

## BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

North Area Council Meeting:  
17<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Agenda Item: 8

Report of North Area Council  
Manager

### FRESH Street Project Match Funding Proposal

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report provides the Area Council with an update on Sheffield University's FRESH Street Project which has been active in Athersley North since March 2018.

#### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1. **Members refer to appendix 1 tabled by Clare Relton, Sheffield University at the July 2018 meeting.**
- 2.2. **Members approve the further 6 months funding, valued at £8,500 as per the in principle agreement at the July 2018 meeting.**

#### 3. Background highlighting all significant financial commitments

- 3.0 Representatives from Sheffield University attended the Anti-Poverty Delivery Group to introduce the FRESH Street Project in 2017.
- 3.1 The project was designed to increase the participants' consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables, leading to a change in behaviour and contributing to improved health and wellbeing of voucher recipients.
- 3.2 The project for Athersley North has meant that 78 households have benefited from 5 x £1 Rose Vouchers per week for 6 months.
- 3.3 Everyone (adults and children aged 2+) normally resident in the selected 'voucher streets' will be eligible, regardless of income/benefit status etc.
- 3.4 Appendix 1 was presented by Clare Relton, Sheffield University, at the July 2018 Area Council meeting.
- 3.5 It has been proposed to extend the project for 6 months. This would require additional funding of £8,500 to purchase Rose Vouchers. Sheffield University have secured additional funding to cover the research posts required to run the project.

3.6 Since the July meeting the Area Manager and Cllr Platts have consulted the Food Access Steering group to ensure that this proposal does not negatively impact on or detract from other projects and initiatives that are planned on a borough wide basis.

**4. For decision**

4.1. It is proposed that due to the positive impact observed to date that the project should be extended by a further 6 months. This was agreed in principle and The North Area Council pending approval at this meeting.

4.2. This extension to the project requires a further investment of £8,500. All funding allocated must be spent within the designated time period.

4.3. The North Area Council are request to confirm the in principle agreement made in July 2018 to fund the project for a further 6 months.

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**Date:**  
**5<sup>th</sup> September 2018**

## Appendix 1:

### Brief interim report on the FRESH Street project 12.7.18

[www.sheffield.ac.uk/scharr/sections/ph/freshstreet](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/scharr/sections/ph/freshstreet)

#### Purpose of the FRESH St Research project

To develop and feasibility test an intervention to help create sustainable and healthy diets, eating behaviours and food systems in areas of high deprivation.

#### The intervention – FRESH Street

- **Area based** – Athersley North selected in consultation with Barnsley council, as suitable area (high deprivation, low fruit and veg consumption, stable population, local fruit and veg shop)
- **4 streets** selected at random – 99 households (total properties in Athersley North = 1811)
- **Every household** on the 4 streets eligible to receive vouchers
- Every household offered **5 x £1 vouchers per week** for minimum of 6 months
- Vouchers redeemable for **fresh fruit and veg only** at selected outlets (Laithes Lane 5 a day fruit and veg shop & Barnsley Market fruit and veg stalls x 6)

#### Recruitment process

Pre-launch (mid-February to mid-March 2018):

- Knocked on every door at least twice at different times of day and had a face to face conversation with residents who answered. Households where no answer – flyer invited residents to contact research team

Post-launch:

- Researchers continued to knock on doors of all households that had not been contacted on a weekly basis for first 7 weeks of the scheme.
- Returned to households that had previously declined to ask again if they were interested in joining the scheme now that majority of their neighbours were receiving vouchers.
- Flyers posted each week to households where there was no answer.

#### Joining FRESH Street

- To join **the voucher scheme**, one member of the household had to answer a series of verbal, free-text eating habits questions:
  - *Describe your main meal yesterday? (to elicit if meal was: Home-cooked from scratch, home-cooked with ready-made ingredients, takeaway, ready-meal, or other)*
  - *Did you eat this alone or with friends/family?*
  - *How often do you eat fruit? How often do you eat vegetables?*
- **Joiners were then** asked if they were willing to 1) provide information on household make up, and 2) fill in the Yorkshire Health Study Health Questionnaire. It was made clear that they would receive vouchers whether or not they answered questions 1 and 2.

#### Number of households joining FRESH Street

- Total households recruited = 78 (79%)
- Reasons for not joining (21 households): property empty (n=2); carer refused on behalf of elderly/disabled householder (n=2); away much of the time (n=2); does all shopping in same place and doesn't want to change that (n=1); eats no fruit and very little veg (n=1); no reason given (n=8); concerns about data collection requirements (n=1); Unable to contact (n=4)

- **Scheme launch**
- First vouchers distributed 21.03.18 to 37 households
- Total households rising to 78 by week 8.
- Household size ranged from 1 – 8 people
- 33 households include children under 18 years of age
- 14 single occupancy households

#### **Voucher delivery**

- Vouchers are delivered each week in a bright green envelope, accompanied by a letter. The content of the letter varies but always includes a message about health benefits of increased fruit and veg consumption and (from week 3), a simple, healthy vegetable-based recipe
- Vouchers delivered weekly by hand. From week 12 onwards vouchers sometimes sent by post.

#### **Voucher spending patterns**

*Redemption rates by household: NB Voucher redemption rates are for weeks 1-8 only as accurate redemption rates cannot be calculated until vouchers have expired (expiry date set at 6 weeks)*

- Over 90% of all vouchers distributed in the first 8 weeks were redeemed
- All week 1-8 vouchers were redeemed for 58 households, most for 18 households
- No week 1-8 vouchers were redeemed for 2 households

Where vouchers are being redeemed: (Total vouchers redeemed 22.03.18 to 28.06.18 = 3428)

- Laithe's Lane '5 a day fruit and veg shop' = 2294 (66.9%), Barnsley Markets = 1134 (33.1%)

#### **Impact – emerging findings (note small numbers)**

- **Local fruit and veg shop:** Initial feedback from the local fruit and veg shop is that existing customers are buying more fruit and veg, and that they are seeing new customers.
- **Shopping patterns:** some started to buy fruit and veg locally instead of at the supermarket
- **Social interaction:** residents talking to one another about the voucher scheme, interacting with neighbours at the local fruit and veg shop, sharing vouchers with family and friends
- **Eating habits:** voucher users reporting positive impact on eating behaviour e.g.
  - Exchanged morning coffee and biscuit for coffee and piece of fruit
  - Used to eat almost no fruit and veg, now has salad every day
  - Have had fruit salad nearly every day since receiving vouchers
  - Have tried varieties of fruit and veg that had not tried before
  - Started cooking healthy soups
- **Children's eating habits:** children are now eating more fruit and veg
- **Recipes:** comments that the weekly recipes have been helpful
- **Weight loss:** comments that lost weight since the start of the voucher scheme
- **Finances:** vouchers have helped financially, enabling them to buy more fruit and veg.

#### **What next?**

- Current funds for vouchers will run out end of September 2018
- Testing idea in Sheffield
- Interest in scheme nationally
- Longer term test
- Future research plans