

## ROSSENDALE COUNCIL AND NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM GRANTS

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### 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In June 2011, Rossendale Borough Council announced that the Rossendale Council Grants pot of £115,650 per annum would be allocated with a commitment of three years funding which ceases in 2013/14. All grant recipients have been informed of this and have been asked what the impact may be on them if they did not secure funding from Rossendale Borough Council beyond 2013-14. All groups have also been informed of the need for Rossendale Borough Council to cut its budget by c£1.5m in accordance with the medium term financial strategy.
- 1.2 The recipients used the grants for various reasons, including:
- Covering overhead and core service costs;
  - Replacing windows;
  - Increasing participation of volunteers;
  - Running family programmes; and
  - Reducing the cost of participation in sport and offering more sports sessions.
- 1.3 The recipients cited the following outcomes and outputs as a result of the funding they had received:
- Increased support for people in debt;
  - Support to victims of domestic violence;
  - Growth of membership of a credit union;
  - Increase in number of volunteers;
  - Community planting schemes;
  - Support to victims of sexual abuse;
  - Support for families and young people; and
  - Increased participation in basketball.
- 1.4 Since the allocation of the Rossendale Council Grants, Lancashire County Council have developed a commissioning approach for domestic violence services and have specified that if Rossendale Borough Council commit £6,000 per annum to a central commissioning pot, then alongside contributions from other agencies, domestic violence services to the value of c£210,000 can be commissioned in Rossendale. On this basis, Rossendale Borough Council has committed £6,000 to the commissioning pot for 2013-14.
- 1.5 In addition, the CAB has received £250,000 National Lottery and Cabinet Office funding for partnership development via Advice Service Transitional funding, over a two-year period. This was achieved by partners working together and was led by CAB

- 1.6 In addition to the Rossendale Council Grants, in 2011-12 a sum of £70,000 was allocated to Neighbourhood Forum Grants annually for a period of three years. Because this pot of funding was drawn from an external grant which came to Rossendale Borough Council, once it is fully allocated this funding will cease and will no longer be in the revenue budget beyond the current year.
- 1.7 Grants awarded have been in the range of £100 to £14,300 and the money has been used for:
- Civic Pride – planting improvements to the bypass and prominent sites in Rawtenstall
  - Whitworth Historical Society – equipment and materials for archiving and cataloguing
  - Spartans Thai Boxing Club – equipment for junior members
  - Bacup Family Centre – toddler group
  - Rossendale Revival – town centre events in Rawtenstall and Bacup
  - St Mary’s Primary School – outdoor equipment
  - Royal Court Theatre – new heating system
  - RAFT Foundation – food parcels
  - Rossendale Road Club – mountain bike leadership training
  - Jubilee, Royal Wedding and Olympics street parties.

## 2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 Given the scale of the savings challenge which faces Rossendale Borough Council, it is proposed that the amount of money made available for Rossendale Council Grants be reviewed and reduced, and that clear expected outcomes are set by Rossendale Borough Council in advance of the application process.
- 2.2 Domestic violence and child sexual exploitation are key priorities for the Community Safety Partnership and the Children’s Trust, which both have funding to allocate. In addition, as per point 1.4, a robust process for commissioning domestic violence services has now been developed by Lancashire County Council. It is therefore proposed that Rossendale Borough Council commit to the annual contribution of £6,000 which will facilitate the generation of c£210,000 of domestic violence support services in Rossendale.
- 2.3 The Children’s Trust also have funding which can be allocated to support families and young people and this is supplemented by the Working Together with Families multi-agency project, which is led by Lancashire County Council. It is therefore proposed that groups wishing to deliver support for families and young people be signposted to contact the Children’s Trust and Working Together with Families project with a view to working in partnership with them.
- 2.4 The inception of Public Health Lancashire, based within Lancashire County Council, and a Locality Based Public Health Team for East Lancashire will provide capacity to delivery community health projects in the local area, so it is

proposed that groups wishing to improve health outcomes be signposted to contact the new team with a view to working in partnership with them.

- 2.5 There are a number of groups of 'Friends of...' various parks and cemeteries across the Borough which are already in existence. It is therefore proposed that any groups wishing to delivery community planting or other environmental projects be signposted to contact existing groups with a view to either joining with them or learning from them to develop further.
- 2.6 Given that volunteering is a core part of any projects which may be ongoing or developed as a result of the above, from the current funded projects, this leaves the issue of financial inclusion outstanding. Rossendale Borough Council currently facilitate a Financial Inclusion Group in the Borough which is working to a clear action plan, and it is therefore proposed that this group be asked to contribute to the development of clear expected outcomes in relation to any funding allocated in relation to financial inclusion.

*2.6.1 Proposals for consultation*

Because these proposals impact on a wide range of residents who live in the Borough, it is proposed that consultation will be carried out via the Citizens' Panel Questionnaire. There will also be further consultation via the Overview and Scrutiny process, with the groups who are currently in receipt of Rossendale Council Grants, and with the Financial Inclusion Group. A further report will be presented outlining the results of the consultation, impact assessments and recommendation for future funding.