

**Agenda Item No.****DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL****CABINET MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC POLICY, ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT AND BUDGET****10 January 2017****Report of the Chief Executive****COMMUNITY PRIORITIES PROGRAMME – APPLICATION FOR FUNDING  
FOR DERBYSHIRE UNEMPLOYED WORKERS CENTRES EREWASH****1. Purpose of the Report**

To approve an application from Councillors Glennice Birkin, Michelle Booth and John Frudd for Community Priority Programme funding of £27,000 for Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre to create a bespoke pilot project within targeted wards in Erewash. This will raise awareness of crisis prevention and offer specific advice to clients in receipt of benefits.

**2. Information and Analysis****Background**

At Cabinet on 24 May 2016, Members agreed to establish a £2.271 million Community Priorities Programme using one off resources identified from General Reserves. It was agreed at the meeting that any projects requiring funding of £20,000 or above would need to seek approval by the Cabinet Member for Strategic Policy, Economic Development and Budget.

The Community Priorities Programme aims to support the development of projects which meets real identified needs, supports communities and families, build community capacity and are sustainable. All projects need to meet the following criteria:

- Support activity benefiting the designated Lower Super Output Area (LSOA).
- Support the aims and objectives of the Thriving Communities programme.
- Link into Thriving Communities activity in areas where work is currently being piloted where possible.
- Be time limited and not require ongoing funding from the Council.
- Complement, not duplicate other funding sources such as the Public Health Locality Fund, the Members Community Leadership Scheme etc.

- Show how activity can be sustained beyond the life of the funding.
- Meet an identified need which can be evidenced through for example, the English Indices of Deprivation, the Derbyshire Quilt etc.
- Be delivered within agreed timescales.
- Show how local people have helped in the design of identified activity or have been consulted or engaged.
- Show what difference will be made.

An application for funding of £27,000 under the Community Priorities Programme has been submitted by Councillors Glennice Birkin, Michelle Booth and John Frudd for Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre (DUWC) to create a bespoke pilot project within targeted wards in Erewash. This will raise awareness of crisis prevention and offer specific advice to clients in receipt of benefits.

This project directly contributes to the Council Plan specifically supporting people in hard times. It also supports the delivery of Derbyshire Partnership Forum's Anti-Poverty Strategy, maintaining effective local welfare support to people who are suffering exceptional financial hardship, maximising household income and addressing fuel poverty through partnership working.

Experience of front line workers in the field of welfare advice is that clients often approach services at a time of crisis where multi agency intervention is required. Much of the intervention relates to challenging sanctions, misinterpretation of claimant commitments and the constant need to re-interpret new government guidance and initiatives such as Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) and Universal Credit (UC).

The concept is to create a bespoke pilot project within the target wards to raise awareness of crisis prevention and offer specific advice to clients in receipt of benefits. The project will specifically:

- Contact clients in receipt of UC/JSA and other key benefits.
- Aim to prevent sanctions by ensuring clients know their rights and ensure they are maximising their benefits.
- Give advice on what to do if sanctioned.
- Raise awareness of Hardship Payments and other crisis services e.g. the foodbank, the Derbyshire Discretionary Fund.
- Contact people again periodically (after 3 and then 6 months), to see what long term improvements have resulted from the work.

Another key aim of the project will be to provide statistics and information to develop a baseline and to support long term provision of the service in Ilkeston.

Due to lack of contributory funding DUWC has been unable to provide its service to Ilkeston and surrounding areas in the past, despite considerable concentrations of poverty and deprivation. It is anticipated that this pilot will be a flagship scheme which will lead to a permanent presence in the town and the opportunity to directly improve people's lives over a long period of time. This will be achieved by securing funding for long term service provision in the area.

Taking into account, the experience of similar projects DUWC would expect to directly assist 250 people, indirectly assist 1000, both members of the same household and those reached through the publicity/information. They anticipate recovering £350,000 in annualised benefits from appeals tribunals and £480,000 in the annualised new take up of benefits.

The project is targeting the following areas:

- Abbotsford
- Ilkeston
- Cotmanhay
- Gallows Inn
- Hallam Fields
- Ilkeston
- Kirk Hallam
- Larklands
- Little Hallam

These are all areas where anti-poverty indicators for example child poverty, unemployment, fuel poverty and pension credits are higher than county/national averages.

The information contained in the application, as submitted, meets the selection criteria as set out above.

DUWC has assured the Council that any grant funding provided will be used solely for the purposes of supporting the pilot project in Erewash and not for political activities.

### **3. Financial Considerations**

Councillors Glennice Birkin, Michelle Booth and John Frudd are proposing to allocate £9,000 each to the project. The total cost of £27,000 can be met from the Community Priorities Programme budget. To ensure that there is compliance with the Council's Financial Regulations, all approved projects will be issued with standard conditions of grant and will be subject to monitoring and evaluation.

#### **4. Equality and Diversity Considerations**

The Community Priorities Programme will ensure that the funding set aside will be targeted to the most deprived and disadvantaged areas of the county.

#### **5. Social Value Considerations**

The Community Priorities Programme will support the development of projects in the 50% most deprived LSOAs in the county, engaging with local people and supporting the improvement of the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the communities concerned. This pilot project will provide a vital service to an area of the county that has considerable concentrations of poverty and deprivation. The impact of the project will be much wider than the 250 people directly assisted, indirectly assisting an additional number of people potentially within the same household. The project expects to recover approximately £350,000 in annualised benefits from appeals tribunals and £480,000 in the annualised new take up of benefits which will ensure that additional resources are available to support the local economy.

#### **6. Other Considerations**

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

#### **7. Background Papers**

- The English Indices of Deprivation - Report to Cabinet - 3 November 2015
- Reserves Position report to Cabinet - 26 January 2016
- Community Priorities Programme report to Cabinet – 24 May 2016
- Community Priorities Programme application for Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre – December 2016

#### **8. Key Decision**

No

#### **9. Call-in**

Is it required that call-in be waived for any decision on this report? **No**

## **10. Officer's Recommendation**

That the Cabinet Member for Strategic Policy, Economic Development and Budget approves the application for £27,000 for the Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre pilot project in Erewash as set out above.

**Ian Stephenson**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**