

MINUTES of a meeting of the **CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES** held on 7 October 2013 at County Hall, Matlock

PRESENT

Cabinet Member – Councillor D Allen

Also in Attendance – Councillor C A Hart

42/13 **MINUTES RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities held on 10 September 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Cabinet Member.

43/13 **COMMUNITY BUILDING GRANTS** Cabinet had previously agreed to establish a Community Building Grant fund of £1million, and the purpose of the Fund was to provide one-off capital grants to promote the social, economic and environmental well-being of local communities. Funding criteria and guidance for applicants had been developed in partnership with voluntary and community sector representatives and other funding bodies, ensuring that a clear, understandable and transparent process had been established. A maximum of £250,000 was available to voluntary and community organisations, who could submit applications in one of three categories – large, medium or small projects. Evidence of match funding towards the total cost of the project was required.

In addition to the written application, a number of other documents were required. The deadline for receipt of applications had been 30 September 2012, and a total of 72 applications had been received. The applications had been assessed against the agreed criteria by a panel made up of representatives from within the County Council and from voluntary and community sector organisations. The Panel had used the criteria to identify the projects that were both feasible and eligible for the grant, and had established a shortlist for each category. This had been refined further following further investigation and requests for clarification, and failure to submit the necessary documents had resulted in the applications being considered ineligible. A number of projects had shown the potential to deliver against the criteria but had fallen short on issues such as planning consent or available match funding.

Five small and five medium projects had been awarded, with the funding totalling £442,222, and this had been approved by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Management on 30 November 2012. A further two large projects had been awarded, with the funding totalling £351,409, and this had been approved on 22 January 2013. In addition, a further £100,000 of the funding had been committed to the development of allotments across the

county, and a further report outlining proposals for this would be presented to a future meeting. £106,369 remained in the budget.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Communities had requested that the projects which had shown potential, but had fallen short during the initial assessment process, be revisited with a view to allocating the remaining funding, and the projects had been contacted to ascertain whether their circumstances had changed.

All the possible projects had now been assessed, and five had fully met all the criteria. It was proposed that the limited funding benefited projects in the areas of greatest need, and the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2010 had highlighted those areas which were more deprived. The projects had been ranked using the IMD by Lower Super Output Area, along with the percentage of match funding provided. The five projects were listed, along with their rank within Derbyshire, and it was proposed that the first two projects – Wirksworth Recreation Ground Development Partnership and Riddings Cricket Club – be supported at a total cost of £90,694. The two projects also offered the best value for money in relation to the percentage of match funding provided.

Upon approval, the two organisations would be notified and would receive an agreement in principle to fund the project, subject to formal grant conditions. A payment schedule would be agreed in line with agreed milestones for the project, and the projects would be evaluated to ensure that funding continued to meet identified needs and priorities.

RESOLVED to (1) approve the allocation from the Community Building Grant programme of £38,986 to Wirksworth Recreation Ground Development Partnership and £51,708 to Riddings Cricket Club;

(2) receive evaluation and monitoring reports at appropriate intervals; and

(3) receive proposals relating to the allocation of funding for allotment initiatives in due course.

44/13 LOAN FUND TO CREDIT UNIONS – PROPOSED REVENUE SUPPORT Credit Unions were playing an increasingly important role in supporting people by providing access to affordable credit and by encouraging saving. Most of the Derbyshire population now had access to a Credit Union, with five operating across the county.

Cabinet had recently approved a grant fund of £300,000 from the Public Health budget for ‘instant access’ loans managed by Credit Unions, and following this, criteria had been approved by the Cabinet Member for Health

and Communities. Decisions on the allocation of the Fund would be delegated to the Strategic Director for Health and Community Safety in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities. To date, one application had been approved for £116,000 to the Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire Credit Union.

The Credit Unions had welcomed the Council's initiative, but had asked if the Authority would provide revenue funding alongside the grant in recognition of the additional workload which would be generated. It was agreed that this was reasonable, and it was proposed to set aside an additional £60,000 from the Public Health budget for this purpose. This would enable the Council to provide a one-off revenue grant of 20% of the Fund being administered by a Credit Union towards additional running costs. The costs would be met from the 2013/14 Public Health budget.

RESOLVED (1) to approve the sum of £60,000 for revenue support to Credit Unions delivering the Council's 'Instant Access' loan fund from the 2013/14 Public Health budget; and

(2) that the sum be allocated on the basis of 20% of the Loan Fund award.

45/13 PROPOSED CRITERIA FOR THE ALLOCATION OF GRANTS TO FOOD BANKS Consideration was given to proposed criteria in relation to the allocation of small grants to food banks in Derbyshire. Food banks were organised by voluntary organisations and emerged where an identified need was acted on by local groups, churches and individuals to set them up. This could mean that there was not a direct correlation between need and supply. Many food banks had no paid staff and were run entirely by volunteers, and those that did employ staff often had one part-time worker.

To receive a food parcel, individuals needed to obtain a referral from an agreed agency. Food banks kept records of how many referrals they received, their source, food parcels handed out and meals per day provided. Most people who needed an emergency food parcel had other complex problems, and food banks liaised with other local agencies to ensure that people were referred on to other support where necessary. There were currently 14 food banks in Derbyshire, and the 'reach' of these was greater than the immediate area in which they were based.

Cabinet had recently 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 in Derbyshire. A range of criteria was proposed to determine the allocation of the fund to the food banks – relative need, the geographical and population reach of the food bank, and 'rural proofing' to ensure that food

banks serving rural areas were not disproportionately disadvantaged. To be eligible for a grant, it was proposed that food banks met a range of conditions.

The purpose of the grant was to support food banks to become more sustainable, and it was therefore proposed that funding could only be used to support the direct costs of food bank activity, such as premises and storage, administrative costs and transportation. The grant could not cover wider organisational costs, nor could it be used for the direct purchasing of food or other items for distribution in food parcels.

It was proposed to invite the food banks in Derbyshire to apply for an allocation of the funding. 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 the initiative, the Council had offered to use its premises, where appropriate, as collection points for food donations. This would be managed by Corporate Property.. The costs would be met from the 2013/14 Public Health budget.

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

RESOLVED to (1) approve 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.

46/13 TRADING STANDARDS CONSUMER SATISFACTION
SURVEY RESULTS According to a report published by Consumer Focus, UK consumers had experienced 15.7 million problems with goods and services purchased in 2012, and the total amount of consumer detriment had been £3.08 billion. On a pro rata basis, this equated to around 180,000 problems in Derbyshire, amounting to £37 million of consumer detriment.

In partnership with local Citizens Advice Bureau, the Trading Standards Service provided advice and information to local residents. The Citizens Advice Consumer Service received the majority of requests for advice via its telephone support service, and any breach of trading standards criminal law was referred to the relevant local authority in which any illegality could have occurred. Derbyshire Trading Standards Service also provided contract law advice to local consumers who were considered to be vulnerable, and to those who had a dispute with a Derbyshire Trusted Trader. All notifications about Derbyshire based traders that were the subject of a complaint were monitored to consider whether there was a need to intervene.

Details were provided of the different types of complaints received by the division over the past three years. The Authority had a statutory duty to enforce the majority of trading standards legislation, but was not obliged to provide civil law advice. Although the total number of complaints had remained relatively stable over the past four years, there had been a sharp fall in the number of 'civil only' complaints dealt with, reflecting the need to prioritise statutory services. There had been a significant increase in complaints about Trusted Trader members, doorstep complaints and breaches of weight restrictions. The increase in complaints about Derbyshire Trusted Trader Scheme members reflected the increased popularity of the scheme and the continuing rise in consumer expectations.

To ensure the integrity of the scheme, all complaints about Trusted Trader members were scrutinised, and appropriate advice given to seek to resolve any justified complaints. A requirement of the Scheme was for members to leave feedback cards with customers, which were returnable to the Trading Standards Division. Since April 2012, 11,003 comments had been received about Trusted Trader members, of which 99% were positive. However, eight members had been removed from the scheme for a variety of reasons.

Although national performance measures no longer required the Division to carry out satisfaction surveys, feedback from service users played an important part of continuous improvement of service delivery and was essential for the Division's quality assurance system. The Division had regularly carried out customer surveys, and during the past year, 208 survey forms had been sent. 71 forms had been returned, and the key results of the survey were detailed. On the whole, service users who had sought advice or assistance as a result of buying goods or services from Derbyshire traders appeared to be satisfied with the service provided. The proportion of very satisfied customers had increased significantly from recent years.

As well as seeking feedback on the services provided, the Division also sought feedback from service users about the current priorities. 79% had responded that they thought the priorities 'were about right'; 8% had thought that they 'could be improved', and the remainder had felt unable to comment. Some additional comments relating to the accessibility and powers of the Trading Standards service that had been made by the respondents were reported.

RESOLVED to note the 2012-13 Trading Standards Consumer Satisfaction Survey.

47/13 **ILLICIT TOBACCO CONTROL** There had been a significant rise in reports of the sale and/or supply of counterfeit and illicit tobacco in recent

years, and the main reason for the increase had been the rise in shops selling illegal tobacco. There had also been a significant number of reports about 'fag houses' – private houses where an individual sold tobacco/cigarettes illegally. As well as a likely increase in smoking prevalence, the availability of cheap illegal cigarettes represented unfair competition to the local legitimate retail sector.

The amount of illegal tobacco seized by Derbyshire Trading Standards had increased significantly in the past six months. In the first five months of 2013/14, Derbyshire Trading Standards had seized over 600,000 cigarettes and approximately 700kg of hand-rolling tobacco. With Police support and the services of a specially trained sniffer dog, officers had conducted 19 raids on twelve shops since January 2013. There had been 25 arrests and 14 search warrants for shops or domestic houses associated with the business. Fourteen industrial storage units had also been searched. It was estimated that the illicit tobacco seized this year had a street value of approximately £500,000. As well as the illicit tobacco, around £12,000 cash had been seized, along with three cars and 43 mobile phones together with two satellite navigation systems.

Responsibility for preventing the sale and supply of illicit tobacco was shared between a number of enforcement agencies. The local authority had a variety of statutory responsibilities, and Derbyshire Trading Standards continued to work closely with Derbyshire Police and other local and regional enforcement colleagues. Trading Standards authorities in the East Midlands, supported by East Midlands public health authorities, had recently appointed a regional tobacco co-ordinator (based in Leicestershire) to support and co-ordinate the work.

Cabinet had recently agreed for funding of £28,000 for 2013/14 and £55,000 for 2014/15 to be transferred from the Public Health budget to the Trading Standards division to ensure the continued prioritisation of illicit tobacco control. It was now proposed that the funding be used by the Trading Standards division to continue to tackle the problem with local and regional enforcement colleagues. Although it was difficult to estimate the amount of illicit tobacco that was being smuggled into the East Midlands and Derbyshire, the anticipated outcomes for the funding were continued seizures of illicit tobacco, enforcement actions against individuals selling and/or supplying illicit tobacco, and an increased awareness of the harm from illicit tobacco.

The Trading Standards division would continue to monitor complaints about illicit tobacco, amounts of cigarettes and hand-rolling tobacco seized, the number of enforcement actions, and the number of media releases about illicit tobacco. A report would be presented at the end of each financial year to evaluate the outcomes of the work.

RESOLVED to agree to the transfer of £28,000 for 2013/14 and £55,000 for 2014/15 from the Public Health budget to the Trading Standards division to provide for the continued enforcement approach with regard to illicit tobacco.

48/13 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC RESOLVED** to exclude the public from the meeting during the consideration of the remaining items on the agenda to avoid the disclosure of the kind of exempt information detailed in the following summary of proceedings:-

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS CONDUCTED AFTER THE PUBLIC HAD BEEN EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING

1. To confirm the exempt minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities held on 10 September 2013

49/13 **EXEMPT MINUTES RESOLVED** that the exempt minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities held on 10 September 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Cabinet Member.