoke' esol for these volunteers in partnership with Adult and Community Learning

- The project aims to map the number of Portuguese families within the district. To date the majority has been from CV31, but we have had requests for help from as far away as Rugby. The advocacy and support work done is so labour intensive that a wider mapping exercise has not been possible to date.
- Warwickshire Welfare Rights have allocated part of their Ethnic minority service to the Portuguese service, initially half a day contact time per week, with Mario as interpreter
- Secure on going funding, and extending the funding and hours for community support for the Portuguese

## **6. In Conclusion**

This interim report has been written on activity occurring from April until the end of July, and as such demonstrates how much the Portuguese community needs their own dedicated worker. In order to extend the study it will be necessary to extend the reach of the project through the partnerships identified in section 5, and to extend the hours and the scope of the project worker. We have not advertised the project except in the Sydni and CVS newsletters, and are aware of other areas in the district as yet untapped. A strategy needs to be found for approaching business and workplace problems, racial harassment and extending the reach of the survey to the rest of the district.

Pauline Urwin & Mario Jaco  
Warwick District  
CVS  
August 2005