

Bolsover District Council

Executive

14 April 2014

Medium Term Financial Plan

Report of the Executive Director - Operations

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To set out for consideration an option to facilitate and provide financial support to a partnership initiative to create a temporary Community Cohesion post working in Shirebrook in order to help resolve issues around growing tension within the local community.

1 Report Details

Proposal for a Community Cohesion Officer at Shirebrook

- 1.1 Executive will be aware that over recent months there has been increasing evidence of tension within the Shirebrook Community. These growing tensions between local groups have been discussed by local partners led by the Community Safety Partnership. A range of issues have been alleged including organised fly tipping, littering, burning of rubbish, street drinking, road safety / transportation, rogue landlords and overcrowding. These and similar allegations are promoting mistrust and misunderstanding between local communities. In response the Community Safety Partnership working with the local community, the Police, Health have taken the view that an Outreach / Migrant worker would be the most appropriate way forward to address the issues and reduce tensions. The discussions between the partner agencies has come to the view that the most appropriate place for the post to be based is within the Council's Community Safety Team.
- 1.2 The table given in Appendix 1 provides a summary of the roles and responsibilities of the post. The intention is that it will provide a source of robust information regarding the issues, the capacity necessary to deliver multi agency initiatives, a point of contact for all local residents and groups and will help inform the local community about the concerns that are being raised. As will be clear from Appendix 1 the post will drive a number of initiatives and while the intention is to commence with a broad based approach over time there should emerge a better understanding of what works and where resources should be concentrated.

- 1.3 The agencies have reached a common view that the post should initially be for a period of two years, although it is accepted that funding constraints may result in the need to compromise on a one year period. On the basis of current information it is estimated that the post will require a salary of up to £30,000 p.a. with oncosts (N.I. Superannuation, travel, office expenses) amounting to a further £10,000 p.a. An indication of the seriousness with which all of the agencies regard the problem is that all have offered to make a financial contribution to funding the post. The indicative amounts concerned are as follows:

Agency	Potential Amount (£000's)
Bolsover District Council (Host / On –costs)	10
Derbyshire Police	6
Hardwick Clinical Commissioning Group	5
DCC Public Health	10
Bolsover Community Safety Partnership	5
Retail – Distribution Company	15
Total	51

- 1.4 While the amounts offered from the public sector are considered to be firm commitments much of the funding comes from a local private sector company which has indicated that it is actively considering providing up to £15,000 p.a. for a period of up to two years. On the basis of the current position with only the funding that has been secured from the public sector taken into account the shortfall would be one of £4k. That would leave this Council with a maximum cost of some £14,000 in the worst case scenario. Officers are, however, confident of securing the £15,000 p.a. from the private sector company. This would unlock further funding from the public sector agencies which would enable the post to continue for a two year period. A two year project would cost some £10,000 p.a. or £20,000 in total.
- 1.5 Given the importance of having the worker in place over the summer months it is recommended that Bolsover District Council move to advertise the post at the earliest opportunity. It should be possible to come to a view relatively quickly as to whether a one or two year appointment would be appropriate in the circumstances.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 The option outlined within this report is proposed in order to help address the growing levels of community tension within the Shirebrook area. By undertaking a pro active role in addressing these issues it is considered that the growth in tension can be reversed thereby removing the need for more costly interventions at a future

point in time. Securing a reduction in the growing levels of tension is crucial to improving the quality of life for all local residents.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

- 3.1 This report is based upon the outcome of extensive work between the partner agencies involved in the Shirebrook area and within the local community. One of the main purposes of the proposed post is to support the development of dialogue with local communities in order to agree a longer term way forward to reduce the current levels of tension.
- 3.2 The proposals within this report are intended to assist in the reduction of hate crime and related community tensions. They are therefore intended to have a positive outcome in respect of the Council's equality agenda, meeting the Council's public sector equality duties under the Equality Act 2010, S.149 (1) and in particular, section (c), the duty to foster good relations.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 The main option at this stage would appear to be a 'do nothing' option. Given the growing tension within the Community and the risk of further escalation the 'do nothing' option is not considered to be an appropriate way forward. The initiative that has been proposed is one of minimal cost and would span a maximum period of two years. Part of the purpose of this initiative is to evaluate what approaches work in practice and this project will provide both the Council and its partners with a better understanding of what options are available should further or an extended period of intervention prove necessary.

Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

The financial implications are set out in Section 1 to this report. Given that the Council is in effect the employer at law in this instance it needs to be recognised that the financial risk associated with this proposals will inevitably fall upon the Council. On the basis of the information currently available a one year scheme will cost a maximum of £14,000 with a two year scheme costing a maximum of £20,000. These costs will be met from the Council's Transition Reserve. The issue of whether the project will cover a one or a two year period is dependent upon the level of additional partner funding that can be secured for the scheme. While the project will require an additional financial commitment from this Council Executive should note that the costs of not effectively addressing growing community tensions could significantly exceed the possible costs of employing a Community Cohesion worker.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

There are no legal issues arising directly from this report. On the basis that the recommendation is accepted Officers will ensure that appropriate employment contracts are in place and that the other partner organisations enter into appropriate contractual arrangements with the Council. Consideration should be given to positive action in the recruitment process to encourage candidates from ethnic

minority backgrounds and / or appropriate language skills, as permitted under Equality Act 2010, S.158.

5.3 **Human Resources Implications**

These are covered throughout the report.

6 **Recommendations**

- 6.1 That Executive recommend to Council that it be agreed that a post of Community Cohesion worker be approved for a period of up to two years to work with the wider partnership as outlined in this report in order to assist in addressing growing Community tensions in the Shirebrook area.
- 6.2 That the costs of the District Council in this matter which would amount to £20,000 should a two year project be agreed be charged against the Transition Reserve.

7 **Decision Information**

Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	No
District Wards Affected	Shirebrook.
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	

8 **Document Information**

Appendix No	Title
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
Outline Business Case	
Report Author	Contact Number
Safer Communities Team / Executive Director Operations	

APPENDIX 1

Shirebrook Community Cohesion Officer Post

Overview of the role and key objectives

The post holders will form part of the existing Bolsover District Council / Bolsover CSP / Derbyshire Police Community Safety Team

The post will involve the mapping of the migrant worker groups living and working in the Shirebrook area and will also link with relevant organisations across the Nottinghamshire border in Mansfield. The officer will desirably possess relevant language skills (Polish) and will undertake community engagement and integration activities within both the migrant and host communities of Shirebrook.

More specifically this will involve the following:

- Establishing an effective mechanism for tension monitoring within Shirebrook communities especially around Hate Incident / Crime issues and formulating and co-ordinating relevant preventative strategies.
- Sharing relevant information in respect of any community / racial tensions with relevant agencies to ensure early multi-agency interventions and preventative measures to prevent an escalation are formulated.
- Attending relevant partnership and local community meetings.
- Scoping and ongoing monitoring of numbers and location of new communities.
- Producing and developing appropriate literature/communication media to address knowledge gaps in UK laws and customs for new and emerging communities in Shirebrook.
- Producing appropriate literature/communication media to 'myth bust', with established, host communities;
- Undertaking engagement sessions with new communities and host communities to tackle and improve integration by 'myth busting';
- Establishing a 'Migrant Forum' or similar external reference group;
- Enhancing existing partnership activity in this area by supporting the ongoing work of stake-holding professionals and agencies. For example support the work of the local SNT , Bolsover District Council's Domestic Violence Worker, MAT's, Parenting Officer, Health Improvement Officer etc.
- Planning and delivering specific community engagement/integration projects or activity;
- Working across relevant stake-holding partner agencies to recruit members of new communities into local community groups and to become involved in local partnership activities and events;
- Producing a Project Evaluation report to create a legacy resource for partners.