

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Monday 9 th September 2019
Report Subject	Flintshire Food Enterprise and the Food Poverty Response
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management & Assets
Report Author	Chief Officer (Housing & Assets)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Food poverty is best defined as *'people not having access to good fresh food by choice'* and referring to the definition and 'if you feed people well, they are more likely to get out of their crisis'.

The County Council and partners – Clwyd Alyn Housing and Can Cook – previously decided to provide support to those who were most vulnerable had access to good fresh food.

During the course of the Holiday Hunger campaign positive publicity was generated and over 17,000 meals were delivered to children in our communities who otherwise might have gone in need during that holiday period. Due to the success of the 2018 campaign, this has been repeated and the response much bigger in 2019.

Since then the Council and its partners have been exploring a number of options which will see progress maintained through the development of a longer term and sustainable solution to food poverty.

The business model is for a new social enterprise business with the three partners having equal rights for the management and delivery of the operation. Food will be prepared in Flintshire through a number of hub locations with a main food preparation hub in the Shotton area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1.	That the committee endorse and support the proposal for a new Social Enterprise model which will make a significant contribution to reducing food poverty in the County.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	BACKGROUND
1.01	Food poverty is best defined as <i>'people not having access to good fresh food by choice'</i> and referring to the definition and 'if you feed people well, they are more likely to get out of their crisis.
1.02	It is known that for every £1 spent on food 37p is added for diet related diseases that require treatment later. Current estimates indicate that as many as 1 in 4 families now require food assistance at some point and of those families most have children who are going hungry for 2/3 days a week. Moreover, hidden/stigmatised hunger is now a major problem, with 8 out of 10 people staying out of the current food bank system. It is a public health crisis that has serious implications for children's learning, wellbeing and life chances, a crisis that hinders parents' ability to alleviate the crisis, because they themselves fall hungry, their ability to make the decisions necessary to improve their ability to make decisions necessary to improve their circumstances are seriously impaired.
1.03	In direct response to the issues set out above, the Council and partners (Clwyd Alyn Housing and Can Cook) previously decided to provide support to those who were most vulnerable and did not have access to good fresh food. During the course of the that period the partnership developed a delivery plan which sought to ensure children were fed across the school holidays and other groups such as those residing in hostels, were also fed well.
1.04	During the course of the Holiday Hunger campaigns a great deal of positive publicity was generated and over 17,000 meals have been delivered to children in our Flintshire's communities who would otherwise have been at risk of going hungry during that holiday period.
1.05	The Council and its partners have been exploring a number of options which will see progress maintained through the development of a longer term and sustainable solution to food poverty. Flintshire County Council has been working with Can Cook to produce a plan.
1.06	The plan, developed in consultation with the Flintshire Food Poverty Group, would at first: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the gaps and issues within the localised food aid offer and; - Address those issues, by designing a local social-food-enterprise that could address some of the issues in the long term.
1.07	This work, which is based on the creation of a new enterprise, the precursor to a wider plan for Flintshire.
	THE PROPOSED FOOD ENTERPRISE
1.08	The proposed model of delivery is for a new social enterprise business, with the three partners, having equal rights for the management and delivery of the operation. The mission of the company will be to "connect everyone with good fresh food".

	Food would be prepared in Flintshire through a number of hubs locations with a main food preparation hub in the Shotton area.
1.09	<p>The model which is set out below aims to deliver the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of good fresh meals using surplus vegetables purchased at reduced rates; • A provider for catering in housing associations; nurseries and workplaces which will generate a surplus which will then be redistributed to establish free/subsidised meal supply for vulnerable groups • To supply meals as an alternative to a “meals on wheels” model. This will directly compete with commercial sellers in this area, but will be very different in that the “community hubs” that we establish will directly benefit from the number of meals they order, this can then be utilised by the “hub” for a community purpose
1.10	<p>A primary aim will be to reach and develop sustainable models for people to access good affordable fresh food, particularly linking in with work we do and services we provide such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domiciliary care and linking food provision with care services • Developing a transition programme from food aid to food purchase for vulnerable groups, i.e. homeless families • To link in with services which support residents and embed support around food provision within those services • To use food provision as a catalyst to begin to tackle loneliness and isolation
1.11	<p>The model anticipates that the partners will provide an initial investment in year 1 and 2 of £375,000 broken down as follows:-</p> <p>Clwyd Alyn - £225,000 (Year 1 £125k, Year 2 £100k) Flintshire County Council £150,000 (Year 1 £100k, Year 2 £50k)</p>
1.12	<p>Discussions have been ongoing between the partners and a number of issues are in the process of being resolved. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of the social value narrative as a basis for the business plan, this is to include the things that are important to Flintshire County Council and to provide a clear steer to the organisation from the outset • Legal documents and terms for the business which will be drawn up over the Summer months • Clear map of the external bids and the indicative prospects of these. • Development of an ethical employment model

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The proposal will create employment opportunities within Flintshire.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	Discussion with prospective partners is ongoing at the moment.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	Food Poverty has been identified as a significant issue and risk to our communities and has been included within the draft Council Plan under the theme of 'Caring Council, Protecting People from Poverty'. Tackling food poverty is an important means of increasing equality of opportunity for all Flintshire residents.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Contact Officer: Neal Cockerton Job Title: Chief Officer, Housing and Assets Telephone: 01352 703169 E-mail: neal.cockerton@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	Holiday Hunger Campaign - It has been recognised many children receiving free school meals do not eat a regular hot meal over the six weeks summer holidays due to their family being in food poverty. During the Summer of 2018 Flintshire County Council along with partners delivered a programme called "Share your lunch" which served around 18,000 hot meals to children in selected play scheme sites during the six week holiday period.
7.02	Social Enterprise - a business with a conscience that is driven by a cause. It focuses on the impact it has on people or the environment and generates profit which it ploughs back into the community.