

BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Steve James, Executive Director

To: Cabinet – 13th March 2023

Author: Steve James, Executive Director

Subject: Recommendations on Fuel Poverty and Credit Unions from Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Purpose: To highlight the recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Commission and allocate these to appropriate individuals or Committee's

Recommendation(s):

- 1) Cabinet notes the recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Commission contained within the report.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the meeting of Council, held on Thursday 1st September 2022, a Motion was received to end Fuel Poverty within the District by 2030.
- 1.2 At the meeting of Council, held on Thursday 6th October 2022, a Motion was received to promote the use of Credit Unions.
- 1.3 Both Motions were referred to Overview & Scrutiny Commission for consideration and to be debated.
- 1.4 On Thursday 1st December 2022 Overview & Scrutiny Commission debated both Motions and made the following recommendations to Cabinet:
 - That a briefing be circulated to all Members detailing the terms of reference and activities of the Health and Wellbeing Partnership.
 - That a summary of the current initiatives, and their funding, which have a bearing on fuel poverty in Breckland or the use of Credit Unions be provided to all Members.
 - That the CAB be invited to a future Overview and Scrutiny Commission meeting for a deep dive session and discussion on data/information which could assist in giving insight into matters of fuel poverty and related issues within Breckland
 - That Councillor Webb and the Executive Director Steve James consider the feasibility of including the data information in the same Overview & Scrutiny sessions as the quarterly reports and appropriate presentation of such information.
 - That the Council produce a report/guidance on how best to appropriately raise awareness of Credit Unions within the district including the services they provide. This should be provided to the Commission for review and comment.
 - That the relevant Cabinet member bring forward to a future OSC meeting on how to increase awareness of recruitment/volunteering opportunities at the CAB and Credit Unions
 - That the Council establish a strategy with the aim of assisting in the ending fuel poverty in the Breckland area by 2030.
 - That Cabinet consider opportunities and initiatives to alleviate fuel poverty and associated vulnerabilities in the population within the next six months within the constraints of the overall budget making note of any such initiatives or policies used in other authorities as appropriate.

1.5 Having reviewed the recommendations, it was clear that ownership of them sat with both individuals as well as Committee's and the following allocations have been proposed:

That OSC will:

- Invite CAB to a future Overview and Scrutiny Commission meeting for a deep dive session and discussion on data/information which could assist in giving insight into matters of fuel poverty and related issues within Breckland
- Invite the relevant cabinet member to a future OSC meeting on how to increase awareness of recruitment/volunteering opportunities at the CAB and Credit Unions

The Portfolio Holder / Executive Director will:

- circulate to all Members detailing the terms of reference and activities of the Health and Wellbeing Partnership.
- Provide a summary of the current initiatives, and their funding, which have a bearing on fuel poverty in Breckland or the use of Credit Unions to be provided to all Members.
- consider the feasibility of including the data information in the same Overview & Scrutiny sessions as the quarterly reports and appropriate presentation of such information.

That OSC recommend to the Cabinet:

- That the Council produce a report/guidance on how best to appropriately raise awareness of Credit Unions within the district including the services they provide. This should be provided to the Commission for review and comment.
- That the Council establish a strategy with the aim of assisting in the ending fuel poverty in the Breckland area by 2030.
- That Cabinet consider opportunities and initiatives to alleviate fuel poverty and associated vulnerabilities in the population within the next six months within the constraints of the overall budget making note of any such initiatives or policies used in other authorities as appropriate

2.0 KEY CHANGES/EXPECTED BENEFITS

2.1 The Council already undertakes a significant amount of work in the areas covered by both Motions and will continue to develop its approach, as such it is expected to see ongoing and continuous service development.

3.0 OPTIONS/RECOMMENDATION

3.1 Cabinet notes the recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Commission contained within the report.

3.2 Cabinet notes the proposed allocation of the recommendations and discusses what actions may be taken.

4.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

4.1 This report is for Cabinet to note the recommendations of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission and to note the proposed allocations.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 In preparing this report, the report author has considered the likely implications of the decision - particularly in terms of Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues; Constitutional & Legal; Contracts; Corporate Priorities; Crime & Disorder; Data Protection; Equality & Diversity/Human Rights; Financial; Health & Wellbeing; Reputation; Risk Management; Safeguarding; Staffing; Stakeholders/Consultation/Timescales; Other. Where the report author considers that there may be implications under one or more of these headings, these are identified below.

5.2 **Constitution & Legal**

5.2.1 N/A.

5.3 **Contracts**

5.3.1 N/A.

5.4 **Corporate Priorities**

5.4.1 N/A.

5.5 **Equality and Diversity / Human Rights**

5.5.1 N/A

5.6 **Financial**

5.6.1 There may be financial implications dependant on any future actions of the Council

5.7 **Staffing**

5.7.1 There may be staffing implications dependant on any future actions of the Council

5.8 **Stakeholders / Consultation / Timescales**

5.8.1 As mentioned within the report, both Motions were debated at Overview & Scrutiny Commission on Thursday 1st December 2022

6.0 **WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**

6.1 All wards

7.0 **ACRONYMS**

7.1 CAB – Citizens Advice Bureau

Lead Contact Officer

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Key Decision: No

Exempt Decision: No

This report refers to a Discretionary Service

