

## **Cabinet – 16 July 2008**

### **Communities for Health Funding**

<b>Portfolio:</b>	Councillors Harrison and McCracken
<b>Service:</b>	The lead service is Leisure, Culture and Lifelong Learning
<b>Wards:</b>	All
<b>Key decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Forward plan:</b>	Yes

#### **1. Summary of report**

In 2007 the Department of Health (DoH) offered Walsall Council £100000 under its Communities for Health programme as 'one off' funding for a programme of health activities in the communities of the borough. Earlier this year a further £50000 was offered for this programme and a further £70000 is now available specifically for work with young people. No applications were needed for this funding and there are very limited criteria for the use of the funding, however, the funding for young people is designed to prepare for two NHS LifeChecks for Teenagers and Early Years, which will be rolled out in the summer of 2008. It is planned that the funding will lead to the development of sustainable projects which will either become self sufficient or will have the work embedded in the way that the community operates or individuals manage their lives and health.

So far officers have worked with community groups to develop projects for the first tranche of funding, some of which have commenced, and further work is ongoing to spend the remaining funding in 2008/9. The projects have largely focussed on encouraging the adoption of healthy life styles and tackling the problems of obesity in the Borough. The projects that have run so far are monitored by the Assistant Director for Leisure Culture and Lifelong Learning and a monitoring report is sent to the Department of Health when required. Overall, it is very light touch scheme with the Department of Health anxious to see positive outcomes, without the burden of complex information and financial accounting programmes.

This report outlines the work carried out so far and seeks Cabinet approval for the continuation of the work, whilst funding remains.

#### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That Cabinet agrees the continuation of the projects that have been instigated already.

2.2 That Cabinet requests officers to develop a programme of community based health projects for 2008/9 in consultation with the relevant Portfolio holders to include:

- Support for the development of the Walsall Food Cooperative
- Projects delivered around the Borough by the Community Playbus.
- Preplanning for the delivery of the NHS Lifecheck scheme being developed by the Youth Service.
- Marketing the use of unused allotments in the Borough to encourage more community involvement in the production of local food.

### **3. Background information**

3.1 Four projects have already been developed for the first tranche of the Communities for Health funding. These are:

#### **Old Hall Partnership: Seeds to Success gardening project in Bentley, Darlaston 2007/2008**

This innovative project builds upon earlier work by the Old Hall Partnership in Bentley. In order to help people to look after their own gardens, it set up a tool loan scheme. Following on from this local volunteers helped people to tend their gardens. This scheme moves this project forward to give local people the skills to look after their gardens and those of others in their local community, and to benefit from both the exercise and the fresh food that can be grown.

10 allotment holders/gardeners that are unable to maintain their plots due to ill health or disability have been supported from spring 2008. The outcome will be to enable them to continue their interest whilst passing their skills on to volunteers and novice gardeners. There is a linkage to the Council's Allotment Strategy which seeks to increase the usage of allotments, especially amongst younger people.

A run down garden area at the Brewer Street Day Centre will be re-vamped and the more able centre users to create a courtyard garden that will cater for the needs of all abilities within the centre. The volunteers involved will have the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the complex needs of adults with learning difficulties and disabilities. Consultation took place in November 2007 and the project started in January/February 2008.

The ULTIM8 project involves a group of 13 -25 years old with learning difficulties which enables them to develop skills in gardening that can contribute something to the local community. This started in February 2008. Some individuals, unable to do the work themselves, have had support to enable them to grow their own vegetables and flowers by providing containers, raised beds, safe paths and other low maintenance aids.

The project employs a co-ordinator and some administration support. The total cost is £19596. This project is self sustaining as the skills passed on can be used by the wider community to its benefit, in the future.

## **Adult Cycle Training 2008**

The pilot project is to train local cyclists to become instructors of the new national standard for cycle training. The purpose is to encourage more family based active lifestyles and to support sustainable forms of transport. These instructors will then train individuals or groups who wish to improve their cycling skills and confidence. This may include parents who want to cycle with their children on the way to school or on weekend cycle rides. It may also include adults who wish to incorporate more physical activity into their daily lives and/or travel sustainably to work. In addition, it is hoped that a future project could be developed in order to utilise these instructors to lead organised cycle rides that would operate in a similar way to the 'Walk On' walking scheme. The project will cost in the region of £5000 - £10000.

## **Community Playbus projects 2007/2008**

**'Have you got a light boy?'** - an innovative project based on smoking awareness and delivered in a fun, light and sensitive way. Partnerships were formed with the Smoking Cessation Team, Cancer Research UK and West Midlands Fire Service.

Working in all 9 Local Neighbourhood Partnership areas at various venues such as Community Associations, church halls and park Fun Days the project explored the dangers of smoking and second hand smoke to children, young people and adults. The project cost £3575. This information and the lessons learned are being passed on to peer groups by the young people involved, this sustaining the impact of the activity.

### **The Garden Gang**

This commenced in January 2008. The Garden Gang is a healthy eating project taking place with both a special needs group, a junior youth club and young peer mentors in Bentley working with 35 participants over a 10 week period

Partners involved in this project are the Community Playbus, Old Hall Peoples Partnership, E2E students, The ULTIM8 Special Needs students, the Junior Youth Club and Spadework. The project cost £4055

### **'Didn't we have a lovely time'**

A health/education project working with 8 – 14 year olds which will commence in March 2008. This project will explore and promote sun safety awareness and safety at the seaside a challenging project in trying to get the message across with out using scare tactics and the fact that Walsall is miles from the coast.

Partnerships have been made with Cancer Research UK, Boots the Chemist and the RNLI. The project has cost £3870

## **Arts and Health Obesity Social Marketing Projects 2008**

This series of project is an Arts and Health Social Marketing programme that utilises current existing and emerging health inequalities development projects undertaken through a partnership between Walsall Council and Walsall tPCT.

'Social marketing' is the use of commercial marketing techniques and principles to achieve social objectives, particularly in the health field.

The Social Marketing programme will work within the theme of obesity and body image and will involve BME and disability groups, Looked After Children, schools and an innovative project with local taxi drivers. Groups will work on a marketing mix from a selection of existing and developing Walsall multi partnership projects. All these projects are aimed at providing life and health enhancing information for the groups involved as well as raising their self esteem and confidence.

The whole programme is managed by Walsall Council, Creative Development Team (CDT) and will cost £53000.

### 3.2 Future projects already being considered are:

- Support for the Walsall Food Cooperative providing cheap and healthy food particularly for older people around the borough.
- More projects delivered around the Borough by the Community Playbus.
- Preplanning for the delivery of the NHS Lifecheck scheme being developed by the Youth Service.
- Working with Allotment Management groups to develop and market the use of allotments in the Borough to encourage more community involvement in the production of cheap food with minimal transport costs.

## 4. Resource considerations

### 4.1 Financial:

The funding has been offered by the Department of Health. To date £220000 has been offered. Were possible this has, and will be, matched against core budgets or other eligible grant funding from other sources.

### 4.2 Legal:

There are no legal obligations arising from this funding.

### 4.3 Staffing:

The projects can be carried out within current staffing resources and working alongside community based organisations.

## 5. Citizen impact

The Communities for Health Programme concentrates on creative ways of tackling two of Walsall's most pressing health issues; obesity affected by poor diet and a lack of physical exercise and smoking amongst young people.

Walsall has some of the worst levels of obesity and the poorest levels of participation in physical activity in the West Midlands and the UK. Evidence shows that obesity and its effects are a major cause of early death in Walsall and that unhealthy eating and low physical activity is closely linked to other forms of deprivation. In the 2007 Sport England Active People Survey, Walsall was shown to have an activity level of 16% in the 16 plus age group. This is the 6th lowest participation rate of 354 local authorities in England. The national average is 21% adults participating in 3 x 30 minute sessions a week; the national target is 25%. The West Midlands region has the lowest participation in the country and, within that; the Black Country councils are the worst.

The projects so far, have focussed on addressing those issues in a sustainable way by changing the lifestyles and aspirations of the citizens of Walsall.

## **6. Community safety**

In addition to the health benefits from the projects, some are aimed at improving community cohesion which should impact on community safety in the borough.

## **7. Environmental impact**

Planned projects include training in cycling skills and local food production. Both will have an impact on improving environmental conditions in the borough.

## **8. Performance and risk management issues**

### **8.1 Risk:**

There are a variety of projects involved in and planned for the programme. As the funding is 'one off' the greatest risk is that they are not sustainable once the funding runs out. As they are designed to be sustainable the level of risk is low and acceptable for this type of innovative project.

### **8.2 Performance management:**

The various projects supply performance information to the Assistant Director of Leisure, Culture and Lifelong Learning, who coordinates the whole scheme. The Communities for Health programme is monitored by the Department of Health and monitoring reports have been sent to the Department. The projects will contribute to achieving other health and physical activity targets.

## **9. Equality implications**

Included in the programme are projects targeted at specific minority groups within communities in Walsall, in particular people with disabilities and BME groups.

## 10. Consultation

In the development of projects there has been consultation with local community groups.

### Background papers

Draft Communities for Health Strategy

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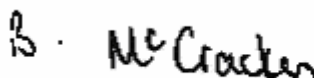


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30 June 2008



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30 June 2008