

**Derbyshire County Council**

**Cabinet Member Meeting, Health and Communities**

**3 March 2014**

**Report of the Director of Public Health**

**DERBYSHIRE UNEMPLOYED WORKERS' CENTRE AND THE TRADE UNION SAFETY TEAM – GRANTS**

**1. Purpose of the Report:**

To consider requests to provide grant funding to support the work of the Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centre (DUWC) and the Trade Union Safety Team (TRUST).

**2. Information and Analysis:**

Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centre was established in 1983 as part of a larger network of Trade Union Council (TUC) Unemployed Workers' Centres. The Centre's objectives include offering welfare rights advice and representation to unemployed, under-employed and unwaged workers; to relieve poverty in unemployed and disadvantaged people in Derbyshire; and to recruit and train volunteers from local communities to assist in their work.

The work of DUWC has expanded to include the provision of welfare benefit appeals referred from local Citizens Advice Bureaux (CAB) as a result of the CAB service in GP surgeries. This is set to increase further once the CAB service is extended to all Derbyshire's children's centres from April 2014. On 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2013, Cabinet approved a grant of £25,000 for 2013/14 and £50,000 for 2014/15 to DUWC to cover the cost of 325 of these appeals.

The Trade Union Safety Team (TRUST) provides help and support to anyone diagnosed with an industrial disease throughout Derbyshire. They undertake diagnostic testing for industrial deafness and vibration white finger to underpin benefits and civil compensation claims. TRUST works closely with DUWC and refer clients for benefits advice when necessary. Successful claims increase clients' incomes which is likely to improve their physical and mental health and reduce health inequalities.

On 16<sup>th</sup> July 2013, Cabinet approved a grant of £39,750 to DUWC and £5,763 to TRUST to cover their core costs for 2013/14. Demand for

services provided by both DUWC and TRUST has increased significantly over recent years and this is anticipated to continue due to the impacts of the Welfare Reform Act.

The work undertaken by DUWC and TRUST supports the Council's priorities to tackle poverty, support communities during hard times and support community-based advice services.

In line with other grants to Voluntary and Community Sector organisations it is recommended that the grant is subject to a Service Level Agreement (SLA) which will set out expectations and requirements on both DUWC and TRUST and the county council in relation to the grant award. Six monthly monitoring will ensure both the quality of the service and accountability for the funding.

At the meeting on 16 July 2013, Cabinet was made aware that DUWC had taken the decision to concentrate on advice and representation services. Any campaigning in relation to political policies, and the organisation of protest, was being taken on by a new body. Assurance has been given to the council that any grant funding provided will be used solely for the purposes of supporting the advice function of the centre and not for political activities. This will be reflected in the Service Level Agreement.

Given the increased pressure on communities and the increasing demand for advice services, particularly as further cuts bite, it is recommended that the County Council continues to provide grant funding for the core costs of both organisations. The requested grants for 2014/15 are £40,148 for DUWC and £5,821 for TRUST and it is proposed that these be approved.

### **3. Financial considerations:**

It is proposed that the cost of these grants will met from the Public Health budget.

### **4. Other considerations:**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

### **5. Key Decision No**

### **6. Call-in**

Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No

## **7. Background Papers**

Cabinet report of 16<sup>th</sup> July: Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centre and the Trade Union Safety Team and Cabinet report of 22<sup>nd</sup> October: Expansion of an Advice Service in Children's Centres.

## **8. OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That grant funding of £40,148 be provided to the Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centre to cover the core costs associated with the delivery of services for 2014/5.
2. That grant funding of £5,821 be provided to the Trade Union Safety Team to cover the core costs associated with the delivery of services for 2014/5.

**Elaine Michel**  
**Director of Public Health**