

Key Decision Required	No	In the Forward Plan	No
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CABINET

23 JANUARY 2015

REFERENCE FROM COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE OF 15 SEPTEMBER 2014

A.3 CITIZENS' ADVICE BUREAU, TENDRING – A REVIEW OF THE OUTCOMES FROM CAB GRANT FUNDING

(Report prepared by Colin Sweeney)

BACKGROUND

At its meeting held on 15 September 2014, the Committee received a presentation by Lynda Isaac, Chief Executive of CAB Tendring (CAB), on the work it undertook, the various sources of funding it received and how the money was spent in delivering the CAB's services.

Ms Isaac said the CAB's primary aim was to help people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free, independent and confidential advice, and to influence policy-makers. The presentation highlighted below, CAB's core service, which was delivered in five locations at Clacton, Harwich, Manningtree, Walton on Naze and Brightlingsea.

- Generalist Advice (any problem for anyone)
- Assisted Information Service
- Client Telephone Box
- Supported Digital Access (Government Digital by Default (25 most used services))
- Specialist Debt and Welfare Benefits Advice

Members were pleased to note that CAB was a highly-decorated, award-winning organisation, whose "Reach Out" Project had been recognised European Union-wide as an example of best practice in the field of "Making Local Services More Accessible to All" and helped its commissioners win Royal Society for Public Health Awards at the highest level. Such was the success of the Project, CAB received a royal visit from HRH Princess Anne and was registered as a finalist at the Civil Society Magazine Charity of the Year Awards 2013.

As part of the presentation, Ms Isaac spoke on CAB's mental health casework (funded by Essex County Council Public Health and recognised by commissioners as a "gold star" service); face-to-face money advice (funded by the Money Advice Service); Financial Inclusion Project (funded by Tendring District Council's Big Society Fund); a breakdown of what CAB's advice services delivered during 2013/2014 and what else it did to help the Tendring community, which included:

- The Tendring Advice Network (funded by the Big Lottery Advice Services Transition Fund)
- Tendring Community Builder Trial (funded by Essex County Council through the Whole Essex Community Budgets' Pilot)
- Food Drive, in partnership with Sainsbury's, and "Vegtastic", a scheme whereby surplus allotment vegetables are given out amongst those in need within the community.
- Behind Closed Doors (advise on how to deal with bad relationships at home)
- Tendring Tenant's Panel

- WorkWise (funded by the Jobcentre Plus Flexible Support Fund)
- Apprenticeships and Work Experience
- Income 2013/14
- What Next?

Ms Isaac said that the Council's grant (£144k this year) made up 25% of the CAB's overall funding for the year and that without this contribution from the Council the CAB could not deliver the range of services it currently provided to the people of Tendring.

Members were keen to establish: (i) a breakdown of the number of clients per ward; (ii) how many of the cases dealt with by CAB were in connection with TDC-related matters; and (iii) how much of the £562k overall annual budget was spent on staffing costs?

Ms Isaac said she was happy to produce these figures and send on to Members.

The Committee congratulated CAB Tendring on its many achievements and reaffirmed that it was highly supportive of the excellent work which had been done, and continued to be done by CAB Tendring. In conclusion, the Committee came to the view that once the figures sought from CAB Tendring had been considered by Members, the Committee would revisit this matter and make recommendations to Cabinet at its next meeting.

The figures sought were received and sent to Members of the Committee. At its meeting held on 17 November 2014, Members considered these figures in conjunction with the draft minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2014 and made a comment to Cabinet in this regard.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS TO CABINET

Cabinet is now asked to consider the comment of the Community Leadership and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee and determine its response if any:

The Committee **COMMENTS TO CABINET** that it seeks to look sympathetically at additional financial support for the Citizens' Advice Bureau, who may be required to undertake an enormous amount of additional work due to the introduction of Universal Credit in 2015.

PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

Comments will be provided directly at the meeting.