

PUBLIC

Agenda Item No. 5

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET MEMBER MEETING – HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES

7th October 2013

Report of the Director of Public Health

PROPOSED CRITERIA FOR THE ALLOCATION OF GRANTS TO FOOD BANKS

Purpose of the Report

To consider proposed criteria in relation to the allocation of small grants to food banks in Derbyshire.

Information and Analysis

A food bank is the distribution of food to those who have difficulty purchasing enough food to avoid hunger by a non-profit, charitable organisation.

People in the UK go hungry for reasons ranging from redundancy to receiving an unexpected bill on a low income. Food banks provide a minimum of three days emergency food and support to people experiencing crisis. In 2012-13 food banks fed 346,992 people nationwide. Of those helped, 126,889 were children. Rising costs of food and fuel combined with static income, high unemployment and changes to benefits are causing more and more people to come to food banks for help.

Food banks are organised by voluntary organisations and emerge where an identified need is acted on by local groups, churches and individuals to set them up. This may mean that there is not a direct correlation between need and supply. Many food banks have no paid staff and are run entirely by volunteers. Those that do employ staff often have just one part-time worker. Volunteers receive training and support and contribute to building 'community capacity' in their areas.

To receive a food parcel, individuals need to obtain a referral from an agreed agency. Referring agencies include children's centres, GPs, advice agencies, schools, probation and the Police. Food banks keep records of how many referrals they receive, their source, food parcels handed out and meals per day provided. Most people who need an emergency food parcel have other complex problems such as unemployment, benefit sanctions, debt, and poverty. Food banks liaise with other local agencies to ensure that people are referred on to other support where necessary.

There are currently 14 food banks in Derbyshire based in the following areas: Ilkeston, Bolsover, Clay Cross, Ashbourne, Gamesley, Glossop, Matlock, Holmewood, Buxton, Long Eaton, Swadlincote, Killamarsh, Chesterfield, and Belper. The 'reach' of these food banks is greater than the immediate area in which they are based. For example, the Buxton food bank supplies food parcels to people across the south of the High Peak, including the Hope Valley area.

At its meeting on 30 July 2013, Cabinet approved a grant fund of £108,000 from the Public Health budget to support local food banks to respond to the increasing need and demand for emergency food parcels in Derbyshire. This initiative supports the Council's commitment to addressing poverty and reducing health inequalities.

The following criteria are proposed to determine the allocation of the fund to the food banks:

- Relative need, based on the number of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA's) within the district(s) area covered by the food bank which are within the 20% most deprived, based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Income Deprivation indices.
- The geographical and population reach of the food bank
- 'Rural proofing' to ensure that food banks serving rural areas are not disproportionately disadvantaged.

It is proposed that to be eligible for a grant food banks must:

- Operate with a constitution and management group/committee
- Have both a bank account and a treasurer
- Distribute food parcels to residents of Derbyshire (excluding the City)
- Have in place referral or other processes designed to assess the needs of food bank users
- Be open and inclusive to all, regardless of faith, race, etc.
- Be able to present a clear case for funding and indicate how any funding would be spent
- Be willing to provide a brief evaluation/report as to how any funding has been used and any impacts achieved

The purpose of the grant is to support food banks to become more sustainable so it is proposed that funding can only be used to support the direct costs of food bank activity such as premises and storage, administrative costs and transportation, including vehicle and running costs. However, the grant cannot cover wider organisational costs nor can it be used for the direct purchasing of food or other items for distribution in food parcels.

It is proposed to invite the food banks covering Derbyshire to apply for an allocation of funding from the £108,000 grant, based on the criteria. It would

be appropriate to delegate decisions on the allocation to each food bank to the Director of Public Health in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities.

To further support this initiative, the Council has offered to use its premises, where appropriate, as collection points for food donations. This will be managed by the Corporate Property.

Financial Considerations

The costs will be met from the 2013/14 Public Health budget.

Legal Considerations

By awarding grant payments, the recipient organisations will not be contractually obliged to deliver any particular services although the Council may be able to claw back grant which has not been spent or is misapplied.

The Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities, has a duty to act fairly, reasonably and rationally when making decisions on grant awards based on the criteria set out in the report.

Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality of opportunity, environmental, health, personnel and property considerations.

Key Decision

No

Call – In

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

Background Papers

Cabinet Report dated 30 July 2013

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet Member:

1. approves the proposed criteria for the allocation of the grant scheme to food banks; and
2. delegate decisions on the allocation of the grant scheme based on the proposed criteria to the Director of Public Health in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities.

Elaine Michel
Director of Public Health