

8. SUPPORT TO BLACKBURN, SEAFIELD AND DISTRICT CREDIT UNION

The Council Executive considered a joint report (a copy of which had been circulated) by the Head of Finance and Estates and Head of Area Services advising of proposals for one-off funding in 2014-15 for financial and other support to be provided to the Blackburn, Seafield and District Credit Union.

The report explained that Blackburn, Seafield and District Credit Union had faced a period of uncertainty and the board had worked hard with its membership to make changes to the way it operated to ensure that it was able to work effectively. This included agreeing to undertake the council's voluntary sector health check; the aim of the health check was to help the organisation become more robust and sustainable. By undertaking the health check the credit union had been able to self-evaluate how it was performing and it was using the outcomes of the health check to produce an improvement plan to take to its board.

Blackburn, Seafield and District Credit Union was seeking funding totalling £23,573 to :-

- Increase the number of schools which had a collection to twenty three (from twenty one);
- Create 200 new accounts;
- Open a new twice weekly service in Armadale, which would increase;
- Create a new account that would allow members to budget for rent, council tax and insurance and energy bills;
- Train six volunteers to support promotional work; and
- Introduce Real-Time Remote Collection using mobile broadband.

It was also proposed that through the Anti-Poverty Strategy Board the council, community planning partners and the credit union would work in partnership to deliver a range of services that were summarised in the report.

It was recommended that the Council Executive :-

1. Note that Blackburn, Seafield and District Credit Union had undertaken the council executive approved voluntary sector health check;
2. Agree to grant the credit union £23,573 to support the development of their service; and
3. Agree to provide in-kind support to the credit union to develop and promote the service to make it more accessible to potential customers.

Decision

To approve the terms of the report.