

Wednesday, 24 January 2024

Report of the Assistant Director Environment, Culture and Wellbeing

Appointment of a temporary Active Wellbeing Project Officer post & Active Wellbeing Engagement Officer

Exempt Information

None

Purpose

This report is to request permission from the Committee to create two temporary posts. The first post being a fixed term one-year temporary Active Wellbeing Project Officer and the second, a fixed term two-year temporary Active Wellbeing Engagement Officer post. The Project Officer post is funded via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to increase levels of participation in sports and recreational activities and to improve the perception and number of users of facilities in the borough. The Engagement Officer post is funded via the Contain Outbreak Management Fund to improve and provide additional physically activity & wellbeing provision for the residents of Tamworth. Both posts will be instrumental in helping to address health inequity in the borough.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the committee consider the content of this report and agree to:

1. Appoint a one-year fixed term Active Wellbeing Project Officer.
2. Appoint a two-year fixed term Active Wellbeing Engagement Officer.

Executive Summary

The above posts will help to address low physical activity rates and high overweight & obesity rates in the borough. Tamworth would benefit from a concentrated effort to improve the health status of its residents. 1 in 3 children in Tamworth are active for less than 30 minutes a day and prevalence of excess weight in reception children is statistically higher than national rates in Glascote (29%) and Stonydelph (32%). In year 6 the percentage of children with excess weight is statistically higher than national rates in Glascote (42%). Although no wards are statistically higher than national obesity rates, it is highest in Glascote (25.6%) and Amington (23.2%). 1 in 4 adults in Tamworth are active for less than 30 minutes per week against the recommended 150 minutes per week recommended by the Chief Medical Officer. Increasing physical activity in children will develop movement skills, muscular fitness, and bone strength, whilst increasing adult activity will improve or maintain muscle strength, balance and flexibility helping to prevent falls in later life, maintain bone health along with helping to prevent overweight and inactivity related conditions such as diabetes, hypertension and certain types of cancer. There is also an intrinsic link between people being physically active and improvements this can bring to an individual's mental wellbeing.

The Active Wellbeing Project Officer will work in conjunction with local sports clubs and physical activity providers focussing on the outcome of bringing new users to facilities – a focus will be placed on new groups on the artificial grass pitch at Anker Valley, turning Anker Valley into a community hub for physical activity, with a focus on activities for women and

girls, disability groups, mental health service users, the physically inactive and those with underlying health conditions. Focus will also be placed on increasing the online presence of local clubs through online booking systems and social media presence to help increase users and club membership levels, helping to create new teams and leagues in the process. In order to help improve the perception of local facilities the Project Officer will identify & support local clubs to apply for appropriate funding helping to leave a legacy and long-term benefit of the project.

The Active Wellbeing Engagement Officer role will enable the provision of free fruit and vegetables, smoothies, health screening (such as blood pressure & body composition analysis) & physical activity opportunities, for example group exercise classes, walking football, cricket, netball, walking schemes, lead cycle rides, couch to 5k, and unique sessions such as silent discos & silent yoga sessions. Sessions will be delivered free of charge for initial engagement, with nominal charges moving forward to aid sustainability; with gradual training of volunteers to allow the sustained longevity of the project. The project will provide a collaborative and holistic approach to helping break down the barriers to taking positive steps to improve health risk factors and help to remove the cost barriers and provide a mobile service where appropriate to engage communities not currently engaged.

Following Job Evaluation both posts were graded at E. When appointed at the bottom of the scale this equates to £39,520 from 2024/25 including employer's oncosts. When considering the impact of an increment and the budgeted pay award for 2025/26, this means that the cost for the Project officer post is £39,520 & the two-year Engagement Officer post is £80,540, total costs of £120,060.

Delivery enabled by both posts will be linked to the consultation work completed as part of the recent Wellbeing strategy, along with our own community consultation. This will be accompanied by pre and post delivery data giving both objective and subjective data to evidence the impact of the projects.

Resource Implications

Grant funding for the projects has already been approved and money allocated towards the two posts. The Active Wellbeing Project Officer post will be funded mainly utilising £37k from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Should the post not be approved it is likely that the stipulated outcomes will not be met, resulting in the money having to be returned to Government.

The Active Wellbeing Engagement Officer post is funded in part (£30k) by the Covid Outbreak Management Fund administered by Staffs CC. The remaining costs of £53,060 are to be met from a current year underspend on Pleasure Grounds Salaries (GX1101 00101) of £26,960 due to a vacant post (a reserve will be required at year end to carry these funds into the new financial year); and £26,100 from the Football Development Fund (Future Sports Facility Development retained fund PM1876). The Football Development Fund is a ring-fenced budget holding the profit from the 3G pitch at Tamworth Enterprise College. This facility was installed by Tamworth Borough Council with external funding obtained via the Football Foundation, a stipulation of which is that all profits must be retained and utilised for leisure provision. This fund currently has a balance of £38k.

Legal/Risk Implications

£67,000 of the £120,060 is externally funded which has already been approved and allocated to the Borough Council to deliver the roles and the subsequent programmes of work. If not approved the money is likely to be unspent within the necessary timeframes and ultimately it would have to be returned to the funding body.

Equalities Implications

Although these projects will be available to all sectors of the community, there will be targeted provision for those with underlying health conditions, at risk of social isolation, mental health service users and those living in lower super output areas.

Environment and Sustainability Implications (including climate change)

None.

Background Information

None.

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List of Background Papers

None.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Job Profile Active Wellbeing Project Officer

Appendix 2 – Job Profile Active Wellbeing Engagement Officer

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