

**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

**POLICY & FINANCE  
CABINET MEMBER**

**CAB ADVICELINE – REQUEST FOR FUNDS**

**1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform the Cabinet Member of a request for funding from Scunthorpe & District Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)
- 1.2 The key points of this report are:
- Adviceline is a national CAB initiative which ensures that those who most need an effective face to face meeting receive it quickly.
  - A successful local trial has increased the number of people helped by 39%; CAB now wishes to fully implement the service.
  - This report seeks approval for the allocation of funding as recommended.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 In October 2014 CAB began a trial of a national CAB initiative, Adviceline. It allows residents to phone trained staff who can assess the level of help needed and either:
- Provide information over the phone;
  - Direct them to information including internet based help;
  - Signpost them to other more relevant services; or
  - Arrange an appointment with an Advisor.
- 2.2 This ensures residents receive the right level of help earlier, makes their face to face service more effective and increases the number of people helped, particularly those who work or live in rural areas.
- 2.3 For the first 3 months of the trial CAB reports show an increase of 39% in the number of residents helped and 55% in the number of issues dealt with over the same period in the previous year.
- 2.4 CAB wants to fully implement Adviceline, expanding its operating hours to include an out of office hour's service further increasing the availability of those who work to receive help.

- 2.5 CAB has used its reserves to fund Adviceline to date as it is additional to the services funded by the Council. The cost of the full implementation is estimated at £58,541, CAB has asked for £30,000 from the Council.
- 2.6 The funding could be provided from existing budgets in 2015-16. CAB is aware funding is only available for this financial year and accepts this.

### **3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 Provide CAB with the £30,000 of funding, as requested, to allow them to provide a full Adviceline service without recourse to their reserves.
- 3.2 Decline CAB's request for funding.

### **4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

- 4.1 CAB would be able to fund Adviceline and incorporate the service into any future tender to provide advice and guidance on behalf of the Council.

Funds are available from existing budgets in 2015-16. Any arrangement would be managed by amending their current SLA and management arrangements with the Council.

- 4.2 CAB would have to fund Adviceline from their reserves and would not be able to expand the service which could impact on CAB's ability to develop their services in line with identified need.

### **5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)**

- 5.1 Financial – Any award would be provided through the Lead Agency Legacy fund.
- 5.2 Staffing – No implications, the additional work would be managed as part of existing arrangements.
- 5.3 Property & IT – No implications

### **6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

- 6.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed but has not identified any negative impact.

### **7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DECLARED**

- 7.1 The impact of Adviceline and the need to expand the service has been discussed on a number of occasions at both the Financial Inclusion Group and the Stronger Communities Funded Group.

7.2 There has been general agreement that the use of triage systems such as this has a very positive impact on the ability of local residents to access advice and guidance.

7.3 No conflicts of interest have been identified.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 That the Cabinet Member accepts recommendation 3.1 and agrees to provide CAB with the £30,000 of funding, as requested, to allow them to provide a full Adviceline service without recourse to their reserves.

8.2 That the Cabinet Member agrees that any offer letter explicitly states that the funding is for 2015-16 only, with suitable amendments being made to the Council's existing SLA with CAB.

DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND RESOURCES

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**Background Papers used in the preparation of this report –**

**Poverty Needs Assessment – 2015**