

Advice Link Terms of Reference
Agreed 27.6.08

Overall aims / mission statement 2008 – 2011

The Advice Link Project, through partnership working with and support to the voluntary, public and private sector, aims to provide accessible, timely, co-ordinated advice to Blackpool residents to promote prosperity, financial inclusion, take up of rights and entitlements, support services, relevant learning and employment opportunities, to prevent and tackle deprivation, poor health and social exclusion in Blackpool.

1. The aims of the Advice Link Project are to

- increase prosperity for the town's residents
- reduce problem indebtedness
- increase financial and social inclusion
- increase access to rights, entitlements and opportunities
- improve financial, physical and mental health and wellbeing leading to a reduced burden on health and social care services
- improve the overall quality and coordination of advice provision in Blackpool

2. The Team at full strength comprises:

- Coordinator
- Business Manager
- Special Projects Officer
- Administrative Assistant – vacant
- 2 Outreach
- 2 Debt Advisers
- Debt Advice Development Worker

3. Management of the team

- The team is managed by a Management Board, the terms of which are attached.
- Day to day running of the team is managed by the Coordinator who reports to the Management Board.
- Decisions will be made by a majority of board members present at any one meeting.
- Members of staff and representatives of staff may attend as observers and are not able to vote.
- All meetings of the Management board are minuted.

4. Monitoring and Reporting

- An annual Business Plan is produced.
- The co-ordinator provides quarterly reports to the Management Board, which include financial information and updates on outputs and milestones.
- A Blackpool Council accountant monitors the team budget and financial security.
- The management board is responsible for monitoring the financial activity, quality and agreed outputs of the team.
- There may be additional reporting requirements by particular funding streams which will be reported through the Board appropriately.

5. Frequency of Meetings

- The Team will arrange quarterly Board meetings.

6. Decisions

- Day to day management of the Team and finances will be carried out by the co-ordinator.
- An annual Business Plan will be submitted to the Board for approval on behalf of the providers and funders.

7. Independence / Conflict of interest

- Advice Link has a duty of confidentiality towards customers who seek advice in confidence. The staff have the freedom to advise and help individuals in an objective fashion without restraints being imposed by third parties. Although based within the Blackpool Council accommodation and subject to financial regulations and budgetary procedures of the funders, all advice and help is independent, unbiased and free from influence from any other quarter.

8. Consultation with Partners & Users

- The Team will conduct an on-going review process with service users.
- Consultation with the Blackpool Advice Link Network will be undertaken annually.

9. Funding

- The Team will explore funding streams, including making applications for funding where appropriate.
- Information regarding funding will be disseminated to the Advice Link Network and the Team will assist partners to make applications where appropriate.

10. Financial Accountability

- Blackpool Borough Council will be the accountable body.
- The Project will use Blackpool Council procedures for keeping accounts.
- A Blackpool Council accountant will monitor the team budget and financial security
- The organisation will comply with relevant legislation.
- Advice Link is a not for profit organisation

Last revised and approved at Management Board meeting 27.6.08