

CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS AND MID AND EAST ANTRIM JOINT WORKING CLUSTER	2nd May 2017
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES REPORT	
FOR INFORMATION	

Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)	
Strategic Theme	Resilient, Healthy and Engaged Communities
Outcome	Tackling Food and Fuel Poverty
Lead Officer	Head of Health & Built Environment
Cost: (If applicable)	£6,000.00 plus Officer Time Spend

Causeway Coast and Glens and Mid and East Antrim Joint Working Cluster

Members will remember from the previous report item that the Joint Working Cluster has been developing and progressing a number of poverty initiatives. Please see below update highlighting progress to date.

Slow Energy Efficient

This initiative focuses on slow cooking and the use of slow cookers as a convenient, effective, energy efficient means of cooking. As previously reported a group of young carers participated in the programme and a follow up session has since been held. The findings from the event indicate that all of the participants found the programme to be extremely worthwhile and have since been implementing their learning in the home setting. One participant advised that they had previously struggled to eat as they lacked cooking skills but having participated in this initiative they were able to feed themselves and those they cared for.

Causeway Food Forum

Council received funding from the Joint Working Cluster to establish a local Food Forum. The aim of the Food Forum is to engage the local community in food poverty initiatives.

The inaugural meeting of Causeway Food Forum was held on Thursday 19th January 2017 in Ballymoney Townhall at 7.00pm. This meeting advised participants on the proposed purpose of the Forum and how Council intended to facilitate the process. Members were informed of the outcomes of previous events and the findings of the recent research undertaken by Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council and the University of Ulster.

The second meeting was held on Thursday 23rd March in Coleraine West Community Centre at 10.00am. This meeting provided participants with an opportunity to advise on initiatives currently being delivered in their areas. There was also the opportunity to discuss projects for further progression.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 27th April at 10.00am in Coleraine West Community Centre and we would encourage members to invite those in their areas who would be keen to promote wellbeing through food to attend.

Food Bank Research

Council with funding from the Joint Working Cluster are currently undertaking a baseline study of food bank provision in conjunction with the University of Ulster. The research will build upon previous work carried out within the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area and it is anticipated that opportunities to enhance food bank service and build on good practice will be identified. The study will include, but is not limited to, the following;

- The number of food banks in the area and services provided
- The number of people accessing food banks and the quantity and type of packs/meals provided
- Explore opportunities to enhance food pack contents e.g. shopping lists, recipe cards, inclusion of ring pull tins, cooking equipment provision, food packed in line with recipes, vouchers for fresh fruit/veg, etc.
- Explore opportunities to enhance the food bank services e.g. health hubs, links to other services.

Once finalised the research report will be circulated for information.

Household Growing Scheme

In order to support with the development of a Household Growing Scheme Action Plan, Council with funding from the Joint Working Cluster is currently undertaking a pilot along with the Cornfield Project. It is anticipated that the pilot will identify how best to encourage growing in smaller back or front spaces within social housing areas with potential scoping for Back to Front Food and Doorstep Allotments.

The “Establishing Your Vegetable Plot” has been developed to train and motivate adults to gain confidence and develop basic horticultural skills. This will enable participants to establish a vegetable plot or outdoor growing space.

Sew Energy Efficient

Due to demand an additional 10 sewing machines have been purchased through funding received from the Joint Working Cluster. These continue to be utilised by a number of groupings including a local girl guides.