

Subject: Period Poverty

Report to: Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee – 20 June 2019

Report by: Neil Shaw, Strategic Director

RECOMMENDATION

To note the work of the Tricky Period project in response to the council motion.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The following motion was resolved at Full Council on 13 December 2018:

That the Council tasks the Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee to explore how to alleviate Period Poverty in Great Yarmouth. By working with partners and to explore the possibility of approved Local community charities to collect and distribute in the most discrete way, sanitary products to those most in need. That the Council, identifies funds to a maximum of £5,000 per annum for the sole purpose for the purchase of sanitary products for distribution via those identified partners and charities. Welcoming the fact that the Government has made a commitment to abolish VAT on sanitary at the earliest opportunity then the Council further notes that this opportunity will be available upon leaving the European Union.

2. ACTION TO ADDRESS THE MOTION

2.1. The council is aware that some local voluntary organisations are already promoting the 'Tricky Period' campaign to improve access to free sanitary products. In addressing the motion the council identified opportunities to more widely promote awareness of the existing provision, expand the current local approach and engage with more vulnerable residents locally.

2.2. A briefing was circulated to all members on 15 February 2019 and this report provides an update on the progress of the work. The project commenced in March 2019. The project involves the council's Customer Services and Neighbourhoods and Communities teams working with the following organisations:

- GY Library
- DIAL
- Salvation Army
- Citizens Advice Bureau and Revolutionary Roots (an organisation supporting young people based at the CAB)
- MAP (a drop in and advice centre for young people)
- Great Yarmouth Minster and Minster Mission (Pathways)

2.3. The council have gained the support of In Kind Direct – a national organisation who receive supplies of a wide range of free cosmetic and sanitary products direct from manufacturers. A number of the local organisations identified are registering with In Kind Direct to receive free supplies of sanitary products. GY Library and the

Salvation Army already receive donations from other sources and have been running the 'Tricky Period' campaign for some time. Tesco have agreed to support the project by supplying a number of free products for a 12 month period and the project funding agreed by members has provided products at wholesale prices for distribution. It is hoped that other local organisations can be encouraged to donate to the programme locally, thus reducing the need for continued purchasing of products from a wholesaler.

- 2.4. The council is also participating in the project directly by providing distribution points for the free items at Greyfriars House, Comeunity and MESH Neighbourhood offices.
- 2.5. Numbered vouchers are provided which entitle the bearer to enough products to cover one month's menstrual cycle. The vouchers have been distributed at locations around Great Yarmouth including the key partner organisations. Women and girls will be able to come to these places (which will be advertised on posters around the town) to redeem their vouchers and receive free products. Distribution partners are keeping a log of voucher numbers redeemed and the date.
- 2.6. Partners are making their staff and volunteers aware of how the scheme will work, and whilst they will not record any information about the women receiving the products, they will need to be able to keep an eye on whether there are any regular recipients and be able to open a conversation with them about whether they need other support or help.
- 2.7. The council has designed and printed vouchers, posters and distribution bags. A copy of one of the posters is attached as an appendix. The posters will be put up around Great Yarmouth and Gorleston to promote the project, particularly in ladies toilets. Posters have been sent to all local schools. Posters will also be distributed in Portuguese. The project is being promoted on social media to help raise awareness. Partners were called together for a meeting on 3 June and positive initial feedback has been received so far.

3. FINANCE

£213 has been used to fund the production of the posters, vouchers, leaflet holders and bags. £297 has been used to bulk purchase products. Funding will be provided up to a maximum of £5,000 to support the project if additional demand is identified by the distribution partners during 2019/20.

4. LEGAL

None

5. RECOMMENDATION

To note the work of the Tricky Period project in response to the council motion.

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	Yes
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	Yes
Existing Council Policies:	No
Financial Implications:	Yes
Legal Implications (including human rights):	No
Risk Implications:	No
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	Yes
Crime & Disorder:	No
Every Child Matters:	No

HAVING A TRICKY PERIOD?

If you're struggling to afford sanitary pads and liners then you can get free sanitary products under the **Tricky Period Scheme**.

It's as simple as

Pick up a free voucher.



Hand in your voucher.



Pick up your free sanitary products.



COLLECTION POINTS

FOR VOUCHERS AND FREE PRODUCTS

Great Yarmouth Library,
Tolhouse Street,
Great Yarmouth

Citizens Advice Bureau,
Revolutionary Roots,
2 Stonecutters Way,
Great Yarmouth

Salvation Army,
Tolhouse Street,
Great Yarmouth

Comeunity,
135 King Street,
Great Yarmouth

DIAL,
Kingside,
26 King Street,
Great Yarmouth

Greyfriars House,
Greyfriars Way,
Great Yarmouth

MAP,
52a Deneside,
Great Yarmouth

Great Yarmouth Minster,
Church Plain

MESH,
Magdalen Way,
Gorleston