



## Monitoring Form – Voluntary Organisation Support Grant

### Uttlesford Citizens Advice

Q2 July – September 2017

#### **Please demonstrate how you are achieving:-**

*Promote and grow the use of Takeley video service. We will work with Uttlesford Food Bank to jointly promote services out of the Station House in Takeley.*

Progress in re-using Takeley as an outreach location has been delayed due to a change in clerk, a delay in the move to the 'Old School House' and IT support issues within Uttlesford Citizens Advice. Work has also been delayed in this area due to the need to prioritise the recruitment and training of new paid staff, recruitment of new adviser trainees and the introduction of a new client management system. (Please see our quarter 1 and quarter 2 performance reports for more context).

#### **Please demonstrate how you are achieving:-**

*Train debt caseworkers to ask new debt clients a set of routine questions, which aim to identify gender violence and abuse (a scheme called ASK). In pilot studies 27% of clients had a life time experience of gender violence and abuse. The aim of the scheme is to ensure that clients get earlier access to appropriate support and advice and to ensure that we provide the most effective debt advice based on their responses.*

Further to the update in Q1 and feedback from our debt team, we have decided to incorporate 'ASK' training in our new adviser training plan from January 2018. This decision is based on national Citizens Advice evidence that ASK is best used with clients at the initial point of contacting the service.

Our debt team have been given the discretion to use the ASK statement **'To make sure we give you the right support and information in helping you deal with your debt we ask clients this question.....are you being hurt or are you frightened by your partner, a family member or someone you know'** if it feels in context with the case.

#### **Please demonstrate how you are achieving:-**

*The charity is keen to work with the district council over the next 12 months to assess medium and long term need within the district for our services – basing this assessment on projected population growth, particularly in the south of the district, and the increasing demand for services in Stansted.*

We had a very helpful and interesting meeting with Dawn French and Fiona Gardiner on 18<sup>th</sup> September at a bi-annual UCAB strategy day. It was suggested that a key council officers should be regularly invited to these meetings to ensure the charity's board are aware of the objectives and drivers within the council whilst also allowing the charity to explain their data and feedback on demand and unmet need within the community.

Joint working between UDC and UCAB around the introduction of Universal Credit has been strong within the district in the quarter. An idea from Dawn French to utilise the 'Members fortnightly newsletter' to better inform Councillors about the role and activities of the charity within the community has already been started with the support of UDC's communication officer.

Completed by:

Name: Kate Robson

Date: 23<sup>th</sup> October, 2017

Position in organisation: CEO

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'KR' followed by a long horizontal line that tapers to a point on the right.