

Derbyshire County Council

MEETING WITH CABINET MEMBER, HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES

13 October 2015

Report of the Director of Public Health

REDUCING FOOD POVERTY: GRANT FOR AFFORDABLE FOOD BOXES

1. Purpose of the Report:

To seek approval to provide a grant for an affordable food box scheme as part of the sustainable solutions to food poverty in Derbyshire.

2. Information and Analysis:

On 28 July 2015 Cabinet approved a programme of interventions that are designed to prevent food poverty in Derbyshire. The interventions include the following:

1. A distribution hub for donated food in Holmewood, managed by the charity Fareshare
2. Subscriptions for Derbyshire food banks to join Fareshare for one year
3. Provision of free breakfast clubs in 24 existing schools plus an additional 12 new schools in areas with a high prevalence of free school meals
4. Community-based cooking and eating projects known as Super Kitchens in all eight districts/boroughs in the County
5. A social supermarket/community shop
6. An affordable food box scheme
7. Mapping of community food outlets
8. Subscriptions to a church-based charity which provides pallets of goods such as non-perishable food and toiletries, to be distributed via food banks.

The report acknowledged that further work was required to develop some of these options.

On 1 September 2015, the Cabinet Member meeting for Health and Communities approved a grant for a mobile facility run by a Community Interest Company called Eudaimonia. This facility will operate as a mobile community food shop and a mobile Super Kitchen. It will also be used to deliver the affordable food box scheme. This report focuses on the development of the affordable food box scheme as part of the Feeding Derbyshire programme.

Affordable food box scheme

There is evidence that many people on low incomes are struggling to feed their families. For example, referrals to food banks for emergency food parcels are increasing, in Derbyshire, as well as nationally. While emergency food parcels are a lifeline for many people, they are not a desirable or sustainable solution to food poverty.

A Fareshare warehouse opened for business on 14 September 2015 with a grant from the County Council, as part of the Feeding Derbyshire programme. Fareshare receives thousands of tonnes from the food industry – good food that would otherwise go to waste. It redistributes the food to charities such as food banks, refuges and hostels for homeless people.

Fareshare can provide food boxes made up of perishable and non-perishable foods that can be purchased by individuals on a low income. The food is good and nutritionally balanced. A small charge or donation is requested to support the sustainability of the scheme and to offer recipients the dignity of paying for their food rather than having to accept charity, which makes many people feel humiliated. Fareshare makes a modest charge for the food to the agencies who make up food boxes to sell on.

It is proposed that Eudaimonia manages and delivers the affordable food box scheme with a grant to purchase the foods from Fareshare. This increases the efficiency of the mobile facility as it will be delivering three components of the Feeding Derbyshire programme. It will also encourage the interaction between the three components, increasing their reach into communities that need help to feed their families with nutritious and affordable food.

3. Financial considerations:

The Report of 28 July included a budget for the affordable food box scheme of £20,000 in year 1 and £10,000 in years 2 and 3. The aim of this scheme, as with all the others in this programme, is that it becomes self-sustaining and independent of Council funding after three years. It is proposed that the cost of this grant will met from the food poverty element of the Public Health budget.

4. Legal Considerations

The proposed use of a grant agreement rather than a contract means that the Council will have less ability to performance manage Eudaimonia and to enforce conditions of performance or outcomes. The Director of Legal Services will be involved in the preparation of any grant agreement.

5. Other considerations:

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

6. Background Papers

- Cabinet Report, 28 July 2015
- Cabinet Member Report (Health and Communities), 15 September 2015

7 Key Decision

No

8. Call-in

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

9. OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That grant funding of £40,000 over three years be provided to Eudaimonia from October 2015 to September 2018 as follows:

Year 1 = £20,000

Year 2 = £10,000

Year 3 = £10,000 (contingency)

Elaine Michel
Director of Public Health