

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

Report of Portfolio holder for Community and Environmental Services

To: LJCC 3rd April 2014
General Purposes 16th April 2014

(Author: Riana Rudland – Community Development Manager)

Subject: **Pride in Breckland**

Purpose: **To provide members with options regarding the allocation of Pride in Breckland funding.**

Recommendation(s): That the General Purposes Committee recommend to Cabinet that:

1. Breckland Council increases the establishment by 1 FTE and creates a Pride in Breckland Officer post on a 2 year fixed term contract funded by the Second Homes Council Tax Grant received from Norfolk County Council for community related projects.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Breckland Council receives circa. £100,000 per annum through a Second Homes Council Tax Grant received from Norfolk County Council for community related projects. Historically, this money has been used to fund the Pride in Breckland programme. The Pride Board has been established to steer the future of the Pride in Breckland programme and allocate funding through a grants scheme; it is made up of Breckland Councillors, key members of the community and stakeholder groups from across the district.
- 1.2 There is currently a balance for the Pride in Breckland programme held on reserve of £208,000 and a forecast under spend of £60,000 to be carried forward into the reserve at year end (2013/14) giving a total of £268,000.
- 1.3 The Pride Board makes grants to projects which meet the Pride corporate objective. The amounts applied for are varied and 100% of the total project cost can be awarded. From April 2013 to date, £20,500 has been awarded to projects. In accordance with the terms that the grant was awarded, these funds cannot be used for purposes other than their original intention and therefore any under spend in a given year is moved to the Pride Reserve. In addition, the Pride Reserve cannot be used to fund projects outside the scope of the grant or to supplement general council reserves.
- 1.4 The Pride Board met on 11 February 2014 and reviewed progress of the Pride programme to date and its future. It was agreed that the Pride Board would make a recommendation to Breckland Council to allocate some of the existing reserve to appoint a Pride in Breckland Officer for a fixed term of two years.
- 1.5 The Board recognised the success of the scheme in previous years when the Council employed a Pride in Breckland Officer and aspire to reintroduce some of the activity and community engagement successes that previously existed. The Board however acknowledged that times and community needs have changed in the current economic climate and that this officer will have a slightly different remit than the previous one. The previous campaign focussed largely on environmental activity and while some of this may be reinvigorated, a focus on other areas such as health and well-being will be more appropriate. It is further envisaged that this Officer will work more strategically to ensure that the Council is able to maximise opportunities relating to external funding as well as

ensure that steps are taken to make the Pride programme more sustainable longer term. It will therefore be necessary to strike a balance between small local projects and larger, forward looking initiatives.

- 1.6 Members of the Pride Board are also taking positive steps to ensure that the grants process is better publicised and more widely accessed.

2. OPTIONS

- Option 1 – Breckland Council increases the establishment by 1 FTE and creates a Pride in Breckland Officer post on a 2 year fixed term contract funded by Second Homes Council Tax income. It is envisaged that this officer will take an active role in encouraging community activity and ensuring that appropriate support and training is delivered where it is required within the communities.
- Option 2 – to not recommend the appointment of a Pride in Breckland Officer.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The proposed programme of activity helps achieve two key corporate priorities: To have Pride in Breckland and to develop Stronger Communities. The intention is that this officer will:

- Build on the success of our Pride in Breckland programme and deliver a programme of activity which reinvigorates and strengthens the ethos of Pride Promote street cleanliness, waste minimisation and recycling Work with ward members to develop their role as community champions. Ensure communities are developed in a sensitive and sustainable way to protect our environment. Engage with communities about the delivery of local facilities and recreational spaces. Improve health, well-being of our community using a range of engagement tools and activities as well as act as a point of contact within the Council for the Community.

- 3.2 The following is a list of some of the projects that could be delivered or supported by the Pride Officer to compliment the overall programme of activity. It is not meant to be in an exhaustive or prescriptive list, however it is based on historical successes.

- a) Community Clean Ups and graffiti removal
- b) To act as a point of contact for ward members and community groups for community activity and initiatives
- c) Promoting Tidy Business Standards
- d) Environmental and recycling Education Projects
- e) Healthy Life Styles opportunities
- f) Street Scene Improvements
- g) Citizenship
- h) Anti social Behaviour diversionary activities
- i) Community based activities which enhance community cohesion
- j) Provision of training and up-skilling opportunities for community groups

4. EXPECTED BENEFITS

- A sense of Pride in the district
- Investment directly into community activity
- Improved community engagement
- Improved community cohesion
- Environmental improvements
- Increased volunteering and volunteering opportunities
- Opportunities for member engagement at a local level
- Volunteering / teambuilding opportunities for staff
- Improved profile and publicity

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Legal

N/A

5.2 Risks

Financial – see proforma B

5.3 Timescales

The recruitment will commence immediately following full approval.

5.4 Equality and Diversity

N/A

5.5 Stakeholders / Consultation

The Pride Board is made up of representatives from key community groups across the district as well as statutory agencies like Norfolk Constabulary, Norfolk Fire and Rescue and public health. The Pride Board Members at their last meeting on 11th February 2014 resolved to make a recommendation to appoint a Pride Officer on a fixed term contract of two years to reinvigorate Pride in Breckland as outlined in this report.

5.6 Contracts

N/A

5.7 Section 17, Crime & Disorder Act 1998

N/A

5.8 Other [insert statement as appropriate or delete]

6. WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED

All

Lead Contact Officer

Name/Post: Riana Rudland

Telephone Number: 01362 656300

Email: riana.rudland@breckland-sholland.gov.uk

Director/Officer who will be attending the Meeting

Name/Post: Rob Walker / Riana Rudland

Key Decision – Yes/No

[use for Cabinet/Council reports or delete]

Appendices attached to this report: