

 <b>Executive Committee – 7 August 2013</b>		<b>Agenda Item No.</b> <b>5</b>
<b>Title</b>	Brunswick Healthy Living Centre	
<b>For further information about this report please contact</b>	Jane Coates <a href="mailto:janecoates@warwickshire.gov.uk">janecoates@warwickshire.gov.uk</a> (01926) 456103	
<b>Wards of the District directly affected</b>	Brunswick	
<b>Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?</b>	No	
<b>Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number</b>	N/A	
<b>Background Papers</b>	N/A	

<b>Contrary to the policy framework:</b>	No
<b>Contrary to the budgetary framework:</b>	No
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No
<b>Included within the Forward Plan?</b>	Yes
<b>Equality &amp; Sustainability Impact Assessment Undertaken</b>	N/A

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive		Chris Elliott
Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer		Andrew Jones
Head of Service		Susie Drummond
CMT		Bill Hunt
Section 151 Officer		Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)		Councillors Doody and Mrs Grainger
Consultation & Community Engagement		
None		
Final Decision?		Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

## 1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The report seeks Executive support for Brunswick Healthy Living Centre and a one-off financial contribution for equipment.

## 2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Executive notes that Brunswick Healthy Living Centre (BHLC) offers a wide range of support services for the more vulnerable members of our community.
- 2.2 That Executive supports BHLC's initiative to expand its existing employment support provision.
- 2.3 That subject to agreeing recommendation 2.2, Executive agrees up to £13,000 being made available from the 2013/14 contingency budget to enable the purchase of laptops and equipment to facilitate customer access to the internet.

## 3. **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 In May 2013, the director of BHLC met with the Leader of Warwick District Council and Chris White MP to explore avenues of support to enable the purchase of additional computer equipment for the centre and an expansion to existing employment support provision. The need was identified by BHLC, which reports experiencing an increase in customers needing both internet access and in some cases individual support to complete new benefit claim forms. BHLC hoped to extend its existing 'job club' programme by supporting the increasing number of customers being referred to them by Job Centre Plus for help.
- 3.2 The job club model adds value to the services being offered by other local providers. Leamington Job Centre Plus refers customers to BHLC when the customer has a specific need, such as extra help with completing forms, or lack of access to a free computer. This is an informal arrangement, not supported by funding from DWP. BHLC reports a sharp upturn in referrals since the introduction of online benefit claims for new claimants. A local training provider, JHP, is commissioned by DWP to provide a work programme in partnership with Job Centre Plus, to tackle long-term worklessness. The national welfare reform implementation programme acknowledges that local voluntary sector groups may be best placed to support their most vulnerable claimants.
- 3.3 BHLC currently delivers two job clubs:
- From the Brunswick centre, funded by Morrisons, until 2014
  - In Lillington, funded by WDC through its voluntary sector commissioning arrangements, until March 2015
- 3.4 BHLC has pursued support to extend their provision through large local businesses, under the auspices of their corporate social responsibility policies. Unfortunately this has not led to any award or 'in-kind' offer.
- 3.5 If funding is not awarded to BHLC, clients seeking access to new benefit claims and advice and support with seeking work may have to wait to receive support, or may be turned away by BHLC. In relation to benefit claimants, this could leave people without money.
- 3.6 Executive is advised that there is no funding in the Corporate and Community Services budgets to provide this sum, as the Voluntary and Community Sector

is supported via commissioned work. The award of the contingency budget is ultimately a decision for the Council's Executive to make.

- 3.7 Members will appreciate that the request from BHLC does not accord with the commissioning approach the Council has taken with regard to Voluntary and Community Sector services. This Council has tried to move away from large grants, preferring to have in place more robust contractual arrangements. However, this should not mean that a one-size-fits-all approach should be doggedly adhered to. There will be circumstances when opportunities present themselves which merit Council support.

#### 4. **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

- 4.1 This Council has endorsed the Sustainable Community Strategy for Warwick District. This includes the priority theme of Economy, Skills and Employment, and the cross-cutting themes of Narrowing the Gaps, and Engaging and Strengthening Communities. BHLC supports these themes by:
- Offering an established model of 'job club' support that works alongside local work programmes and the DWP to improve customers' skills in applying for work.
  - Making computers and internet access available without charge to members of the community who would otherwise be disadvantaged due to the lack of this facility at home.
  - Providing an 'open door' drop-in facility 5 days a week, 50 weeks a year, that welcomes all sections of the community and provides signposting and on-site services based on customer need.

#### 5. **BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

- 5.1 Should Executive agree to support BHLC then £13,000 could be drawn down from the Contingency Budget, which currently stands at £152,900 (subject to any other requests being considered at this Executive meeting).
- 5.2 The breakdown of the funding request, which will support the first year of the provision, is as follows:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>
Purchase of 15 laptops	6,000	0
CTX software-reduced costs	1,000	0
Chargeable laptop secure store cabinet	1,750	0
Installation costs and maintenance support	1,800	500
Infrastructure costs	500	0
Printer	350	0
Internet and wi-fi	500	500
Insurance premium	300	300
Consumables, e.g. toner	300	300
BHLC full cost recovery	1,500	1,500
Advisor cost	0	0
Volunteer expenses	1,000	1,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>4,100</b>

BHLC intends to approach other funders for the remaining year 1 balance of £2,000, and for the year 2 costs.

## 6. **ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S) CONSIDERED**

6.1 Executive could decide not to support BHLC.

## 7. **BACKGROUND**

7.1 The Charitable Objectives of BHLC are:

The promotion for the public benefit of urban or rural regeneration in areas of social and economic deprivation (and in particular in the Leamington Old Town of Warwickshire within the municipal district of Warwick (the area) by all or any of the following means:

- The relief of poverty
- The advancement of education, training, retraining, particularly among unemployed people, and providing unemployed people with work experience
- The provision of financial assistance, or business advice or consultancy in order to provide training and employment opportunities for unemployed people in cases of financial or other charitable need through help:
  - In setting up their own business, or
  - To existing businesses
- The maintenance, improvement or provision of public amenities
- The provision of recreational facilities for the public at large or those who by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, poverty or social or economic circumstances have need of such facilities
- The provision of public health facilities and childcare, in particular by the establishment and operation of a healthy living centre in the area
- Such other means as may from time to time be determined subject to the prior written consent of the charity commissioners of England and Wales

7.2 BHLC provides, both at its own base and on an outreach basis, a wide range of services in accordance with its Charitable Objectives. Over recent years and to the present day, activities have included: a community café; a wide range of inclusive physical activities; computer access, supported if required; a volunteer development programme; health promotion activity; a job club; work experience.

7.3 The staffing structure at BHLC comprises 8 people employed on a full- or part-time basis, and a variable pool of volunteers (usually in the region of 50 or more actively supporting the centre's customers).

7.4 In the 2012/13 financial year, the Brunswick job club supported 31 people into work. The North Leamington job club supported 28 people into work. Based on customer footfall this equates to a success rate of 13.5% in Brunswick ward, and 28% in Lillington.