



Comhshaol, Pobal agus Rialtas Áitiúil
Environment, Community and Local Government

Óifig an Aire
Office of the Minister



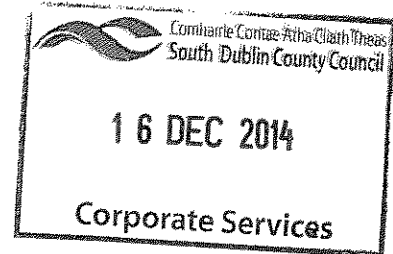
Q 37/1014

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Q 40/1014

12th December, 2014.

Mr. Tom O'Neill,
Meetings Administrator,
South Dublin County Council,
County Hall,
Tallaght,
Dublin 24.

RE: REP1697/AK/14



Dear Mr. O'Neill,

I refer to your recent correspondence regarding the National Collective of Community Based Women's Network (NCCWN).

The Department's LCDP is the largest social inclusion intervention of its kind in the State. The current Programme officially ended at the end of 2013 having operated for four years with funding of €281million over that period. It is being implemented on a transitional basis for 2014 with a budget of €47million pending the roll out of the new Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP).

The proposals outlined in Putting People First - Action Programme for Effective Local Government seek to position local government "as the primary vehicle of governance and public service at local level – leading economic, social and community development, delivering efficient and good value services, and representing citizens and local communities effectively and accountably".

As part of the programme of reform of local government, Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) are being established in all local authority areas. These Committees, comprising public-private socio-economic interests, will have responsibility for local and community development programmes on an area basis including the SICAP. They will develop, co-ordinate and implement a more coherent and integrated approach to local and community development than heretofore, with the aim of reducing duplication and overlap and optimising the use of available resources for the benefit of citizens and communities.

The new Programme, (SICAP), is a key priority of Government. As a key intervention for the harder to reach, the Programme's target groups are:

- Children and Families from Disadvantaged Areas
- Lone Parents
- New Communities (including Refugees/Asylum Seekers)
- People living in Disadvantaged Communities
- People with Disabilities
- Roma
- The Unemployed (including those not on the Live Register)
- Travellers
- Young Unemployed People from Disadvantaged areas

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In accordance with the Public Spending Code, good practice internationally, legal advice and in order to ensure the optimum delivery of services to clients; the new Programme is subject to a public procurement process, which is currently underway. Stage one (Expression of Interest) has been completed. Stage two (Invitation to Tender), which got underway on 20th October, will involve the successful applicants from Stage one being invited to apply to one or more Local Community Development Committees, in Local Authority areas, to deliver the programme. Contracts for SICAP will be determined following the outcome of the procurement process.

The public procurement process is a competitive process that was open to Local Development Companies, other not-for-profit community groups, commercial firms and national organisations, such as the NCCWN, that could provide the services to be tendered for to deliver the new Programme. In Stage one, joint applications were encouraged and organisations of varying sizes (for example smaller organisations working in consortia with larger organisations) were invited to submit joint applications.

That said the Department understands that some small groups, such as the groups under the remit of the NCCWN, faced a number of challenges in competing in the Stage one process. The results of Stage one were released on 24 September and none of the NCCWN groups expressed an interest either as lead applicants or as part of a consortium. Department officials are currently considering the outcome of Stage one of the procurement process and the implications of that for NCCWN. Until such time as this process is complete, the Department will not be in a position to provide any further information to NCCWN or its affiliated groups.

I can confirm that agreement has been reached to provide short-term funding to NCCWN until the end of March 2015. It should be noted that the funding for that period will be reduced in line with programme budgetary reductions. With regard to funding post March 2015 the Department is currently exploring options however this process is still on-going and as a result I am unable to confirm funding post March 2015.

Yours sincerely,

PP 
Larry Kelly,
Private Secretary