

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Audit Committee
16TH MARCH 2009

Wyre Forest District Revised External Funding Strategy

OPEN	
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME:	Multi-themed
CORPORATE PLAN AIM:	Multi-themed
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Steven Clew
HEAD OF SERVICE:	Head of Planning, Health and Environment
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APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 – Revised External Funding Strategy

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Audit Committee of the proposed revisions to the External Funding Strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Audit Committee is asked to Recommend to Cabinet the revised External Funding Monitoring Strategy be adopted.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC) promotes and improves the economic, social, and environmental well being of the district in the best interests and for the greatest benefit of its inhabitants, residents, businesses and visitors.
- 3.2. The District Council is increasingly dependant on attracting external funding sources, in addition to it's own budgets, to meet it's own priorities and as well of those of the community.
- 3.3. In April 2005 the District Council adopted its External Funding Strategy to establish protocol and aid development to all stakeholders and partner organisations that WFDC work with (on external funded projects) to be aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- 3.4. The Strategy states that external funding data obtained is to be recorded on a quarterly basis to ensure that funding is reported and

monitored regularly. It is also made available on the Intranet.

- 3.5. An annual report is to be delivered to the Corporate Management Team detailing levels of funding attracted in that financial year.
- 3.6. As the Strategy is now over three years old a review is required to ensure that it is meeting its aims and objectives effectively, and that the protocol is relevant and up to date.
- 3.7. Recently, problems have been experienced in reporting and monitoring external funding data. Information regarding funding bids has not regularly been submitted to the Regeneration Officer.
- 3.8. In November 2008 the Community Services Scrutiny Committee established an External Funding Review Panel to:
 - i) Investigate the process for selecting and applying for external funding by Council divisions.
 - ii) Review the process for collecting, monitoring and the reporting of funding data across divisions of the Council.
 - iii) Define the role and responsibilities of the External Funding Strategy and the External Funding Working Group (EFWG).
- 3.9. The recommendations of the Panel were reported at the Community Services Scrutiny Committee on the 4th February 2009. The work of the Panel has informed the development of the proposed revised Strategy.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1. As the Strategy was adopted in 2005 a lot of the information within it is now out of date. This is particularly true of references to made to other Council Policy such as the Corporate Plan. There have also been changes in the service that the Council provides with regard to external funding. A general revision is required to make sure that the document is relevant and up to date.
- 4.2. The most notable issue involved in the review of the strategy is the process of reporting funding bids. As mentioned, bidding activity has not been consistently reported, therefore, the main aim of this review was to investigate this and find a way of making the process easier and more of a priority for Officers making bids.

5. MAIN AMENDMENTS TO STRATEGY

STRATEGY NAME

- 5.1. During consultation, the External Funding Working Group, commented that the Strategy should be better defined to recognise its principal role as a monitoring and reporting process. As the Strategy has never been an "action plan" for the Council's Externally funded activities, it is proposed to rename the Strategy the 'External Funding Monitoring Policy' to emphasise its primary function.
- 5.2. This point is further reiterated throughout the document itself through the stated aims and objectives and through the more defined role of the Working Group.

PROTOCOL

- 5.3. The most significant change to the Strategy involves the protocol behind the reporting of funding bids. This was one of the key recommendations to come from the Community Services Scrutiny Committee.
- 5.4. Currently, Officers making funding bids are required to complete Funding Intent Forms, which are then sent to the Regeneration & Economic Prosperity Section for recording.
- 5.5. However, the revised Strategy proposes that Officers send the completed funding bid to the Regeneration & Economic Prosperity Section. The Regeneration Officer will then complete the forms on their behalf and record the data.
- 5.6. All the Funding Intent Forms have been revised as part of this process, as the Community Services Scrutiny Committee recommended to Cabinet.
- 5.7. A new Intent Form has also been created for situations where WFDC has been involved in a funding bid but is not the financially accountable body for any monies received. It is still deemed important to report this as WFDC Officers have committed their time and the District will benefit. This will require the Officer to fill out the form, but it is designed to be simpler and quicker to complete.

EXTERNAL FUNDING SERVICE

- 5.8. As WFDC no longer subscribes to a funding database, it can no longer formally offer the free external funding search service it once did. However, the Strategy points people towards sources where they can search for funding streams, in particular the Worcestershire Partnership website, which offers an excellent search facility for community and voluntary groups.
- 5.9. The Strategy also highlights the important role that WFDC has in assisting community and voluntary groups in finding and bidding for

funding.

5.10. IMPORTANCE OF REPORTING & MONITORING

- 5.11. The Strategy sets out exactly why it is important that all funding bids are reported and monitored. This aims to clarify that the process is not simply for bureaucratic reasons, but is vital to ensure the Council's financial and legal probity.

EXTERNAL FUNDING WORKING GROUP

- 5.12. The Strategy more concisely defines the role of the working group and its function in the process. Officers on the Working Group, representing each Division, are responsible for ensuring that funding bids from their area of work are reported to the Regeneration & Economic Prosperity Section.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES & ACTION PLAN

- 5.13. The items set out in the aims, objectives and the action plan have been included to ensure that a monitoring framework will be in place for the recording of funding bids which will then be reported to CMT on a quarterly basis and to Members via the Audit Committee and Member Information Bulletin, as recommended by the Community Services Scrutiny Committee.
- 5.14. The recording of this information will also be used to set up a database of all funding bids. This database will be made available to all Officers and Members. It will be a useful tool in providing best practice examples of bids and for identifying funding streams in which the Council has been successful in attracting money.
- 5.15. A recommendation from Community Services Scrutiny Committee was the need for an event to share and highlight best practice. Therefore, the action plan also sets out that training will be provided to relevant officers dealing with external funding. This is aimed to result lead to a greater number of successful bids.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. There are no financial implications to the Council arising from this report.

7. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. There are no legal implications arising from this report. The recommended policy responses are in accordance with the Council's established priorities.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1. There are no risk management issues arising from this report.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1. The adoption of the Strategy will enable the District Council to better record, monitor and report external funding activities.

10. CONSULTEES

10.1. External Funding Working Group.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1. Recommendations from Community Services Scrutiny Committee - 4th February 2009.

External Funding Monitoring Policy

Wyre Forest District Council

February 2009

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1. Introduction

“Wyre Forest is a vibrant District where all our communities enjoy a high quality of life, and people value themselves and one another. Residents of all ages receive efficient services and play an active part in the success and wellbeing of the District. Our distinctive and beautiful rural landscape is preserved; our three uniquely identifiable riverside towns and the outlying villages thrive, socially and economically. Wyre Forest District is a safe, prosperous and healthy place to live, work and play.”

Sustainable Community Strategy Vision 2008

1.1 Definition of External Funding

For the purposes of this policy, External Funding is defined as:

“Any money which the Council secures, extra to its annual allocation from central government and the money raised from council tax, fees and charges either by itself or in partnership, which has been specifically bid for by an Officer(s) for a particular project.”

1.2 The Policy

WFDC uses its influence to promote and improve the economic, social and environmental well being of the district in the best interests, and for the greatest benefit, of all-present and future inhabitants, residents, businesses and visitors.

The Council is increasingly dependent on securing funding from sources other than its own budgets to meet priorities and those of the community. This trend is set to continue with an increasing reliance on partnerships, exemplified by the role of Wyre Forest Local Strategic Partnership, Wyre Forest Matters.

The Sustainable Community Strategy Vision adopted by Wyre Forest Matters is the aspiration that is motivating WFDC and its partners to improve the district, and this is where the need for external funding becomes paramount.

A Policy is required that will establish protocol and aid development to allow all stakeholders and partner organisations that WFDC work with on externally funded projects to be aware of their roles and responsibilities.

A robust structure within the Council will allow for a more pro-active approach by those involved in external funding. By pooling resources and information internally and externally there is an opportunity to target certain groups often excluded from the bidding process, for example using the County wide LSP (the Worcestershire Partnership) to establish bids across district boundaries.

This Policy will be used in support of and in alignment with the District Council's Corporate Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy ensuring that

WFDC has a corporate approach to achieving and progressing the District's objectives.

1.3 Vision

The Vision for the External Funding Monitoring Policy is therefore to:

“To maximise the potential of the Council to apply for and secure funding for the benefit of WFDC and the District, demonstrating that a well thought through process has taken place before any funding enters the district with all considerations and partner involvement established.”

2. Context of the Policy

As funding opportunities become progressively more competitive it is important to demonstrate to funding bodies that the awarding of a grant will result in the best possible service for the public or the special service group it is targeted towards.

Therefore, it is essential that any projects for which external funding is required can be linked to the themes, priorities, targets and outcomes that are set out in strategic documents produced by Government and relevant partnerships at Council, District, County and National levels.

2.1 Local Area Agreement

The Worcestershire Local Area Agreement is a three-year agreement that sets out the priorities for a local area. It is negotiated with Government, represented by Government Office West Midlands, and the local area, represented by local authorities and their partners working through the Worcestershire Partnership.

Worcestershire's second Local Area Agreement covers the period 2008 - 2011 and was signed by Hazel Blears, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, at the end of June 2008.

The document sets out the strategic vision for the future of Worcestershire and to focus on activity needed in the short term (2008 – 2013) to make it happen. The aim is to improve the quality of life of people who visit, work or live in the county. The document sets out of six key themes and their associated priority outcomes – these are show in the table below:

Worcestershire Local Area Agreement – Themes and Priority Outcomes

Themes	Priority Outcomes
<i>Communities that are safe and feel safe</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To continue to improve community safety and build confidence in Communities• To reduce the harm caused by illegal drugs and alcohol

<p><i>A better environment for today and tomorrow</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To enhance Worcestershire’s countryside and urban greenspace and appropriate access to them while protecting the natural and historic environment • To maximise the diversion of waste away from landfill through prevention, re-use, recycling/composting and recovery • To address issues of water quality, supply, and consumption and land drainage in Worcestershire • To increase energy efficiency and increase the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources
<p><i>Economic success that is shared by all</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business – to promote technology-led growth benefiting all sectors and parts of the county • Place – to support the sustainable development of the county through infrastructure development (in particular transport infrastructure), and establish Worcester as a growth point • People – to remove barriers to employment and improve skills • Powerful Voice – to ensure that Worcestershire’s economic interests are effectively represented at all levels
<p><i>Improving health and wellbeing</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support adults to lead healthier lifestyles • To reduce health inequalities • To improve the quality of life and independence of older people and those with a long-term illness • To improve mental health and well-being
<p><i>Meeting the needs of children and young people</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support children, young people and families to lead healthy lifestyles • To identify and deal effectively with bullying, and support all children, young people and families who have been affected by it • To raise the educational achievement of all children and young people • To ensure children, young people

	and their families have access to positive things to do and enjoy in their communities
<i>Stronger Communities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide decent, appropriate and affordable housing that meets the diverse needs of Worcestershire • To improve quality of life in Worcestershire by providing vibrant cultural and sporting opportunities for all • To support effective volunteering that is accessible to all • To reduce income deprivation including child and pensioner poverty • To deliver an accessible, affordable, safe, convenient, sustainable and integrated passenger transport network

2.2 Sustainable Community Strategy

Wyre Forest Matters is the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for the Wyre Forest District. This is a partnership of over 100 local organisations from the public, private, community and voluntary sector aiming to improve the quality of life in Wyre Forest by addressing important issues affecting those who live and work here, such as health, community safety, transport and education.

The LSP have produced the Wyre Forest Sustainable Community Strategy which sets out the Partnership's collective priorities for the District. This Policy is the overarching strategic document for WFDC and is central to the long-term prosperity and well being of the area.

The five themes and their priorities within the Wyre Forest Matters Sustainable Community Strategy also support WFDC's activities where appropriate. These are set out in the table below:

Sustainable Community Strategy – Themes and Priorities

Themes	Key Priorities
<i>Communities that are safe and feel safe</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the quality of life for people living in Wyre Forest by reducing crime and deliberate fires • Reassure the public reducing the fear of crime • Reduce the harm caused by illegal drugs and alcohol • Build respect in communities and reduce anti-social behaviour
<i>A better environment for today and</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have cleaner, greener and safer

<p><i>tomorrow</i></p>	<p>public spaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the impact of climate change • To reduce waste and increase re-use and recycling • To protect and improve Wyre Forest District's natural environment
<p><i>Economic success shared by all</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop a vibrant and sustainable economy, by attracting and retaining high growth and niche businesses into the Wyre Forest District • To develop the economic infrastructure • To improve the skill base of the population • To ensure access to economic benefits
<p><i>Improving health and wellbeing</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase the life expectancy of adults and reduce the incidence of coronary heart disease and cancer • To improve the quality of life of older people, especially those with a limiting long term illness • To reduce health inequalities • Improved life choices for people with mental health problems
<p><i>Meeting the needs of children and young people</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support children and young people to lead healthy lifestyles • Improve the emotional wellbeing of children and young People • Prevent bullying, and support children and young people who have been affected by it • Protect children and young people who are at risk of harm or neglect • Ensure that children and young people are respected and valued in their communities • Actively involve children, young people and their families more in decisions affecting their lives • Support the implementation of Extended Services in Wyre Forest District • Raise the educational achievement of all children and young people,

	<p>from those who find learning challenging to the most gifted and able</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrich the experiences and development of children and young people through activity and positive contribution • Ensure that children, young people and their families have things to do and enjoy in their communities • Increase the participation of young people aged 16 and over in education, employment and training • Ensure that all children and young people and their families live in satisfactory accommodation
<i>Stronger communities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access to learning, participation and cultural opportunities • Increase participation in cultural, leisure and recreational activities • Improve access to services, including advice, support and facilities • Increase the availability of affordable, appropriate and decent housing • Improve housing conditions • Access to housing and preventing homelessness

2.3 Wyre Forest District Council Corporate Plan 2008-2011

WFDC's Corporate Plan for 2008-2011 explains what the Council is aiming to achieve with the help of its partners through the 3 year period. The Plan sets out four Corporate Aims which represent what the Council wants to achieve for the social, economic and environmental well being of the District. The plan also sets out four Priorities for improvement, as well as target areas to which progress will be measured. The aims and priorities are set out in the table below:

WFDC Corporate Plan – Aims and Priorities

AIM	PRIORITY	TARGET AREA
A better quality of life	More affordable housing	Units of affordable housing
A sustainable environment	Reducing waste to landfill and increasing recycling	Domestic waste recycling Business Waste

		Recycling On-street recycling
A vibrant local economy	District-wide regeneration	Regeneration of Kidderminster Public realm improvements in Stourport Supporting the redevelopment of important sites Rural regeneration strategy
A well run and responsive Council	Improving efficiency and value for money	Value for money strategy Efficiency savings Customer satisfaction ICT strategy Sickness absence

3. Sources of Funding

As mentioned above, funding opportunities have become progressively more competitive. This coupled with the fact that the Wyre Forest District is not a priority funding area for many of the national sources of funding, means that attracting funding into the District is becoming increasingly difficult.

Wyre Forest is not a priority area for EU structural funding (other than Objective 3 funding which the whole of the UK can utilise (aimed at training and employment)). Objective 3 is routed through co-financing, raising the importance of partnership working with bodies such as the Learning and Skills Council and Jobcentre Plus. Through the Worcestershire Partnership a European funding group aims to ensure the County benefits from any future EU financing.

The National Lottery provides major funding streams that provide some of the biggest opportunities to bring in funding that WFDC should aim to capitalise on. The National Lottery supports several funding bodies and streams that WFDC could, and do, bid for funding from, including:

- Big Lottery Fund
- Sport England
- Arts Council of England
- Community Fund
- Heritage Lottery Fund
- New Opportunities Fund

Central Government provides funding and most Departments have funding programmes running, including the Department for Communities and Local

Government (DCLG); Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA); and Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

The table below details some examples of the funding streams from which projects in the District have benefited from.

Funding Source	Name of Fund	Project
EU	Objective 3	Business Link new business start up courses delivered through the Kidderminster College.
Central Government (ODPM)	Liveability Fund	Helped to refurbish Brinton Park and Queen Elizabeth Jubilee gardens. The project received £169,000 in 2004 and £227,000 in 2005.
Central Government (DEFRA)		Waste Implementation Programme – a project to carry out a seasonal waste analysis in Worcestershire. The project received just over £89,000.
National Lottery	Heritage Lottery Fund	Improvements to Bewdley Museum to widen opportunities for access and learning. HLF contributed around £400,000 to the project.
National Lottery	Arts Council	Contributed £5,000 towards the development of the Kidderminster Arts Festival Audience and Marketing Strategy.
Private Sector (Community Housing Group)		The Community Housing Group contributed £10,000 to support the Far Out Club – an adventure club for young people.
Private Sector (Weavers Wharf, Swan Centre, Rolland Hill Centre)		The Weavers Wharf, Swan Centre and Rolland Hill Centre contributed a combined £11,000 to the enhancement of Kidderminster's Christmas lights.

4. Bidding for Funding

In the majority of cases external funding is obtained by submitting a bid to the appropriate funding body. The application forms for such bids can be long, complicated, and require copious amounts of information. Making these bids, therefore, takes up a significant amount of Officer time.

It is also important to note that completing application forms is a skill in its own right and many Local Authorities, certainly the larger metropolitan Authorities, employ dedicated bid writers to maximise the success of the bids they submit. There are also organisations who offer extensive training on the art bid writing.

Nevertheless, Officers who do submit bids for external funding have been hugely successful in their applications and have secured a significant amount of funds for the Council. However, it must be recognised that the availability of resources, and particularly time, means that the amount of funding attracted will inevitably be limited as a result.

5. Partnership Funding

External funding grants are usually made for a percentage of the costs; funding bodies are rarely prepared to pay for the full cost of a project. Therefore, partnership or 'match funding' has to be obtained from other sources.

Match funding refers to the finance or commitment put forward as a contribution to the eligible costs of a project and can either come from private or public sources such as central or local government or non-profit making organisations

There are two types of match funding:

- *Actual Match Funding* – a cash contribution to the project.
- *'In kind' Support* – the provision of a service or product by an organisation for which they do not charge.

This match funding can be declared as part of a funding bid – and it may actually be a requirement of some funding streams to provide this. It is also thought that bids for projects that have already gained match funding from another source before approach the funder often have a greater chance of success.

There is a danger that the requirement to find match funding can lead to the delay in implementing, or even the cancellation, of projects. The abandonment of projects that have attracted limited funding but have no match funding is to be avoided.

6. Sustainability

Sustainability can be a challenge when externally funded projects come to an end with no clear direction specifying how the project should be closed down or indeed, if it should be continued. Therefore, the long-term viability of a project must be considered when bidding for funding.

If a project has been successful but has ended due to a lack of funding to continue, the perception to the public can be that services are being cut. Officers making funding bids need to be able to demonstrate either that future

funding streams can be identified to continue the project or that they can show that the closing down of the project will have no detrimental effects on WFDC's provision of public services.

This situation is addressed in this Policy. The Forward and Exit strategy forms set out how projects that have achieved their aims will be continued or closed down.

The temptation to 'chase funding' is to be avoided as the adverse long-term financial implications outweigh the initial benefits of receiving monies. Instead, funding should be applied for when a specific project has been identified and a strategy for its future has been thought through.

Awareness of public perception of funding limitations is crucial. The bad press attached to leaving projects unfulfilled is to be avoided.

7. External Funding Service

7.1 Funding Database

In the past WFDC has subscribed to external funding databases, such as Grants Online and J4B, which provided brief notifications of the latest funding streams and also enabled officers to search for funding streams specific to their project.

The Council also offered a free external funding search service to community and voluntary organisations looking for funding streams that may be available for their projects.

However, the subscriptions to these services have since expired and have not been renewed. A discussion with the External Funding Working Group (see Chapter 7) revealed that these services were not regularly used by officers searching for funding streams and that there were very limited requests for searches from local groups. This, combined with the expense of subscriptions, meant that it was not deemed cost-effective to proceed with using these services.

In addition to this, the Worcestershire Partnership now offers its own free funding and grant search facility. This database contains details of funding streams from the National Lottery, Government and Trust Funds that are available to community and voluntary organisations.

Please see <http://www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk/> for more details.

Central Government also provide a funding search service called The Voluntary and Community Sector Funding Portal, supported by the Home Office and The Office of the Third Sector.

Please see <http://www.governmentfunding.org.uk/> for more details.

For the businesses in Wyre Forest, Business Link West Midlands also offer a free grants and funding search facility through their 'Grants and Support Directory'.

Please see <http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/> for more details.

The Nation Lottery is also a major potential source of external funding, providing funds for vast variety of projects all over the U.K. Their website also includes a search facility.

Please see <http://www.lotteryfunding.org.uk/> for more details.

7.2 Funding Support

Although WFDC does not now provide a formal external funding search service, Officers still have an important role in advising and supporting community and voluntary organisations in their search for funding streams and making bids. The knowledge that Officers may have from their own experiences with funding applications can be used to help those organisations which may have no or little experience in these matters. The work that such organisations do will benefit the District and it is therefore important to provide support to their endeavours.

8. External Funding Working Group

An internal officer External Funding Working Group (EFWG), chaired by the Council's Regeneration Officer, is in place which includes representation from all Divisions. The EFWG allows all sections of the Council to input into the Policy, and the processes that it is concerned with, to ensure that all interests are included. It also allows more effective communication of external funding issues to all areas of the Council.

The Group's primary function is to work with the collection, monitoring and maintenance of details of all funding applications dealt with by WFDC. The EFWG are also responsible for advising Internal Audit, Corporate Management Team, and Members on the progress through quarterly reports. Its terms of reference are set out in Appendix 2.

The Working Group meets on a biannual basis and liaises electronically as required.

At the time of writing, the following Officers were members of the EFWG:

- Ruth Finney – Community & Partnership Service
- Lesley Fox – Community & Partnership Services
- Kathryn Hebbert – Community & Partnership Services
- Rebecca Mayman – Planning, Health & Environment
- Steve Singleton – Planning, Health & Environment

- Matthew Barker – Planning, Health & Environment
- Trevor Jones – Property & Operational Services
- Rebecca Dunne – Chief Executives Office
- Irene Clee – Financial Services
- Rachel Gill – Human Resources
- Clare Taylor – Legal & Democratic Services

9. Monitoring External Funding

The main function of this policy is to provide a framework and protocol for co-ordination and monitoring of the Council's external funding activities. This is necessary to achieve a clear and holistic picture of the level of bidding being done by WFDC and the amount of subsequent external funding received.

This monitoring is not for bureaucratic reasons, but is an important requirement for several purposes:

- Publicising the positive work that WFDC does in seeking and obtaining external funding, as well as assisting voluntary and community groups in bidding for funding, for the benefit of the Wyre Forest District.
- Informing Members of the amount of monies being attracted into the District through WFDCs external funding activities.
- Ensuring that all funding bids made can be fully justified by an identifiable need and can be linked to the priorities and objectives of relevant tiers of government.
- Ensuring that, in the interests of sustainability, exit and forward strategies are considered for projects receiving external funding.
- Ensuring financial and legal probity – particularly in regard to VAT.
- Creating a database of funding bids to monitor the funding streams which may be available for WFDC to bid for and the funding streams WFDC has been successful or unsuccessful in gaining funding.

10. Aims and Objectives

10.1 Aims

The aims of the External Funding Policy are as follows:

- To provide a monitoring protocol and framework to ensure all external funding bids are recognised and reported.

- To provide a strong start on which WFDC can base its funding applications upon, aiming to improve the application system and improve on the Councils capacity for applying for funds.
- To monitor project implementation and impact of funds ensuring that exit or forward strategies are applied as appropriate.
- To provide a framework to ensure consistency and uniformity in the way WFDC deals with external funding applications for approved projects.
- To ensure financial and legal probity.
- To increase the amount of external resources, which support the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Council's Corporate Plan priorities, and maximise the impact of the additional funding.

10.2 Objectives

The objectives of the External Funding Policy are as follows:

- To develop, maintain and audit a database of current and proposed WFDC internal and WFDC supported external projects, which use external funding.
- To report to the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Cabinet on progress of externally funded projects.
- To ensure exit strategies are in place for externally funded projects, and forward strategies for continuing projects ensuring WFDC's objectives are being met and long term position is maintained and effective.
- To give appropriate training to relevant officers responsible for external funding applications, project development, management and monitoring.
- To contribute to the annual Best Value Performance Plan.

11. Action Plan

Objective	Action	Who	Outcome	Time scale
Develop and maintain a database of WFDC projects	Develop database of, 1) current and 2) proposed, WFDC projects	EFWG	Greater efficiency in seeking funding Projects stored in project bank. Utilise for audit purposes Efficient & streamlined funding bids	Within 3 months and on-going
	Put database projects on the WFDC Intranet	Regeneration Officer	Active databases for access across WFDC	Within 3 Months and on going
Report to CMT and Cabinet on progress of externally funded projects.	Forward quarterly progress and audit reports to CMT and Cabinet.	Regeneration Officer	Regular update to CMT and Members	Within 6 Months and on going
Provide training to relevant officers involved in external funding	Source, contact and contract with appropriate training providers.	Regeneration Officer & Human Resources	Relevant officers will be trained to handle funding applications and procedures project management, monitoring and evaluation	12 Months
Ensure exit strategies are in place for externally funded projects.	Applicants liaise with project partners and complete relevant section of "Intent Form"	Project applicants	Ensure WFDC's objectives are being met and long term position is maintained and effective	On going
Evaluate completed projects.	Applicants liaise with project partners and complete relevant Exit Strategy Form"	Project applicants		On going
Input into Best Value Performance Plan.	Prepare annual report on achievements	Regeneration Officer	Submission of report to include performance indicators	Within 12 Months

12. Performance Indicators

Performance Indicators will give quantifiable measures to ensure that the external funding function within WFDC is being operated efficiently and in line

with other WFDC strategies. The Performance Indicators will be agreed annually by the internal working group.

The Performance Indicators will comprise of:

- The number of external funding applications that resulted in additional funding being brought into the district.
- Percentage of external funding applications that resulted in additional funding being brought into the district.
- Total external funding received by Wyre Forest district during the financial year.
- Total match funding received by Wyre Forest district during the financial year.
- Number of independent bodies currently working in partnership with WFDC on funding projects.
- Percentage of projects over 50% of the way through their funded period with exit/ forward strategies in place.

The Regeneration Officer will analyse the data on a quarterly basis and report on the effectiveness of the service providing commentary on variations as appropriate, a full review of the Performance Indicators will be included in the annual report.

13. The Reporting Protocol

This Policy sets out a pre-set procedure for the reporting of external funding bids for monitoring purposes. This procedure is to be followed by all Divisions who are intending to submit bids/applications for funding.

This procedure involves the completion of pro formas (the Process Forms) in conjunction with any bid for funding being submitted. These forms will be completed by the Regeneration Officer with information regarding the bid being provided by the WFDC lead officer involved with the project.

The completed forms will then be compiled in a database of funding bids, which will be made available over the intranet, and funding activities reported to CMT and Members.

13.1 Process Forms - Explained

The purpose of the Process Forms is to establish essential information about the project and the bid. They seek information on what the project involves, where it will take place and who will benefit, why the project is needed, and what are the expected outcomes. The Forms also request information on the financial implications: how much the project will cost and the potential sources of funding, including partnership funding and 'in kind' support.

The Process Forms consist of five individual forms which can be found in Appendix 4:

- **Form A** – Funding Intent Form (bids where WFDC is the financial accountable body)
- **Form B** – Funding Intent Form (bids where WFDC is not the financial accountable body)
- **Form C** – Delegated Authority Form
- **Form D** – Forward Strategy
- **Form E** – Exit Strategy

NOT ALL OF THESE FORMS NEED COMPLETING, IT IS DEPENDENT ON THE INVOLVEMENT THAT WFDC HAS IN THE BID.

Please refer to Appendix 1 for a guide to the different Process Forms.

13.2 The Protocol – What Officers need to do! (where WFDC is the Accountable Body)

WFDC is financially and legally accountable and responsible for any monies secured following a successful bid for funding. Such funding needs to be reported to ensure financial and legal probity.

The reporting process has been made as simple as possible to reduce the pressure on Officers' time.

*A Reporting Protocol Flowchart has been produced to provide a simple guide on the actions that Officers are to take when submitting a bid. Please see **Appendix 2**.*

The Reporting Protocol is made up of 4 Stages:

1. REPORTING

Officers are required to forward a copy of the application for funding (preferably electronically) to the Regeneration Officer once it has been submitted.

2. CONFIRMING

When the Officer has been informed of the outcome of the funding bid notification must be given to the Regeneration Officer. This can be done via email.

This conformation should include the conditions of the grant, if not already made clear during the bidding process.

3. AUTHORISING

After confirmation of the success of the bid, the Officer must seek the authorisation of the relevant Portfolio-Holder

This requires FORM C to be completed and signed by the Portfolio-Holder and sent to the Regeneration Officer.

4. EXIT OR FORWARD

A Forward or Exit Strategy Form is to be completed when a bid has been successful and funding has been awarded to a project.

A Forward or Exit Strategy is most appropriately considered in the mid-point of the funding period (i.e. 2 years into a 4 year project). At such time a review of the project will be conducted to determine how the project will progress after the current funding ends.

It will be decided whether the project can be taken further after the current funding ends (Forward Strategy) and where future funding would be attained from; or whether the project is to be closed down (Exit Strategy) and conclusion are to be made about its success.

FORM D or E is to be completed, as appropriate, and sent to the Regeneration Officer.

13.3 External Funding where WFDC is not the Accountable Body

There are also cases where there are externally funded projects, that WFDC may have had involvement in attracting (through a partnership, assisting a community organisation, etc...) but is not actually the financially accountable body for any monies received.

However, WFDC has still made an important contribution in attracting the funding which will be to the benefit of the District. It may also be case that the Council are contributing to the project in other ways, be it match funding or committing Officer time. Therefore it is still important that these activities get reported.

If Officers have been involved in such a project then they are requested to complete FORM B and provide the essential details of the project.

13.4 What happens to the completed Process Forms?

All the funding bids and the completed Process Forms will be kept in a database which will be made available to Officers. This will provide a record of the areas and sources where WFDC has been successful in attracting funding to/from and could provide a valuable resource for Officers looking for a

funding pot for a certain project. In addition to this, the successful bids on record will provide an example of good practice in bid-writing.

Successful funding bids will also be reported at quarterly intervals to CMT and Cabinet to inform them of the work that WFDC is doing to improve quality of life in the District. It is also important to promote the positive work that WFDC is doing to attract funding into the District and to support projects that will benefit the people of Wyre Forest.

Information of funding bids will also be sent to the Financial Services Section for audit purposes and to ensure financial probity.

APPENDIX 1 – Process Forms Explained

FORM A

Form A is to be completed when WFDC is submitting the bid for funding and would be the financial accountable body for any monies received if successful.

As WFDC is receiving money directly, this form requests more detailed financial information to ensure financial probity. If completing Form A then Form C will also be required.

FORM B

Form B is to be completed when WFDC is not submitting the bid for funding and would not be financially accountable for any monies received if successful. This is most likely to occur in cases where WFDC is assisting an organisation in submitting a bid for funding that would still be to the benefit of the District.

This is a much shorter form require less financial information. However, it requests more details of WFDCs contribution to the project, and in particular Officer Time.

FORM C

Form C is the Delegated Authority Form. It is to ensure that any funding received has the authorisation of the relevant Portfolio-Holder.

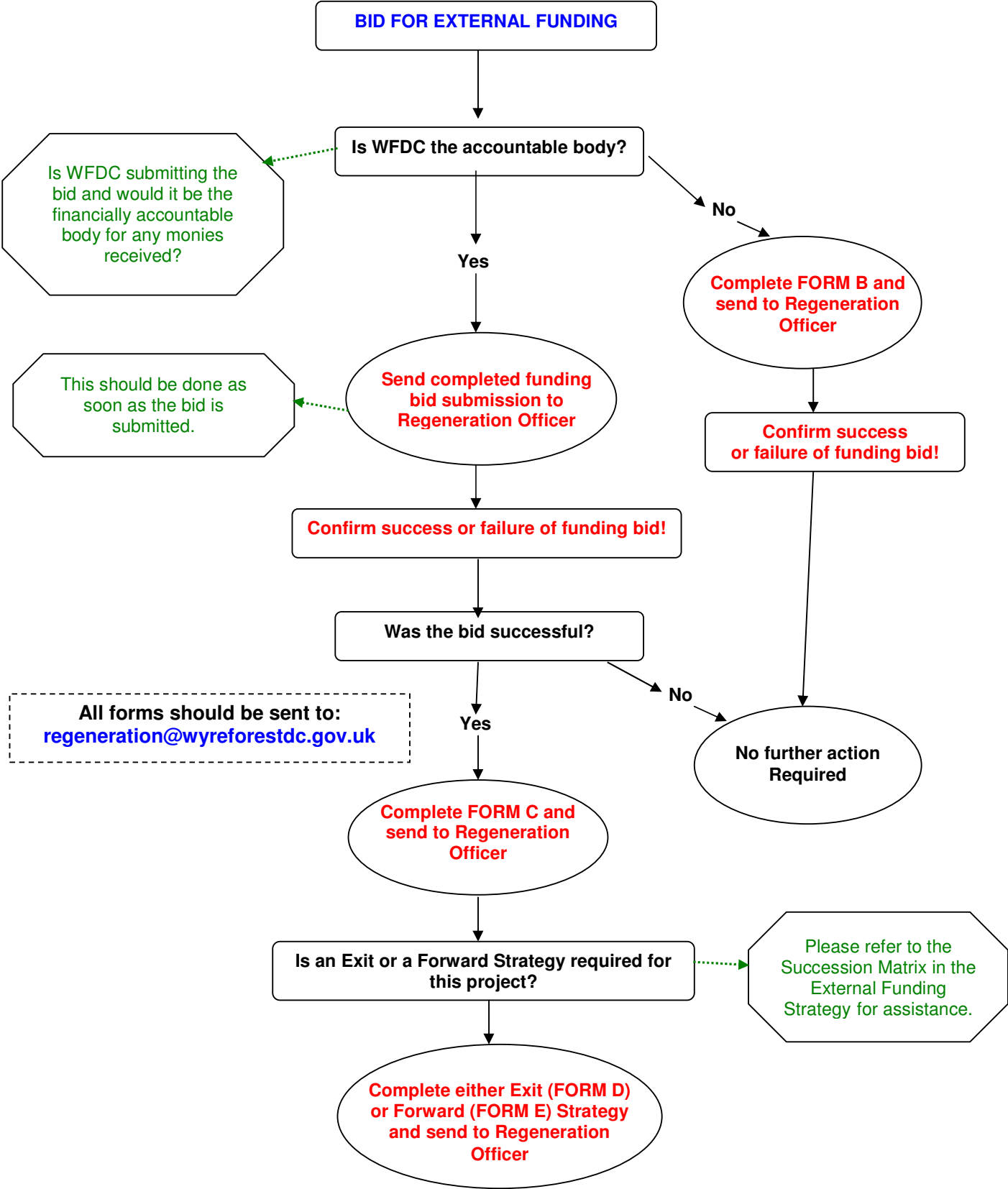
FORM D & E

Forms D and E are the Forward and Exit Strategy Forms and are to only be completed when a bid has been successful and funding has been awarded to a project.

A Forward or Exit Strategy is most appropriately considered in the mid-point of the funding period (i.e. 2 years into a 4 year project). At such time a review of the project will be conducted to determine how the project will progress after the current funding ends.

It will be decided whether the project can be taken further after the current funding ends (Forward Strategy) and where future funding would be attained from; or whether the project is to be closed down (Exit Strategy) and conclusion are to be made about its success.

APPENDIX 2 – Reporting Flowchart



APPENDIX 3 – Process Forms

FORM A – FUNDING INTENT FORM – funding bids where WFDC is the financial accountable body

1. Contact Details

WFDC Officer (s):	
Division and Section:	
Telephone No:	
E-mail Address:	

2. Project details

Project Title:			
Brief description of project:			
Final submission bid date:		Notification date for successful applications:	
Estimated Project start date:		Project completion date:	
Corporate Theme and Key Priority:			
Other Targets? i.e. LAA or national			
Lead Organisation:		Financial Accountable Body: (If different from lead organisation)	
Project location:		Prime beneficiary of project:	
Why is the project needed and what are its outcomes/targets?			
Is a Forward/Exit Strategy required? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <i>(if yes please complete Form D or E)</i> <i>Please refer to the Succession Matrix in the External Funding Strategy for assistance</i>			
Partner Details	<i>Please give full details of all partner organisations including information about what they are gaining from the venture.</i>		

Conditions of Grant	<i>Please attach the conditions of grant document</i>
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3. Financial Appraisal

Table i) – Estimated project costs					
Financial Years:	Project Element/Phase	Capital:	Revenue:	'In Kind' Support:	Total: (£)
Total Cost of Project:					

Table ii) – Potential sources of funding						
Financial Years:	Funding Partners:	Capital	Revenue	'In kind' support	Total (£)	Funding Assured Y/N
Total funding Identified:						

Table iii) Financial implications to WFDC	
<i>Who will place orders and receive goods/supply:</i>	
<i>Who has responsibility for approving expenditure and keeping accurate accounts and audit details:</i>	
<i>When will WFDC make contributions to the project (if applicable):</i>	
<i>Will payment be made by WFDC or a partnership:</i>	
<i>Will there be any retention/gifting of goods:</i>	
<i>Will any income be generated:</i>	
<i>Initial VAT recovery forecasts:</i>	

4. Accountability Statement

Project Manager:			
Signed:		Date:	
<i>I acknowledge receipt of the responsibility and accountability delegated to me by my Head of Service. I also understand that the information provided in this document will be processed by WFDC to assist in the research, analysis, evaluation, monitoring and reporting of external funding activity to all appropriate persons.</i>			
Head of Service:		Date:	

FORM B – Funding bids where WFDC is not the accountable body

1. Contact Details

WFDC Officer (s):	
Division and Section:	
Telephone No:	
E-mail Address:	

2. Project details

Project Title:			
Accountable body:			
Brief description of project:			
Corporate Theme and Key Priority:			
Project location:		Prime beneficiary of project:	
What are the project outcomes/targets?			
<p>Is an Exit Strategy required? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> (if yes please complete Form D)</p> <p><i>Please refer to the Succession Matrix in the External Funding Strategy for assistance</i></p>			

3. Financial Appraisal

Table i) – Estimated Project Costs		
Financial Years:	Project Element/ Phase	Total Cost (£)
Total Cost of Project:		

Table ii) – Potential sources of funding (not including any WFDC contributions)				
Financial Years:	Funding Partners:	Capital	'In Kind' Support	Funding Assured Y/N

Total funding Identified:				

4. WFDC Contribution

Financial Contribution		
Financial Years:	Project Element/Phase	Total Cost (£)
Total Contribution:		

Officer Time Contribution	<i>Please give brief details of the contribution that WFDC officers have made towards the project.</i>

4. Accountability Statement

Project Manager:			
Signed:		Date:	
<i>I acknowledge receipt of the responsibility and accountability delegated to me by my Head of Service. I also understand that the information provided in this document will be processed by WFDC to assist in the research, analysis, evaluation, monitoring and reporting of external funding activity to all appropriate persons.</i>			
Head of Service:		Date:	

FORM C – Delegated Authority

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL DECISION NOTE
DECISION MADE BY AN INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER**

DECISION:

To allocate external funding in the sum of £ xxxx

for -----

received from partner(s) -----

----- into the revenue/capital budget (delete as necessary) for the financial
year(s) XXXX/XXXX.

Cost Centre: XXXX
Account Code: XXXXX

REASON FOR DECISION:

In accordance with delegated powers approved by Cabinet 22nd November 2007,
minute number CAB.113.

In accordance with the authority delegated to me and having consulted with
the Service Department I approve the above decision.

(In the case of a key decision) I confirm that I have carried out consultations
in accordance with the Forward Plan. *(delete if not applicable)*

Dated this day of XXX, 200X

Signed :

**Councillor xxx
xxxx Portfolioholder**

Note to Originating Officer

If this decision is not called in by the date specified above, the agreed action
may be taken after that date. You will be notified of any call-in.

Approved: -----
Date: -----

**David Buckland
Head of Financial Services**

FORM D - Forward Strategy

1. Project Details

Project No:	
Project Title:	
WFDC Lead Officer (s):	
Division and Portfolio:	
Telephone Number:	
E-mail Address:	
Changes to original project:	
Evidence of need:	
Targets/ outcomes:	

2. Financial Appraisal

Table i) - Estimated Project Costs					
Financial Years:	Project Element/ Phase	Capital:	Revenue:	'In Kind' Support:	Total: (£)
Total Cost of Project:					

<i>Table ii) - Potential Sources of Funding Including Council contributions and if contributions are from an existing budget (EB) or specific approval is needed (SA)</i>						
Financial Years:	Funding Bodies inc. Partners:	Capital	Revenue	'In kind' support	Total (£)	Funding Assured Y/N
Total funding Identified:						

3. Accountability Statement:

Project Manager:			
Signed:		Date:	
<i>I acknowledge receipt of the responsibility and accountability delegated to me by my Head of Service. I also understand that the information provided in this document will be processed by WFDC to assist in the research, analysis, evaluation, monitoring and reporting of external funding activity to all appropriate persons.</i>			
Head of Service:		Date:	

Form E - Exit Strategy

This form is only to be completed when funding/ projects are to be closed down. The aim of this is to minimise the effects of WFDC withdrawing from a project and ensure that every opportunity has been explored to ensure that all possible benefits from the venture have been utilised.

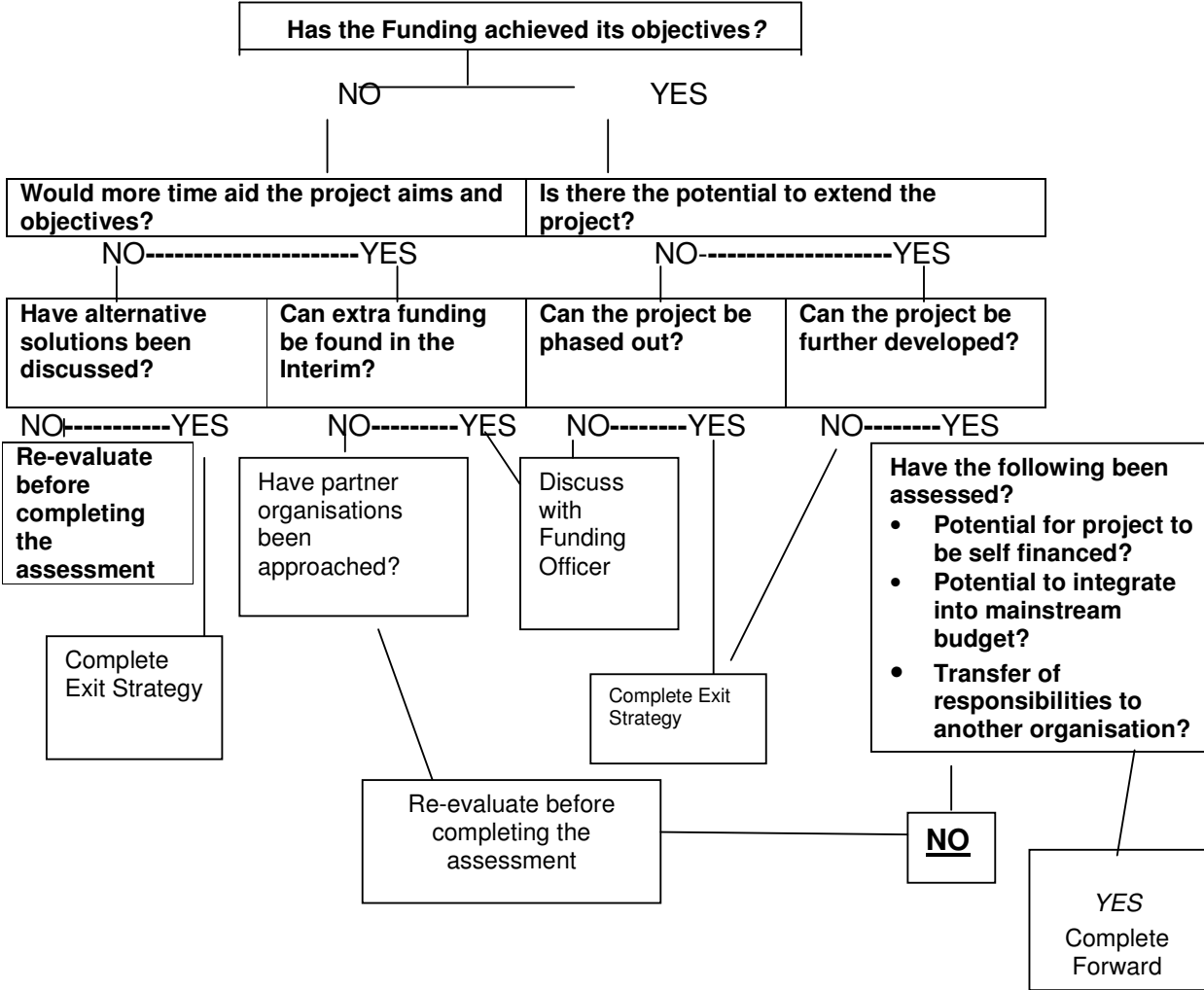
1. Project Details

Project No:	
Project Title:	
WFDC Lead Officer (s):	
Division and Portfolio:	
Telephone Number:	
E-mail Address:	
Have the objectives been achieved? If not why not?	
What conclusion to the project has been allowed? E.g. phasing out, media coverage etc	
Are all partners aware and in agreement of actions?	
Is there potential for this project to operate again?	
Portfolio Holder notified:	

2. Accountability Statement:

Project Manager:			
Signed:		Date:	
<i>I acknowledge receipt of the responsibility and accountability delegated to me by my Head of Service. I also understand that the information provided in this document will be processed by WFDC to assist in the research, analysis, evaluation, monitoring and reporting of external funding activity to all appropriate persons.</i>			
Head of Service:		Date:	

Succession Matrix



APPENDIX 4 – Terms of Reference

Wyre Forest District Council INTERNAL OFFICER EXTERNAL FUNDING WORKING GROUP Terms of Reference

February 2008

In order to support the effective, efficient and consistent operation and management of internal working groups, it has been agreed that a set of corporate protocols / standards will be adopted.

The corporate protocols / standards are as follows:

Before any new working group is established, a report must be tabled to the Corporate Management Team outlining the purpose, need and proposed outcomes of the working group. For consistency purposes, groups will be named working groups.

Working groups will have an agreed set of Terms of Reference. The template attached must be used for this purpose.

Working group meetings will follow a set agenda. This will be circulated to all representatives prior to the meeting and must clearly state the overall purpose of the meeting, in addition to the core business items.

Notes including an action sheet will be produced after each working group meeting and will be used to provide an audit trail of the group's work. A copy of the notes will be sent to the Chief Executive's office for information purposes.

The working group will have a Chairperson. The responsibilities of this position should be defined by the working group and set out in the Terms of Reference.

The working group will provide the Corporate Management Team with a quarterly progress report. In some instances, monthly progress reports may be required. However, the Chairperson of the working group will be advised accordingly by the Corporate Management Team.

The Chairpersons of each working group will meet at least twice each financial year. The purpose of this forum will be to identify and join up cross cutting policy issues and to share best practice. The Chief Executive will chair this forum. Each working group shall produce an end of year report showing a summary of activities and meetings.

The Chief Executive's Office will be responsible for monitoring that the above protocols and standards are being carried out.

External Funding Working Group	
Purpose	<p>To develop the necessary processes and procedures through which the Council can secure the maximum level of external funding for the community of the Wyre Forest District by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improving the quality of life of our community through improvement of its economic environmental and social wellbeing; ▪ Getting best value from what we do; ▪ Developing the effectiveness of how we work within the community; and ▪ Setting a course for the future.
Role	<p>Collect, monitor and report information on the Council's external funding activity to CMT and Cabinet;</p> <p>Review the processes involved in the collection, monitoring and reporting of funding bids to ensure that it is working efficiently;</p> <p>Establish a central database of external funding bids, both successful and unsuccessful and make it available to Officers and Members of the Council;</p> <p>Provide a resource to the Council, other agencies, bodies and individuals in terms of a knowledge base in respect of fund availability and access to information on application procedures;</p> <p>Provide good practice examples of successful bids to assist in the attraction of additional funding to the District.</p>
Actions	<p>To take forward the biannual EFWG meetings.</p> <p>Provide CMT with a quarterly progress report.</p>
Working Arrangements	<p>Biannual Meetings</p> <p>Although the nucleus of the group will comprise of representatives from all divisions, the actual composition of the group will vary depending on the themes under review.</p>
Date Adopted	February 2008