

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 3 November 2022

Report of the Director of Public Health

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Corporate Priorities:
Caring for the vulnerable;

Establishing Additional Funds for Community Food Grants

Contact for further information:

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Brief Summary

Further to the previous decisions taken by Cabinet in September and October to support Lancashire's residents to manage the rising cost of living, the public health team has received numerous applications for the community food grants scheme.

The demand for the schemes, especially supporting food related projects in conjunction with warm and welcoming spaces, is over and above the current financial allocations.

This report describes an approach to manage the demand for additional applications for food related schemes to support residents during this winter.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Approve an increase in the funding available from Lancashire County Council's 'Community Food Grant Scheme' to £250,000 for the year 2022/23.
- (ii) Authorise the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, to allocate these funds, using the existing application process administered by the community projects team, to respond to the increase in demand for community food projects.

Detail

Our community and voluntary organisations can apply for up to £3,000 for projects that are aimed at tackling food insecurity. Applicants can apply for items such as food, equipment, volunteer expenses, premises costs, organisation staff costs and resilience building activities. The total allocated budget during 2022/23 is £180,000.

The first round of community food grant scheme has already received over 96 applications and has approved 46 applications with funding totalling just over £123,000. It is anticipated that an increasing demand for food related projects will be delivered in conjunction with warm and welcoming spaces.

In addition, the community projects team undertakes the following activities to address food insecurity across Lancashire:

- Facilitate the Lancashire Food Network online events. This is a network of organisations, including voluntary and community groups, local authorities and other statutory organisations with an interest in food insecurity. Members of this network share their experiences, hear from other organisations about support that is available to organisations as well as people accessing their services. For example, there have been presentations from food clubs, banks, and pantries to talk about their organisations. Officers from the county council have also attended to talk about Universal credit and healthy start voucher uptake.
- Lancashire Local Authorities Food Officers meet every month to share experiences and knowledge and are starting to link up much more to co-ordinate activity.
- The team contributes to a number of district food networks, e.g. Lancaster District Food Justice Partnership, West Lancashire Food Insecurity forum.
- The team continues to offer advice and support to community food organisations around project and organisational development, e.g. funding strategies, project planning, and applying for funding.

Given the increasing demand, it is proposed that the county council:

1. Increases the allocated funding for community food grants scheme to £250,000.
2. Adopts the existing application process administered by the community projects team.
3. Continues to collaborate with wider stakeholders in ensuring that priority is given to support the most vulnerable residents and community groups during this winter.
4. Strengthen the support available to community food organisations in applying for support and funding.



Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

The additional sum of £70,000 will be identified from within the ring-fenced public health grant.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

