

Anglia Revenues Partnership

Report of Operational Board to the JOINT COMMITTEE – 1st December 2011

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DWP LHA Extra Admin Funding Report 2011-12

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide members with an update on the additional funding & seek approval to share the associated costs through the Partner Authorities.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 2.1 Note the contents of the report
- 2.2 Approves the payments necessary from the partner authorities to Breckland Council.

Note: In preparing this report, due regard has been had to equality of opportunity, human rights, prevention of crime and disorder, environmental and risk management considerations as appropriate. Relevant officers have been consulted in relation to any legal, financial or human resources implications and comments received are reflected in the report.

3. Information, Issues and Options

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 During 2011 the Government made some changes to the way Local Housing Allowance (LHA) was managed and the levels of award.
- 3.1.2 Additional funding was provided during the last financial year by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to facilitate these changes.
- 3.1.4 A previous report has been taken to Joint Committee and approval has been given to spend the money on additional staffing and additional costs relating to the increased expenditure in stationery, travel etc. as a direct result of the increase in the number of cases.
- 3.1.5 The total amount of additional funding awarded for the 2011/12 for all four partner authorities is £9,384; this is shown in Appendix A to this report.

3.2 Issues

- 3.2.1 The DWP have given this additional funding to enable Local Authorities to continue to provide the necessary services to Housing / Council Tax Benefit claimants.
- 3.2.2 The Partnership has also seen a growth in the number of people wishing to be home enabled, this is over and above the business case forecast. Home enabling the team adds significant benefits to the organisation such as staff retention, better productivity, reduced disturbance payments & a potential reduction in office space needed. There is also some equipment and software to be purchased to enable physical property inspections to be reduced and undertaken using ICT systems. It is suggested that £5,000 is allocated to the purchase of the necessary ICT Equipment to facilitate these changes.

3.3 Options

- 3.3.1 To approve the report and the expenditure as stated above & shown in Appendix A to this report, this is fully funded by the DWP. The balance of funding, as shown as the “gain share” is to be retained by the partner authorities to spend as required.
- 3.3.2 To reject the report. And retain the funding for expenditure on other benefits related projects.
- 3.4 Reasons for Recommendation(s)
- 3.4.1 To enable the Partnership to continue to provide the current level of service, to meet the needs of our citizens, to reduce Revenue costs further and to increase productivity.

4. Risk and Financial Implications

4.1 Risk

4.1.1 None

4.2 Financial

4.2.1 Proforma B attached

5. Legal Implications

5.1 None

6. Other Implications

None.

7. Alignment to Council Priorities

7.1 To maximise service standards and have positive outcomes for our residents.

8. Ward/Community Affected

8.1 All within partner authorities

Background Papers

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Key Decision Status (Executive Decisions only):

Appendices attached to this report:

DWP LHA Extra Admin Report Appendix A

Proforma B