

## Members' Library Service Request Form

Date of Document	21/03/14
Originator	Paolo Vestri
Originator's Ref (if any)	
Document Title	CABx Service Level Agreements and Funding 2014/15

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Additional information:

Authorised By	Monica Patterson
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Date	25 March 2014

For Office Use Only:	
Library Reference	55/14
Date Received	25/03/14
Bulletin	Mar14

**REPORT TO:** Members' Library Service

**MEETING DATE:**

**BY:** Depute Chief Executive – Partnerships and Community Services

**SUBJECT:** CABx Service Level Agreements and Funding 2014/15

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 This report makes recommendations on the Service Level Agreements between the Council and the Haddington Citizens Advice Bureau and Musselburgh and District Citizens Advice Bureau for 2014/15.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the current Service Level Agreements and funding allocated to Haddington CAB and Musselburgh and District CAB which conclude on 31 March 2014 be extended for a year until 31 March 2015.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 In March 2013 Cabinet agreed to continue with the Service Level Agreements in place with the Haddington CAB and Musselburgh and District CAB until end March 2014.
- 3.2 These Service Level Agreements provides the two CABx with funding totalling £298,562. This funding includes core funding for the Bureau, funding for money advice and the grant previously allocated from the Fairer East Lothian Fund. Haddington CAB, which also receives support towards the rent of its property, receives a total of £154,272. Musselburgh CAB receives a total of £144,290. It is also important to recognise and note that Musselburgh CAB also benefits from a subsidised rental of council owned property, which in effect should be considered as grant in kind. The Estates Manager has advised that the value of this subsidy is approximately £9,205pa.

- 3.3 The Council initiated a review of welfare and money advice services in 2011. Recommendations from an interim were accepted in March 2012, including the 'mainstreaming' of the CABx Fairer East Lothian Fund grants referred to above and the re-instating of budget provision for the Council's Welfare Rights Service. The other key recommendation of the interim report was that consideration should be given to the option of creating either an East Lothian Group CAB or a single CAB.
- 3.4 Work has been carried out to review how the Council supports independent welfare and money advice services. This work has concluded that detailed consideration should be given to procuring these advice services through a formal tendering process. It should be noted that the current funding provided to the two CABx from the Service Level Agreements alone amounts to almost £300,000; a significant service to be provided without any procurement process. Further work is being carried out on producing a tender specification that details the services that will be commissioned with a view to ensuring:
- A consistent approach to providing access to advice services across the county
  - Maximising access to advice services, not just through face-to-face provision but also telephone and internet access
  - The provision of advice at a high standard (accredited to meet nationally recognised quality standards)
  - Vulnerable groups and communities with the highest levels of economic deprivation have access
  - Reducing duplication and inefficiencies resulting from duplication of services and funding streams.
- 3.5 The timescale for the procurement exercise has not been finalised but it is envisaged that the specification will not be finalised until late spring and that any final decision on the contract itself will not be taken until late autumn. It is not envisaged that the contract would start until sometime in 2015.
- 3.6 Therefore, it is recommended that pending the outcome of the procurement process the Service Level Agreements with Haddington CAB and Musselburgh CAB should be extended for a further year and that funding should remain at the level agreed for 2013/14 as detailed above.

## **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Service Level Agreements and funding allocation to the two CABx will contribute towards achieving the Single Outcome Agreement outcome: *'Fewer People will experience poverty in East Lothian'*.

## **5 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out and no negative impacts have been found

## **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Financial – The awards to the two CABx totals, £298,562. This sum can be contained within the 2014/15 Partnership Fund.
- 6.2 Personnel – none
- 6.3 Other – none

## **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 2013/14 Partnership Funding from the Fairer east Lothian Fund, Safer East Lothian Fund and Miscellaneous Grants; report to Cabinet, 12<sup>th</sup> March 2013

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<b>DATE</b>	21 March 2014