

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

Report of the Director of Services and the Deputy Chief Executive to the GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – 7th January 2009 THETFORD - HEALTHY TOWN

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The report seeks member approval to extend the Council's establishment to include an additional Senior Planner in the Thetford Growth Point Team and a Project Manager and Community Health Promotion Specialist in the Sustainable Communities Team.

2. Recommendations

- It is recommended that the Committee:
- 2.1 agree to extend the Council's establishment to include an additional Senior Planner in the Thetford Growth Point Team and a Project Manager and a Community Health Promotion Specialist in the Sustainable Communities Team

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 Members will be aware that Thetford received Healthy Town Status in November 2008. Only 9 towns in the country have received this status and Thetford is the only one in the East of England

3.2 Issues

- 3.2.1 Thetford has 'healthy town' status and therefore, along with nine other towns, has exclusive use of this status for marketing, campaigning, bidding and branding purposes.

- Thetford has been awarded £900,000 revenue funding over three years to assist in a programme of activities (approx split 2008/09 = £90,000; 09/10 = £405,000; 10/11 = £405,000)
- Funding is awarded to the Primary Care Trust (NHS Norfolk) as the 'accountable body' for the funds
- The Thetford bid (lead by Breckland Council) was made on the basis that Moving Thetford Forward would 'steer' the project overall, working closely with all partners.

Year 2009/10 and 10/11 funds are subject to the submission of a detailed 'project plan' by end of January 2009, setting out in more detail our aims, objectives and work programme. It is assumed that this project plan will be the basis for monitoring progress and audit purposes to ensure funds used appropriately.

- 3.2.2 The key elements of the Thetford bid focussed around undertaking and achieving the following:

- Health Needs and Health Impact Assessments
- Social Research

- Best Practice in delivering health through planning / new communities
- Preparing, and delivering over many years, the infrastructure to support healthy lifestyles (access, green gyms, allotments etc)
- Alignment with the already announced BDC Specialist Cohesion Pilot
- Recruitment and Training of 'health connectors', supporting measures already in place
- Build on the successful META information and advice service
- Walking for Health, building on existing initiatives already recently commenced.
- Cycle Recycle project
- The Joy of Food programme, targeting youngsters about food and cooking etc

Community Supported Agricultural (CSA) Project, where locals get involved with a small holding to understand food production, and as well as servicing the town with local produce. A site would need to be found first.

3.2.3 The project has many varied elements, including

- promoting* healthy lifestyles (diet, exercise, etc),
- preparing policy* (eg to embed healthy lifestyles with the Thetford Area Action Plan) and
- delivery of projects* on the ground (eg access routes, allotments, CSA, cycle recycle etc).

3.2.4 The bid to the Department for Health included the following three new staff members to be recruited:

- A **Project Manager**. This person would oversee management of the overall project and oversee the delivery of a portfolio of subsidiary projects by a range of local delivery vehicles. The Department of Health has specified the requirement for a Project Manager to act as a single point of contact with regard to Healthy Town status and to oversee project management and monitoring requirements. Appx Cost (until March 2011): £90k + costs.
- A **planning policy officer** who has responsibility for embedding sound and deliverable healthy lifestyles as part of the new and existing communities (e.g. policy and working with landowners and developers on issues such as ensuring the highest quality new cycle/footways; play and open space areas; allotment provision etc). Initially take on early work of the CSA project. This person would most obviously fit within the Thetford Growth Point Team. Appx Cost (until March 2011): £70k + costs
- A **Community Health Promotion Specialist**. This person would lead, or assist others, on items such as social research, META work, Joy of Food, Walking for Health and other promotional and activity work. Appx Cost (until March 2011): £60k + costs

All posts would be temporary until March 2011, though if they are more than 2 years then redundancy implications would need to be taken into account and costed.

3.2.5 All posts have the support of the Moving Thetford Forward Board (who include Breckland Members) and they have recommended to the NHS Norfolk Board that the above three posts be recruited as soon as possible, with NHS Norfolk agreeing a SLA with BDC to cover costs (including salary and on-costs, office costs, recruitment and redundancy provision). Breckland Members are now being asked approve taking these two posts.

3.3 Options

3.3.1 Option A: agree to extend the Council's establishment to include an additional Senior

Planner in the Thetford Growth Point Team and a Project Manager and a Community Health Promotion Specialist in the Sustainable Communities Team

3.3.2 Options B: Do not agree to extend the Council's establishment to include an additional Senior Planner in the Thetford Growth Point Team and a Project Manager and a Community Health Promotion Specialist in the Sustainable Communities Team

3.4 Reasons for Recommendation(s)

3.4.1 Members are requested to approve option (a) on the basis that the successful bid was predicated on the delivery of projects over a wide-ranging subject area as outlined above. All posts formed part of the successful bid and the funding awarded took account of them. NHS Norfolk are the accountable body for the project and the posts are wholly externally funded

4. Risk and Financial Implications

4.1 Risk

4.1.1 At this stage, the biggest risk is not setting in place quickly and soundly a process of managing and running the project. There is a lot to achieve in less than 2.5 years. Once projects commence in speed in 09/10, risk will be assessed on a project by project basis

4.2 Financial

4.2.1 This report does not have any direct financial implications however the overall Healthy Town Project does have financial implications. On the positive side, NHS Norfolk has been given access to £900,000 funding over three years. Crucially, this is revenue funding, something which is often extremely hard to find.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 None

6. Other Implications

- a) Equalities: None
- b) Section 17, Crime & Disorder Act 1998: None
- c) Section 40, Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006: None
- d) Human Resources: Addressed in the report
- e) Human Rights: Addressed in the Report
- f) Other: [e.g. Children's Act 2004] : None

7. Alignment to Council Priorities

7.1 The work of the Thetford Growth Point Team and Sustainable Communities Teams directly contributes to the following Council Priorities:

- Building Safer and Stronger Communities - Contribute to improving the health of people who live in Breckland
- Environment – Protecting and improving Breckland's natural environment and resources
- Prosperous Communities – Protecting and enhancing our town centres

8. **Ward/Community Affected**

8.1 All Thetford wards

Background Papers

MTF Board Papers – 27th November 2008

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