

# Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee

BRIEFING NOTE – No. 07/13

Date: September 2013

Briefing paper to: All Members of the Business Support Overview & Scrutiny Committee (copied to Members of the Regeneration, Community and Culture O&S Committee)

**Purpose:** The briefing note provides Members with some additional information regarding the Fair Access to Credit Review which was requested at the April meeting of the committee when it considered a six month update report.

## **FAIR ACCESS TO CREDIT REVIEW**

Members of the Business Support O&S Committee requested further updates and information with regard to the following areas: -

Citizens Advice Bureau to be contacted to establish the current position on the establishment of a multi-agency Social Impact Board

When the task group met with the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) as part of its evidence gathering, the CAB informed the Members that it would be establishing a multi-agency Social Impact Board.

The CAB has been contacted to request an update on the current position on the establishment of the board but this has not yet been received. A further update will be provided to the committee at its next update report scheduled for March 2014.

Provision of an update on responses to letters referred to at decisions 8 and 11 in Appendix 1 to the report

No further responses have been received and no more are expected due to the letters being written in a rhetorical nature.

Update on progress in identifying a suitable High Street location for the Medway Credit Union

The temporary Council Benefits Reform Advice Programme (BRAP) will be co-located with the Credit Union in Unit 88/89 in the Pentagon Shopping Centre. Officers are in the process of recruiting two graduate staff for the duration of BRAP who will provide basic signposting information to residents. This will

be either face-to-face or via the temporary "helpline". A mapping exercise of all the services and support available, such as the Council's Social Housing officers, housing associations, Jobcentre Plus, Citizens Advice, local & national charities etc, is currently taking place.

The Pentagon office may also be used (currently in discussion) by voluntary sector organisations to provide more in-depth budgeting / debt management advice to residents. The aim is to provide as much as possible, a joined-up approach to residents, particularly low-income private rented households.

#### Information on financial literacy support across all Medway Wards

In terms of providing financial literacy workshops across Medway's wards, the Council hopes to work with the local voluntary sector to deliver this late autumn / early spring.

#### Sharing with colleagues in C&A Directorate info as to the UK Youth Parliament's current campaign on curriculum for life which include financial skills so that this can be shared with the Medway Youth Parliament

The Youth Development Worker who supports Medway Youth Parliament has confirmed that MYP Members are aware and involved in the campaign. Two Members of MYP are also Members of the UK Youth Parliament (UKYP) and attended the national annual sitting in Leeds at the end of July.

The UKYP representatives from Medway have written to the three Medway MPs and the Department of Education. So far, an acknowledgement from the Department of Education has been received, explaining that they believe that schools already have a flexible system in place to incorporate a curriculum for life. The UKYP representatives hope to get academies in Medway to sign their pledge committing themselves to supporting a curriculum for life, with one academy signing up to the pledge so far.