

OAK TREE HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED**REPORT TO: MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE****REPORT FROM: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER****SUBJECT: WIDER ACTION 2019-2020****DATE: 26th AUGUST 2019****Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is to present to Committee, the first quarter update report for 2019-20, received from Community Links, regarding the Wider Action activities undertaken by the Inverclyde Housing Association's.

Key Recommendation

It is recommended that Committee note the contents of the report attached from Community Links (Appendix 1) and the First Quarter Expenditure. (Appendices 2 & 2A).

Potential Implications

Financial Implications	The Finance Director will discuss with Committee the budget and expenditure details at the 26 th August 19 meeting.
Risk Considerations	Specialist firms are utilised to deliver the OTHA wider action agenda and they carry necessary insurances.
Legal Implications	There are none
Health & Safety	There are none
Equalities Assessment	OTHA makes it clear, that it is imperative that individuals and groups are treated fairly and no less favourably, specific to their needs.
Workload Resources	Wider action project development is undertaken within current staff and with some external resources.

Issues to Note/Consider

The Finance Director has worked to establish the updated budget for 19/20 and expenditure for the first quarter, from information the DCEO obtained recently from Community Links.

1) Work Pays (People & Communities Fund) 2019/20

Following the closure of the People and Communities Fund (PCF), Oak Tree Housing Association were asked whether they wished to apply for a three month extension (2019/20 Q1) to this project in Feb 19. An initial expression of interest was noted, however following detailed discussions with Paul Findlay at Financial Fitness, it was agreed that this duration of funding was not feasible. The staff member that supported the delivery of this project had handed in their notice, and it would be difficult to recruit given the uncertainty of continuation

funding. The Scottish Government were then notified that no continuation application would be submitted.

This application covered the cost of Financial Fitness delivering the Work Pays programme, and was matched with Housing Association contributions (Oak Tree, Cloch and Larkfield) for the Advice for All project. Oak Tree will not receive any invoicing from Financial Fitness for the delivery of Work Pays, but should still receive quarterly invoices for the Advice for All (Welfare Benefits Advice) project. Oak Tree's contribution towards this for 2019/20 is £11,000.

Investing in Communities Fund

This fund replaces the PCF funding from October. Oak Tree have submitted two applications to this fund – Pathways to Construction and Community Voices – notifications on this should be out by the end of October. Financial Fitness applied to the fund to continue the Work Pays project directly, delivering the same services for Housing Association customers.

The Scottish Governments Investing in Communities Fund (ICF) Training and Employability Initiative (Pathways to Construction)

This seeks to work with unemployed young people, and support them to gain skills and real life experience within the construction industry. Funding will be sought towards the wages and support costs for a squad of up to 6 No young people to be employed as trainees for a 6 month waged contract. Over the course of the project, it is anticipated that up to 30 young people could directly benefit from the project and support Oak Tree Housing Association's work within communities. The project will be delivered in partnership with The Trust (Inverclyde Community Development Trust) – who will undertake the recruitment, directly employ and manage the trainees and deliver the training aspects of the project.

Through participation young people will gain specific experience in external landscape works, painting / decorating and carpentry – ensuring they leave the project with a core set of practical skills and relevant formal qualifications that will support them to move along the employability pipeline and enter into employment or further training as a route to employment.

In addition to practical skills The Trust will provide employability skills including job search guidance, CV development support, interview techniques and general advice and support to assist the trainees in accessing further employment upon completion of their placement.

Community Engagement Initiative (Community Voices)

Seeks to build on the Participatory Budgeting project (Our Community, Our Future) through securing funding for a Community Development Officer (CDO), together with a pot of money to continue with Participatory Budgeting across the communities where Oak Tree Housing Association has stock. The CDO will engage directly with individuals and groups within targeted communities, to encourage, inspire and support them to deliver community-led solutions to issues that matter most to their communities.

The CDO will use a variety of methods to engage and will facilitate the development and delivery of workshops and activities within each community. These may include: Community Clean Up events, art and upcycling workshops, community planting days and liaisons with schools and parent councils. Key outcomes of this work, may be that each community develops its own Community Plan – identifying each community's aspirations and a timeline for delivery.

Miscellaneous

Discussions are ongoing with a two community based projects (Financial Fitness and Branchton Community Centre Association) to ascertain as to whether a joint submission can be made, with Oak Tree Housing Association as a partner rather than a lead applicant.