

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

meeting date: 7 NOVEMBER 2023
title: VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION GRANTS – CITIZENS ADVICE UPDATE
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES & DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: VALERIE TAYLOR

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To consider service statistics for the Ribble Valley area as provided by the Citizen's Advice East Lancashire Service for the April to September period of the 2023/24 financial year.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In March 2023 this Committee approved the allocation of £51,750 of voluntary organisation grants to twenty voluntary organisations for the 2023/24 financial year.
- 2.2 The allocations included £5,000 that was awarded to Citizens Advice Rossendale and Hyndburn to support extension of the service into the Ribble Valley area.
- 2.3 During the committee meeting it was noted that the Voluntary Organisation grants working group had made a number of specific suggestions, including:
- That a review is carried out after six months that asks Citizen's Advice Rossendale and Hyndburn to provide some further details as to their face-to-face meetings in the Ribble Valley.

3 SERVICE STATISTICS

- 3.1 Citizens Advice East Lancashire (CAEL) were contacted in October and asked to provide details of the following:
- The number of hours and the locations of face-to-face meetings that have been carried out in the Ribble Valley between April and September 2023; and
 - How this compares to the hours spent on face-to-face meetings in the Hyndburn and Rossendale areas.
- 3.2 CAEL have provided a list of outcomes for the Ribble Valley service (Annex 1) and a comparison of outreach work across different areas (Annex 2).

4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 In March 2023 the voluntary organisation grants working group recommended to this committee that a review of Citizen's Advice Rossendale and Hyndburn be carried out after six months. Monitoring information provided by the CAEL is attached in the annexes to this report.

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT

DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
AND DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

PF72-23/VT/AC
24 OCTOBER 2023

Ribble Valley Service headline statistics April-Sept 2023



Offering free, confidential and impartial advice on a range of topics ... Accessing the service

Access to the service for clients has been via the **telephone** using the adviceline number: **0808 278 7975** via **webform from our website and QR code in the community or 3rd party referral** from another agency

Drop in Face -Face access has been available within the Ribble Valley at Trinity Community Hub and St Paul's Church Longridge on alternate Fridays with event stands across the rural communities of Longridge, Chipping and Slaidburn.



54 clients seen face-face at drop-ins and community events since July



176 clients dealt with by phone and other channels



£82,500 of income generated into local Ribble Valley households

The funding of £5,000 provided by Ribble Valley Council for face-face advice has so far generated £32,000 back into the local economy through benefit gains and grants at the face-to-face drop in's with the remaining £50,500 of gains being via our telephone adviceline and specialist casework teams.

Clitheroe CP, Longridge, Billingham and Langho and Chipping were the top four parishes for demand. 57% of service users had a long term illness or disability and the highest proportion were in the 55-59 age range.

Ribble Valley residents also have access to any of our offices in East Lancashire and residents have been attending in Pendle and Accrington if they live close to the border.

Summary of Outreach work as provided by Citizens Advice East Lancashire April-September 2023

In terms of how much outreach we do compared to other areas please see the below:

Bacup - 7.5 hours per week

Hyndburn-5 hours per week

Ribble Valley- 3.5 hours per week (excluding write up time which can be a few hours a week)

The hours spent at public events during this period

Bacup -

Stubbylee Park Carnival -5 hours

Health Centre - 4 hours

Family Hub- 5 hours

Hyndburn

Family Hub-5 hours

Ribble Valley

Goosnargh and Longridge show - 7 hours

Chipping Show - 7 hours

Hodder Valley show (Slaidburn) - 7 hours

So if we take a fair comparison of July-September thats 13 weeks –

Rossendale had a total of 112 hours of face-face drop-in sessions

Hyndburn had a total of 70 hours of face-face drop-ins

Ribble Valley had a total of 86 hours of face-face drop-ins (prior to July we delivered face-face advice via home visits and the Accrington office where people were prepared to travel and on top of that they get the added value of our telephone advice service and our webform advice)