



## **REPORT of DIRECTOR OF SERVICE DELIVERY**

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**to  
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
19 NOVEMBER 2020**

### **MALDON CITIZENS ADVICE - REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF FUNDING**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To consider the request from the Maldon Citizens Advice for a review of its funding at **APPENDIX 1**.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members:

- (i) consider the request from Maldon Citizens Advice at **APPENDIX 1**;
- (ii) confirm if they wish to increase funding to Maldon Citizens Advice, from £73,500 to £75,000 for 2021 / 22;
- (iii) consider funding for 2022 onwards as part of a report on future procurement to be brought back to the Strategy and Resources Committee in Spring 2021.

#### **3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

##### **3.1 Existing Funding arrangements**

- 3.1.1 Maldon Citizens Advice are delivering a General Advice Service under a contract that was awarded in 2016, with annual funding of £73,500.

3.1.2 It is proposed to:

- extend that contract until April 2022 at the current rates of funding.
- undertake a procurement exercise during 2021 to offer a new contract from 2022 for a minimum period of five years (three years plus extension of two years). A detailed report will come to this Committee in the spring to approve the specification, timetable and funding for the new contract.

- 3.1.3 Officers had not proposed any changes to the funding arrangements for 2021 / 22.

### 3.2 **Request for additional funding**

3.2.1 A request to consider additional funding has been received from the Maldon Citizens Advice, a copy of which is at **APPENDIX 1**.

3.2.2 Maldon Citizen Advice has asked for the funding to be increased as follows:

- 2021 /22 .....£75,000;
- 2022 / 23 .....£77,500;
- 2023 / 24 .....£80,000.

## 4. **CONCLUSION**

4.1 Officers were intending a one year extension of the existing contract at the existing level of funding £73,500, and to undertake a new procurement exercise during 2021 / 22.

4.2 Members will be asked to approve the new contract specification, timetable and funding in Spring 2021, with the intention that any future contract would be for a minimum period of five years (three years plus two years)

4.3 Maldon Citizens Advice has requested an increase in funding for 2021 / 22 and beyond, which at the moment is not built into current budgets.

4.4 Members may wish to consider the request for an increase in funding for 2021 / 22.

4.5 Funding beyond 2022 will form part of the new contract that Members will be asked to consider in Spring 2021.

## 5. **IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES**

5.1 The provision of an Advice Service supports the Councils Corporate Priorities of **Excellent services and value for money** through the use of a volunteering model to deliver, and the clear prioritisation and measurement of outcomes through the management of the contract. It also supports the priority of **Healthy, safe and vibrant communities**, through the contract targeting key outcomes such as support to manage debts and increase financial capability, increase digital inclusion and helping to reduce homelessness.

## 6. **IMPLICATIONS**

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – The effective delivery of an Advice Service reflects the corporate plan priorities of delivering excellent services and value for money, and supporting Healthy Safe and Vibrant communities., particularly through the use of a significant level of volunteering within the community. This service is increasingly vital to support customers who face the impact of the Pandemic, including Housing, financial and employment issues.

- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – A service which is easily accessible to residents, through website, telephone, and where required face to face appointments is essential to ensure equality of access.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – An effective advice service is essential to deliver a range of services which are not delivered by the Council. A lack of an effective advice service would impact adversely on the wellbeing of residents and would significantly increase the workload of the Council’s own staff. This advice service is increasing vital as more residents are impacted by the Pandemic. Given the wide range of advice that Maldon Citizen Advice offer it would not be possible to deliver this service in-house at the current cost.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – Current budget provides for funding of £73,500 per year.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – The absence of an advice service would have a significant impact upon our resources.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None.
- (vii) **Impact on Strengthening Communities** – The Maldon Citizens Advice actively supports volunteering in the District through its use of a high number of volunteers to deliver its services.

Background Papers: None.

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