

**Agenda item 3c**

**Appraisal application form for Interaction NMP Board**

***A Summary and basic information***

<b>1. Title of proposal</b>	<b>Signpost</b>		
<b>2. Date submitted</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> July 2007</b>		
<b>3. Summary of proposal (max 150 words) i.e. what does the proposal involve and what will it achieve?</b>			
<p>Signpost's office in Golf Green is a valuable resource, offering both physical and interpersonal resources based in the community. These services are supplemented by an Outreach Service which is also active in Pier ward.</p> <p>The project uses a tried and tested approach to support people back into gainful employment, volunteering, education, or some other meaningful activity.</p> <p>Overall the project will achieve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remain open in the Community</li> <li>• Deliver Outreach services in the Interaction Wards</li> <li>• Support 250 New People</li> <li>• Have 100 repeat visits</li> <li>• Generate a good satisfaction rating</li> <li>• Support 50 people into work or education</li> <li>• Secure continuation funding.</li> </ul> <p>It is possible to infer significant qualitative benefits in terms of improved self esteem and confidence from these quantitative outcomes</p> <p>This proposal is for £15,000 to help sustain and develop the project for one year. We are currently running at below full strength and this fund will allow us to cover our costs. Should the panel see fit to extend their support across the SSCF period then these funds will be utilised to the benefit of the community. It will also enhance the effectiveness of SSCF funds by allowing us to lever in more resources.</p> <p>Hopefully, Signpost is well known to the panel but any visit or inspection is welcomed.</p>			
<b>3. How much will the proposal cost in total?</b>			
	From NM	From other sources	Total
Capital	Nil	Nil	Nil
Revenue	15,000	31,096	46,096
Total	15,000	31,096	46,096
<b>4. Organisation responsible</b>			
Name of contact and	Paul Feasey		

position	Centre Manager
Address	Signpost Tendring Unit 5, Jaywick Enterprise Centre Lotus Way Clacton on Sea Jaywick Essex CO15 2LU
Phone	01255 688683
e mail	Paul.feasey@sign-post.info

## ***B The proposal***

### **1. What is the problem you are trying to address?**

Set out the problems and causes, using statistics and evidence where available – referring to the delivery plan and its targets and outcomes.

Signpost opened the Office in Golf Green in response to the long established local issues of unemployment and deprivation. This was at the suggestion of Jobcentre Plus and TDC.

The Panel will be familiar with the general profile of deprivation in the two wards and they will not be laboured here. However, I have been able to obtain additional statistics that describe the numbers of people in receipt of benefits:

<b>Golf Green</b>	<b>Pop</b>	<b>% of Working Pop</b>
Total Ward Population	4665	n/a
Of working age (between 16 and 59)	1958	100%
In receipt of Incapacity Benefit	550	28%
In receipt of Invalid Carer's Allowance	65	3%
In receipt of Income Support	375	19%
In receipt of Jobseekers Allowance	205	11%
Totals of Working Age Pop' in receipt of Benefits	1195	61%

<b>Pier</b>	<b>Pop</b>	<b>% of Working Pop</b>
Total Ward Population	4810	n/a
Of working age (between 16 and 59)	2478	100%
In receipt of Incapacity Benefit	515	21%
In receipt of Invalid Carer's Allowance	45	2%
In receipt of Income Support	405	16%
In receipt of Jobseekers Allowance	210	9%
Totals of Working Age Pop' in receipt of Benefits	1175	48%

*Figures Courtesy of Jobcentre Plus.*

Broadly speaking, approximately half of the people of working age in the deprived wards are in receipt of some form of benefit. This shows a clear need for work that helps people to look after themselves improving; self respect, self esteem and confidence.

### **Working with the Delivery Plan**

Signpost exists to address many of the complex issues that lay behind these figures. We are well placed and equipped to support the delivery plan within the themes of: 'Health' and 'Employment and Income' across both of the deprived wards.

More generally, our activities will support the efforts across many of the LAA 14.1 indicators. This is through the empowerment of individuals.

## 2. Proposal objectives?

List the objectives for the proposal (these should be measurable) which can be used to evaluate the impact of the project

Below are listed SMART objectives for the whole project:

Specific	Measured	Achievable	Relevant	Timely
Golf Green Office to remain open 4.5 days per week, 50 weeks per year.	Internal records	Staffing is the challenge here. We have managed to remain open in previous years.	'Being There' is important to being valued by the community. A resident will only turn up to find us closed once!	Until project year end.
Outreach to provide 2 * half day sessions in the Interaction wards.	Outreach worker's records	Currently delivering 3 half days, one of which is in Pier Ward (Clacton Library).	Reaching people who may be reluctant to come into an office or can't travel.	Until project year end.
Support 250 new people.	Client records, collected at first visit.	Last year's figures show that we can engage with people at this rate. We would expect to exceed this.	This represents added value in that these will all be 'new' visitors who have not used our services before.	By project year end.
100 Repeat visits	Visitor signing in sheet	Whilst many of our clients might only have a CV prepared for them. Significant numbers of people use Signpost's facilities on a regular basis.	Repeat visits indicate that people are finding our services useful and relevant. It is also part of putting modern resources at the community's disposal.	By project year end.
Above average satisfaction rating	Via quarterly telephone survey.	Currently our clients rate us at about 4.5 out of a possible 5.	Measuring client satisfaction ensures that we are useful to the community we serve.	Three months after project year end.
50 people into work or education.	Via quarterly telephone survey.	Currently helping 23% of people into employment	This is our reason for being in the affected wards and there is a clear need.	Three months after project year end.
Secure continuation funding	Successful bids / tenders.	Sustainability has been part of our task since the beginning.	Voluntary sector organizations will always need support	Funding to be secured 3 months prior to project year end.

While the above are quantifiable objectives it is appropriate to point out that the gains in personal development and qualitative outcomes are not so easily measured.

## 3. How do you propose to address the problem?

List the activities and set out who will benefit.

## **Signpost Activity**

Signpost exists to help people to overcome the barriers to achieving their aspirations. Often, but not always, this takes the form of employment related help. This is quite a broad remit as it is a client centred service and this means that help and support offered is formed around the needs of the beneficiary.

The project being delivered by Signpost Tendring is in the unique position of being able to offer physical and interpersonal resources via our a well equipped and staffed facility in the heart of deprivation in West Clacton:- in Golf Green. We also operate outreach services across Tendring, one of which is in Pier Ward. Thus, we are represented in both wards.

Specifically our activities support people in overcoming the various challenges they encounter:

- Physical resources include: A comfortable IT suite which offers members of the community free access to the internet and all the training and benefits associated with IT.
- Our interpersonal resources include: A welcoming culture that treats people with respect and the expectation of success. A thorough understanding and expertise in the challenges and cycles of unemployment and poverty with a supportive, practical approach to overcoming those barriers.

It is difficult and limiting to be specific about the planned activity because we are an essentially 'Client Centred' service. That is, we shape our services around the need of the individual beneficiary.

We also host outreach services from other agencies. For example: CAB and Tendring Volunteer Bureau.

## **Delivery Plan**

The presence of Signpost in the affected wards supports the aims of the Interaction initiative within the themes of:

### *Health*

There are clear links between longer term unemployment and increased risk of mental health issues. In supporting people back into employment, getting them 'job ready,' we frequently have to address mild anxiety and depression issues that can be precursors to more serious mental health problems. We do a lot of work developing confidence and self esteem.

Whilst it is hard to demonstrate Primary Care outcomes at this level, it is highly likely that the work of Signpost has had a very positive impact. Anecdotal evidence exists to support this effectiveness.

### *Employment and Income*

The main focus of Signpost's work is to support people back into employment. Residents can be at varying levels of 'job readiness,' and we work to support people with their personal development. This invariably empowers them to secure gainful employment or some other meaningful activity such as further education.

We also support people with the more practical stuff such as; Jobsearch CV writing, application forms, interview techniques etc. (We are a Jobcentre Plus Intermediary).

## **Beneficiaries**

Signpost facilities and services are open to all members of the community. This is without exception excepting repeated inappropriate or challenging behaviour. (We have not had a serious incident since being here; approx 4 years).

It is noteworthy that a recent postcode analysis of our database revealed that approximately 30% of our clients who were able to give us an address reside in the NM wards.

#### **4. How does this proposal address the problem.**

List activities and describe evidence from similar initiatives if possible.

As mentioned above the proposal is to part fund Signpost facilities and services in the deprived wards. This will ensure that we are able to continue to support residents with both physical and interpersonal resources.

A list of our more tangible activities reads:

CV, Jobsearch, Interview Techniques.

Motivation Management for the Unemployed.

IT support: Training, Home Computers

Listing specific activities is quite limiting in trying to express the benefits to the community of Signpost's work. This is because of the client centred nature of our operation.

The model of helping we use has been developed over 12 years across the 3 Signpost offices. It is client centred at all levels in that each office is different, reflecting the needs of the local population, and each individual's needs are explored before support is offered. That support might take the form of help with securing employment, or getting into education. It may even involve close one to one work in more acute cases. The thread that runs through these activities is developing self esteem and confidence.

The advantage of adopting a client centred approach that aims to empower people is that once people experience success it becomes self reinforcing and offers the best hope of a real shift in their social and economic circumstances. Once a person acquires this ability they no longer need our help. People who are able to change their circumstances for the better will, most likely, choose to stay out of poverty.

Obviously this is not a new project and we have the advantage of some track record. A summary of last year's activity is included in the enclosed Annual Report.

**5. Community involvement**

How have residents been involved in developing the proposal?

The Signpost Office in Golf Green has been established for some 4 years. Prior to the commencement of the project extensive research was carried out to determine the suitability of Signpost's services for the area.

A feasibility study was conducted in October 2002. This included consultation with Tendring District Council and taking into consideration the views of The Jaywick Residents Association, The Tudor Estate Residents Association, and other agencies (notably Jobcentre Plus, SureStart and Tendring Adult Community College) already working in the area.

Our clients continue to express satisfaction with our services via the regular survey alluded to elsewhere. We remain sensitive to the needs of members of the community. They have not changed much since we have been here.

**6. Management arrangements?**

Describe the arrangements for ensuring the proposal is managed, monitored and delivered as planned. Please give names of two references or referees (people that you've worked with before) that we can contact in advance of the appraisal process.

**Management**

Signpost management has evolved through the requirements of the Charities Commission and various projects in which we have been involved. An important management body is the Committee of Trustees. They are supported by an Advisory Committee.

At an operational level Signpost has a Management Committee, and each Office has a Manager. The Centre Manager for Tendring attends Advisory Committee and sits on the Management Committee. Management style across Signpost and particularly at Tendring is facilitative. This means that, where appropriate, staff, volunteers and clients are able to input into the decision making process.

**Referees**

Mark Creasey: Advisory Services Manager, Clacton Jobcentre Plus.

Elizabeth Foss-Smith: Widening Participation Manager & Head of Clacton Campus, Colchester Institute.

**7. Risks**

Risk	Impact	Likelihood Low /Medium / High	Importance Low /Medium / High	Contingency and/or mitigation actions
<b>Initial implementation or build risks for the project</b>				
Overall funding crisis across all of Signpost	Withdrawal of centralized services from the Golf Green Office	L	H	If successful this application will make Signpost in Golf Green financially independent at the current level of service delivery.
Faliure to secure adequate funding	Reduced service delivery	L	H	As we are a people business any shortfall in funding will be compensated for by reducing staff numbers and hours.  Should funding shortages become so severe as to undermine the viability of the project then Signpost holds funds to meet our legal and moral obligations.

Risk	Impact	Likelihood Low /Medium / High	Importance Low /Medium / High	Contingency and/or mitigation actions
<b>Ongoing risks if objectives are not met</b>				
Recruiting insufficient numbers of beneficiaries.	People will not be receiving the help they need.	L	H	Should visitor numbers be too low then increased effort will be diverted to marketing the project at the community.  It is noteworthy that our marketing efforts are currently restrained to match our reduced capacity.

### C Finances

#### 1. What is the total cost of the proposal?

Itemise the total spend as much as possible and set out the period this will cover, indicating what proportion is required from NM

	item	£ year 1	£ year 2	£ year 3	Total
<b>Capital (NM)</b>					
<b>Revenue (NM)</b>					
<b>Total (NM)</b>					
<b>Other funding</b>					
<b>Total</b>		<b>46,096</b>			<b>46,096</b>

<b>Projected Income 07 08</b> (* = secured)	
Fair Share	*17,784
Adult Social Care	*2,000
Key Fund	*10,000
Fowler Smith Jones	*1,000
NM	15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>45,784</b>

<b>Projected Expenditure 07 08</b> (at current levels)	
Staff / Volunteers	33,000
Travel	1,800
Proff Fees	5,000
Stationary	1,800
Phone / Internet	1,904
Rent	2,052
Other	540
<b>Total</b>	<b>46,096</b>

The two inserted tables show the overall projected figures for this financial year at the current level of activity. NM funds can be accounted for either as a percentage of overall costs or for specific items depending on preferred NM monitoring.

It is noteworthy that a difficult challenge for organisations such as ours is in keeping records to satisfy a diverse range of funders across a broad range of activities. Less complexity and specificity will allow us to target resources towards supporting people rather than admin.

## **2. Value for money**

Explain how this proposal provides value for money not only in terms of cost but also in terms of quality

This proposal will lever in resources extra to NM funding, via some of the routes alluded to elsewhere.

The Signpost office in Golf Green is a well established facility with local reputation and expertise. This has taken some years to build up.

At the heart of how we operate is a client centred approach that treats people with respect and the expectation of success. Whilst this is the sort of statement one might expect to read in a bid it is important to note that it is the key to *sustainable* outcomes for individuals, and therefore the community.

For example: A person who is levered into a job before they are job ready, merely to make the figures look good, is more likely to fail in that job and return to benefits than a more confident individual. Such a person will have chosen their path in life and have experienced some success in getting a job, They may have been supported during the change back into work, and are more likely to value the benefits of employment.

## **3. What resources are already invested by your, and other, organisations in the area on this issue?**

As well as the funding routed into the NM area via Signpost (described elsewhere) we are also able to lever centralised resources which include things like record keeping and management time.

## **4. Why is NM money needed?**

The projected figures above are for the Signpost Office in Golf Green to run at reduced capacity. Projected staffing would require one more part time member of staff based in the office. This funding will allow us to meet our shortfall for this year. We will then be in a position to work towards expanding our services to further support the community.

The aims of Signpost and those of NM are closely aligned. Without support from NM it is unlikely that we would be able to sustain the project at its current level, nor could we expand or develop it.

**5. Can you be paid this money in arrears, or do you need it to prime the project?**

As a small organisation we would require the money ASAP.

**6. Who are your organisation's auditors?** (Please attach a copy of your last set of audited accounts)

PACE Chartered Accountants

3 The Retreat, Glebe Lane,

Abberton, Colchester.

CO5 7NW

Accounts included as part of the enclosed Annual Report.

***D Options***

**1. What other options have been considered to address this proposal and if they were, why have they been rejected?**

This proposal is to fund an existing project. The project uses a tried and tested approach to support people in the community.

The initial research was conducted prior to commencing the project and our work continues.

***E Measuring and sustaining the impact***

**Taking into consideration the objectives for the project set out in section 2, what outcomes do you hope to achieve?** (i.e. overall results and benefits that relate to the delivery plan ?

How will the outcomes be measured?

The specific objectives of the project, and their measurement, is set out in the SMART objectives at section 2.

**Health**

There are well established links between worklessness and poor mental health. Signpost aims to impact on these.

At this time it is not clear to us how we might objectively measure this. Perhaps the monitoring mechanisms employed by NM might be used to measure the impact of the project.

**Employment and Income**

Support people back into employment impacts on both economic and social regeneration.

We have a long standing practice of conducting a follow up survey by telephone approximately three months after beneficiaries' first visit. The survey enquires as to their employment and training status, satisfaction with our services and whether they would recommend us.

## **2. What monitoring arrangements will be put in place?**

Set out your milestones (what you will have done by when) and outputs (things you can count to measure your activities) How will spend be monitored?

### **Milestones**

The SMART outcomes listed above are timed to be completed by the end of the project year (1 year from receipt of funding). We would expect to divide them into half yearly, or quarterly, milestones to coincide with the Interaction Panel's reporting requirements.

### **Monitoring Spend**

One of the challenges we face, as a small voluntary sector organisation with multiple donors, is to track information to satisfy each funder. This is extremely complex. In response to this we have evolved a system whereby each spend is allocated to a fund. Thus, it is possible to construct a report for each funder.

## **3. Evaluation**

Following implementation of the project how will you evaluate if your objectives have been met and ensure that there is continuous improvement?

Within the SMART objectives above there are listed the systems for collecting data for monitoring progress. These are:

- Internal Records
- Outreach Worker's Records
- Client Records
- Visitor Signing in Sheet
- Quarterly Telephone Survey

#### 4. The long term and future

What is the exit strategy when NM resources are no longer available and how will the benefits be sustained?

##### Exit Strategy

At this point in time it seems that the issues that both Signpost and NM have been created to address are far from fully dealt with. Our intent is to continue with our work until such time as the community no longer need our services. Centrally, Signpost holds reserves to meet our legal and moral obligations in the event of a financial crisis.

##### Sustainability

Signpost is constituted as a Charity and works with people who are usually, but not always, at the bottom of the economic ladder. Thus we will always require funding. It is most likely that we will continue as we are – seeking to match the needs of the Community and Funders. Securing continuation funding is one of the SMART objectives for this project.

#### Appraisal and approval structures

Amount of funding	Appraisal method	Approval required
Up to £2.5k	Neighbourhood Manager can carry out appraisal and submit for approval	Neighbourhood Manager and 2 Board members one of whom should be a resident board member if possible
Over £2.5k	Neighbourhood Manager and two board members one of which should be a resident board member if possible must go through the project appraisal form and submit for approval	Full Board

Signed: .....(project proposer) Date: .....

Name: .....

**Proposal - Signpost****Date****16/7/07 – Chris Kitcher**

<b>Summary</b>	<b>Yes/no</b>	<b>Notes / changes required</b>
Does this proposal impact on mainstream services or resources?	N	This is to support the ongoing project for the current financial year.
Do we know what level of service are delivered by and resources committed to the area by this organisation?	Y	
Will this help us achieve our agreed outcomes?	Y	
Is it based on the needs and wishes of local people? Have they been involved in the creation of the project idea?	Y	
Will it make a lasting difference?	Y	This does need to be considered for longer term sustainability issues.
Is this a substitute for mainstream funding?	Y	
Does it provide best value?	Y	
Is it too risky?	N	
Are we confident it will be well managed, monitored and evaluated?	Y	
<b>Section A</b>	<b>Yes or no</b>	<b>Notes / changes required</b>
Is it clear what is being proposed?	Y	
Is it clear how much money is required?	Y	
Is it clear who the responsible organisation is?	Y	
<b>Section B</b>		
Is it a convincing proposal in terms of setting out problems, objectives and activities?	Y	


Will the proposal contribute to the delivery plan outcomes?	Y	
Is it clear how the proposal relates to existing service delivery in the area, and neither substitutes nor duplicates related services?	Y	
Have residents been adequately involved in developing the proposal (or their views taken into account)?	Y	
Are management arrangements adequate?	Y	
Have risks been adequately considered and planned for?	Y	But see comment above relating to sustainability

<b>Section C</b>	<b>Yes or no</b>	<b>Notes / changes required</b>
Are the finances clear and reasonable and do they provide adequate detail?	Y	
Does the proposal provide value for money?	Y	
Is adequate information provided on the resources already invested by the organisation?	Y	
Is an adequate explanation provided for why NM money is required?	N/A	
<b>Section D</b>		
Have other options been adequately considered?	Y	
<b>Section E</b>		
Have measurable outcomes been identified?	Y	
Are adequate monitoring arrangements in place?	Y	
Are mechanisms in place for evaluation?	Y	
Is it clear what the exit strategy is and how the	Y	

benefits can be sustained?		
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***Decision of appraisal panel***

Recommend approval	Y
Do not recommend approval	
Recommend changes required before approval	
If so, please state or refer to above sections	

<b>Name</b>	Chris Kitcher
<b>Signed</b>	
<b>Date</b>	16 July 2007

**Proposal: Signpost. - Mildred Newton**

**Date 07/7/07**

<b>Summary</b>	<b>Yes/no</b>	<b>Notes / changes required</b>
Does this proposal impact on mainstream services or resources?	No	
Do we know what level of service are delivered by and resources committed to the area by this organisation?	Yes	
Will this help us achieve our agreed outcomes?		Only in a small way
Is it based on the needs and wishes of local people? Have they been involved in the creation of the project idea?	Yes	
Will it make a lasting difference?		Dependent upon the number of people who find permanent work.
Is this a substitute for mainstream funding?		It supplements and could duplicate the work of the Jobcentre.
Does it provide best value?		Difficult to quantify
Is it too risky?	No	
Are we confident it will be well managed, monitored and evaluated?	Yes	
<b>Section A</b>	<b>Yes or no</b>	<b>Notes / changes required</b>
Is it clear what is being proposed?	Yes	
Is it clear how much money is required?	Yes	
Is it clear who the responsible organisation is?	Yes	
<b>Section B</b>		
Is it a convincing proposal in terms of setting out problems, objectives and activities?	Yes	
Will the proposal contribute to the delivery plan outcomes?		Only to a small degree

Is it clear how the proposal relates to existing service delivery in the area, and neither substitutes nor duplicates related services?	Yes	As it relates to the work of the Jobcentre, it is not clear.
Have residents been adequately involved in developing the proposal (or their views taken into account)?	Yes	
Are management arrangements adequate?	Yes.	
Have risks been adequately considered and planned for?	Yes	

<b>Section C</b>	<b>Yes or no</b>	<b>Notes / changes required</b>
Are the finances clear and reasonable and do they provide adequate detail?	Yes	
Does the proposal provide value for money?		Not necessarily as it does the work that should be done by the Government Agencies
Is adequate information provided on the resources already invested by the organisation?	Yes	
Is an adequate explanation provided for why NM money is required?	Yes	
<b>Section D</b>		
Have other options been adequately considered?	Yes	
<b>Section E</b>		
Have measurable outcomes been identified?	Yes	
Are adequate monitoring arrangements in place?	Yes	
Are mechanisms in place for evaluation?	Yes	
Is it clear what the exit strategy is and how the benefits can be sustained?	Yes	

***Decision of appraisal panel***

Recommend approval	X
Do not recommend approval	

Recommend changes required before approval
If so, please state or refer to above sections Any attempt to help fit people on benefits to take up employment is to be encouraged. Given the shortage of job opportunities in the area, it will be an uphill struggle. I would hope that any unemployed person under 25 is helped into a suitable "Learn to earn" scheme.

<b>Name</b>	Mildred Newton
<b>Signed</b>	<i>M. F. Newton</i>
<b>Date</b>	7/7/07

