

Prevention Fund Update

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Cabinet Member: Cllr David Fothergill – Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Customers and Communities and Cllr Christine Lawrence Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing

Division and Local Member: All

1. Summary

- 1.1. This is an update item in relation to the decision taken to enable the creation of a £1m Prevention Fund for SCC Officers, SCC Members and the Somerset Youth Parliament to finance Council work and community projects that prevent issues developing or tackling them early to stop them escalating. In doing so it aims to improve lives whilst reducing future demand on the Council's services.
- 1.2. Prevention is integral to **Somerset County Council's vision** to improve lives. This funding is designed to support the delivery of the Somerset County Council 2019-20 Business Plan at a very local level.

2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

- 2.1. This is an information update item for Scrutiny to note, further to Cabinet decision taken on 10 June 2019.

3. Background

- 3.1. At Full Council on 15 May 2019, Cllr David Fothergill announced the Council's aspiration to develop funds to help Prevent Demand and develop a prevention ethos across both the County and throughout the Council.
- 3.2. Improving lives is the core purpose of the council and so we need to shift the focus of our resources towards preventing need and issues, intervening early and tackling inequalities. The focus needs to be shifted to improving lives at an individual, family and community level as part of a forward-looking system working with partners.
- 3.3. The following funds will be made available:
 - 3.3.1 Firstly, the **Improving Lives to Prevent Demand Fund** will provide an opportunity for proposals which focus on preventing needs/or the escalation of need in order to reduce future demand on Somerset County Council Services.

Proposals, generated by SCC officers, can be for as much or as little as necessary with a maximum of £850k available. Proposals will be encouraged that promote work jointly across the organisation as well

collaboratively with partner organisations and communities (e.g. with other local authorities, police and NHS) to create greater scale of change and, where possible, encourage any matched funding opportunities. In all cases, the proposals must be for projects benefitting Somerset residents, with the aim of improving lives and reducing future demand for SCC services

3.3.2 The second fund is the **Members' Improving Lives Grant Scheme** which will provide a fixed sum of £2k to each member to support local voluntary and community group initiatives in their division.

This enables small grants to be provided at a very local level to help communities and neighbourhoods develop activities that deliver the County Council Improving Lives vision. One of the most important things we can do to improve lives is to support locally led activity which encourages people to connect together, particularly people who find it hard to integrate into their local community.

This scheme will be open from **1 September and will close on 30 November 2019.**

Members will be encouraged to submit photographs of projects and project updates which will assist with analysing projects and their impact on communities.

County Councillors can only put forward four proposals which will be considered by the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing, and the Director of Public Health.

3.3.3 The third is the **Somerset Young People's Fund**, which will support initiatives to improve lives for children and young people which are aligned to the Children and Young People's Plan and current priority concerns for young people identified by Somerset Youth Parliament's recently elected Members' campaigns:

- The Environment
- Youth Voice
- Youth Safety and Empowerment.

The fund will enable Somerset Youth Parliament to be closer to the process of decision making and decision makers/services and strengthen their representative roles in a practical sense. It will create a network of conversations, dialogue and appreciation between young people and services.

It demonstrates that SCC is committed to listening to young people and communities, building mutual trust, respect and resilience, moving towards a more integrated, robust, equal community, prepared for future challenge and change.

4. Consultations undertaken

4.1. SLT has been involved in developing the proposals, and specific engagement

has taken place with:

- Cllr David Fothergill (Leader of the Council)
- Cllr Christine Lawrence (Cabinet Member for Health & Well-Being)

- 4.2. Opposition Spokespersons as well as Scrutiny Chairs have been sent details regarding the funds and were particularly supportive of the Members Improving Lives Grant Scheme. Involvement of other councillors as part of influencing fund decisions was also raised.
- 4.3. All members have been informed about the proposed decision. A Member information sheet is also planned to further raise awareness amongst all County Councillors as part of the promotion of the Members' Improving Lives Grant Scheme, prior to it going live in September.
- 4.4. The proposal for a Somerset Young People's Fund follows engagement with the Somerset Youth Parliament and the launch of the Somerset Children and Young People's Plan.

5. Implications

- 5.1. Under the terms of the Local Government Act 1972, every local authority has the power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions. The scheme will contribute to the delivery of the Council's responsibilities under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and will facilitate the discharge of its duty under the Care Act 2014 to take steps to contribute towards preventing or delaying the development by adults and carers in Somerset of the need for care and support.
- 5.2. Decisions to approve initiatives under the funds should comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty. Each must demonstrate that it has given due regard to the need to:
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
 - advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
 - foster good relations between people from different groups.

It is anticipated that the impacts of this programme on the different groups will be largely positive. There are potential negative impacts (indirect discrimination) if groups with high levels of health inequality were not included in the programme. It is possible for example that in the distribution of the funds some groups of individuals could feel excluded, and it is important that care is taken to ensure that the process is fair and transparent.

- 5.3. Prevention initiatives supported through the funds may align to community safety activities e.g. reducing fear of crime, social isolation or exclusion and helping to prevent crime and disorder

6. Background papers

- 6.1. Appendix 1: Cabinet Key decision 10 June 2019 (including Equalities Impact Assessment)

Appendix A – Improving Lives to Prevent Demand Fund

Appendix B – Members' Improving Lives Grant Scheme

Appendix C – Improving Lives to Prevent Demand Fund approval process

Appendix D – Risk Management

Note For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author