

36. Lincoln Social Responsibility Charter

Heather Grover, Principal Planning Officer

- a. presented the proposed Lincoln Social Responsibility Charter for consideration prior to Executive approval.
- b. advised that the aim of the charter was to encourage organisations in Lincoln to undertake activities which benefited both their employees and also the local community in which they were located.
- c. gave an overview of the background of the report and advised that following discussion at the Living Wage Forum, the Corporate Policy Unit had been looking at a new approach recognising good employers in the city.
- d. referred to paragraph 4 of the report and highlighted examples of social responsibility activities and explained the benefits to the organisation, employees and the local community.
- e. advised that signatories to the charter would be published on the City of Lincoln Council's website and elsewhere such as a copy in City Hall reception.
- f. referred to the proposed sign up form at appendix B of the report and advised that there would be no cost to an organisation signing up to the charter.
- g. referred to paragraph 4.5 of the report and advised on what the organisations signing up to the charter would receive.
- h. advised on the key timescales for the approval of the charter and highlighted that the formal launch would be in May 2018.
- i. highlighted the estimated costs to set up and launch the charter, together with the estimated ongoing costs as detailed at paragraph 4.7 of the report.
- j. asked for members questions and comments

Question – Members referred to the examples of socially responsible activities within the Terms and Condition of Section 3 of the Social Responsibility Charter and asked if Bereavement Leave could be added?

Response – Yes this could be looked at.

Comment – Expressed concern that the charter would only benefit larger businesses as smaller businesses would not be able to afford to fulfil the criteria that needed to be met.

Response – Referred to page 5 of the Social Responsibility Charter and advised that small organisations should proactively undertake a minimum of 3 activities with at least one benefitting the employee and one benefitting the local community. This compared to large organisations who were required to undertake ten activities.

Comment – Suggested that no criteria be set for small businesses.

Response – There needed to be a balance, the aim was not to make it too easy to sign up otherwise the charter would have no value, or too difficult, resulting in a very small number of signatories. The criteria would be reviewed in 1 years' time.

Question – How would the Charter impact on staff and resources?

Response – Some time would be spent initially developing the form, once the form was set up it could be administered by an apprentice under officer guidance.

Comment – Suggested that veterans could be added as a group to receive concessions and that there was some specific support for carers which could be added to the socially responsible activities examples.

Response – Veterans would be added to the examples for receipt of concessions and the support for carers mentioned would be looked at for adding in.

RESOLVED that

1. the Lincoln Social Responsibility Charter be noted and comments referred to Executive for consideration.
2. the Lincoln Social Responsibility Charter would be reviewed by Policy Scrutiny Committee 18 months from implementation.