

Division(s):

CABINET – 25 FEBRUARY 2020

YOUTH OPPORTUNITY FUND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AWARD

Report by Corporate Director of Children's Services

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**
 - (a) **award a total of £999,800. (details can be found at Annex 2); and**
 - (b) **close the Youth Opportunity Fund.**

Executive Summary

2. The Youth Opportunity Fund (YOF) was introduced by Cabinet in 2019 to increase opportunities for young people across Oxfordshire. The fund aims to support voluntary and community organisations to establish new youth opportunities and extend existing activities to additional sessions, areas or groups of young people between the ages of 11 to 18 (25 where young people have special educational needs). The total value of the Fund is £1 million for two years from the date of award, and up to a maximum of £70,000 per application across the two years. Once the available resource is used the Youth Opportunity Fund will be closed.
3. Applications to the Fund were opened on 8 October 2019 and the closing date was 22 November 2019.
4. 95 applications requesting an overall amount of £4,538,298.98 were received.
5. Following the application process, the cross-party panel evaluated the applications received and recommends the applications included in the report for funding.

Background

6. The Youth Opportunity Fund was introduced by Cabinet in 2019 to increase opportunities for young people across Oxfordshire.
7. This fund aims to support voluntary and community organisations to establish new youth opportunities and extend existing activities to additional sessions, areas or groups of young people between the ages of 11 to 18 (25 where young people have special educational needs).

8. The total value of the Fund is £1 million for two years from the date of award, and up to a maximum of £70,000 per application across the two years. Once the available resource is used the Youth Opportunity Fund will be closed.
9. The fund will be allocated across Oxfordshire to ensure all areas can benefit from the financial support available.

Application Process

10. Following the agreement of the grant criteria and guidance by the cross-party panel, and approval by CEDR, the Fund was launched on 8 October 2019.
11. The information about the fund has been shared with Oxfordshire Youth, the organisation representing more than 100 voluntary and community organisations working for young people, and town and parish councils. There was also a media campaign to encourage applications and wider distribution.
12. A dedicated web page was set up, www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/youthopportunity and an inbox youth.opportunities@oxfordshire.gov.uk to ensure applicants had timely access to information and updates as well as to submit their applications.
13. A workshop was held on 4 November 2019 for potential applicants to share their ideas and ask any questions. The closing date of the Fund was 22 November 2019.
14. A total of 95 applications have been received, requesting an overall amount of £4,538,298.98. The number of applications and amount requested were much higher than anticipated.
15. The number and the quality of applications showed the demand, passion and ambition for young people in Oxfordshire. Most applications were of high quality and represented the needs of the communities for supporting young people.

Evaluation Process

16. The cross-party panel chaired by Cllr Mark Gray comprised councillors representing the political structure of Oxfordshire.
Cllr Mark Gray – Chair
Cllr Jane Hanna
Cllr Jeannette Matelot
Cllr Deborah McIlveen
Cllr Liam Walker
17. The panel also included a representative from Children, Education & Families and a young person from Voice of Oxfordshire's Youth (VOXY). The YOF process and the panel have been supported by Officers from the Children's Commissioning team.

18. All Panel members scored the applications against the criteria individually. Scores were discussed and moderated at the Panel meeting on 23 January 2020.

Recommendations for award

19. The Panel recommends to
 - (a) award a total of £999,800.000, details can be found at Annex 2
 - (b) close the Youth Opportunity Fund.

Equalities Implications

20. The criteria for grant funding (Annex 1) required applicants to demonstrate how they meet the 'need' that they identified in their communities, which includes consideration of impact.
21. Equality and inclusion implications have been considered. The proposal to offer grants to the community and voluntary sector to support young people is only thought to confer a benefit on those with a protected characteristic and there is no adverse impact on those individuals.

Climate Implication

22. All applications were submitted and processed electronically by using the Council's secure applications. This enabled us to reduce the need to print applications and encouraged the use of electronic access and assessment as part of the cross-party panel meetings.

Communications

23. The process and criteria for applying to the Youth Opportunity Fund has been communicated via a dedicated section on the council website, through multiple email communications, and the Council's social media accounts to encourage applications and wider distribution. Flyers, posters and media coverage were arranged and distributed by the Council's Communications Team.
24. Following the Cabinet's decision, successful applicants will be given confirmation of the outcome by email communication on 4 March 2020.

LUCY BUTLER
Corporate Director of Children's Services

Annexes:

Annex 1: Youth Opportunity Fund Grant Guidance and Criteria
Annex 2: Youth Opportunity Fund Recommendations for Award

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Youth Opportunity Fund Grant Guidance & Criteria

Introduction

Oxfordshire has a good range of opportunities for young people, providing excellent support to young people and helping them to live fulfilling lives. In order to extend these opportunities further, Oxfordshire County Council has developed the Youth Opportunity Fund. This fund will support voluntary and community organisations to establish new youth opportunities and extend existing activities to additional sessions, areas or groups of young people.

The fund is open to community and voluntary organisations with a total of **£1 million** available. Funding will be **for two years** from the date of award, and up to a maximum of **£70,000** across the two years. All bids to the Fund should include any on-costs relating to employing members of staff – including pensions, national insurance and mileage.

The fund will be allocated across Oxfordshire to ensure all areas can benefit from the financial support available. Once the available resource is used the Youth Opportunity Fund will be closed.

The Fund

Organisations wishing to bid will need to identify the local need of young people and can use local evidence from within their community. This might include using existing data and/ or anecdotal evidence. The applicants will need to demonstrate how the bid will meet the identified needs.

Activities may include, for example, providing guidance and support about their lives and issues relating to school, family life and peers. Applications may, for example, facilitate the provision of a safe space for young people who would otherwise have nowhere to go, including a safe space to talk, some food, and the ability to enjoy some self-directed or group/organised activities.

Bids will need to demonstrate that they are offering new youth opportunities or extending existing ones for young people between the ages of 11 to 18 (25 where young people have special educational needs), and how these opportunities will support them to live a full and varied life.

We are keen for opportunities to be accessible to all young people, therefore applications demonstrating how they will extend their reach to young people who have not previously engaged with these opportunities are encouraged.

The Youth Opportunity Fund is open to applications from community and voluntary sector organisations, including existing organisations and organisations in the process of setting up, as well as town, parish and district councils. Organisations are encouraged to work with other voluntary and community organisations, and with town, parish and district councils.

The Fund cannot be used to promote the views of a religious organisation or party-political groups. Religious groups may apply for non-religious activities that they are organising for young people.

Grant Criteria

We will assess applications according to:

- Whether the proposal is providing new opportunities or extending the existing ones for young people to additional sessions, areas or groups of young people.
- How the proposed provision will meet the needs identified
- How it will support young people to live a full and varied life
- How it will add value to the local community
- How the funding will be used.

We believe supporting young people should become an indispensable part of their community and young people who have benefitted from support should continue to do so after the funding period. Applications therefore are encouraged to present their plans as to how they are going to make the provision **sustainable**.

Applicants must ensure they always have procedures in place to safeguard young people. Members of staff are required to complete the online safeguarding training offered by Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board free of charge (please see <https://www.oscb.org.uk/learning-zone/training>) as a minimum to familiarise themselves with principles and processes to follow.

Organisations need to provide the details of a safeguarding lead who would be the first point of contact for any safeguarding concerns that may arise during the sessions.

Support available

Oxfordshire Youth, the lead organisation for youth sector in Oxfordshire, is available to provide support to organisations wishing to bid for funding and needing support with this. For more information and to contact them for support, please see: <https://oxfordshireyouth.org/>

The Application Process – Key Dates

- **w/c 7th October 2019** - The Youth Opportunity Fund opens
- **4th November 2019** - Applicant workshop
- **12 noon on Friday 22nd November 2019** – Closing date
- **25th and 26th November 2019** - Scoring process
- **W/c 2nd December 2019** - Evaluation panel meetings
- **15th December 2019** - Applicants notified of recommendations
- **21st January 2020** - County Council Cabinet, for final decision
- **28th January 2020** - Applicants notified of final decisions

We encourage applicants to contact us with any questions they might have as early as possible.

Please complete and submit the application form electronically, along with your most recently available, year-end accounts by **12 noon on Friday 22nd November 2019**. We require all application forms to be submitted electronically, unless agreement has been sought for alternatives prior to the closing date.

How will applications be assessed?

Officers will check all applications to the Youth Opportunity Fund against the criteria set out above. All applications meeting the criteria will be discussed at the Panel.

Applications for larger grants may be offered the opportunity to present their proposal to the Panel.

The panel will make recommendations for award and the final decision will be made by Cabinet.

Awarding the grant

Successful applicants will be asked to sign a legal agreement with the Council. Once the legal agreement is signed, the funds will be transferred to the organisation's bank account.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified without delay.

Monitoring

Successful applicants are expected to comply fully with any monitoring requests from the Council and must agree to this when signing the funding request form. This may include a review of their project during the period of funding, checking how the money was spent, reports on the activity funded, feedback from young people and any other record of the activity funded (e.g. promotional flyers and posters).

Successful applicants will need to complete a monitoring report towards the end of the funding agreement. A copy of the monitoring report will be sent out with the signed grant agreement, at the beginning of the funding period.

Any unspent grant funding will be recovered by the county council.

Contacting Us

If you have any queries about the **Youth Opportunity Fund** or the application process, please contact us:

Email: youth.opportunities@oxfordshire.gov.uk

ANNEX 2

Youth Opportunity Fund Recommendations for Award

Ref	Organisation	Name of the Project	Location	District	Funds Awarded
1	South Oxford Adventure Playground (SOAP)	Second Step: South Oxford Community Youth Project	Hinksey Park and Carfax ward	City	£16,015.29
2	Rose Hill Junior Youth Club	RH&L Creative Connections	Rose Hill and Littlemore	City	£69,050.00
3	Barton Community Association	Barton Pathways	Barton	City	£58,839.25
4	Wood Farm Youth Centre	Wood Farm Outreach Project	Oxford	City	£35,620.00
5	EMBS Community College Ltd	Take2	East Oxford	City	£70,000.00
6	Blackbird Leys Adventure Playground	Growing Young Leaders	Blackbird Leys	City	£16,740.00
7	Leys Community Development Initiative	Glow-on Leys Youth Opportunities	Blackbird Leys and Northfield Brook	City	£63,500.00
8	Asylum Welcome	Youth Support Programme	Oxford	City	£30,230.00
9	Tackley Youth Café	The YP Café Tackley	Tackley (Woodstock)	West Oxon	£5,500.00
10	Chipping Norton Town Council	Youth Engagement and Empowerment Project (YEPP!)	Chipping Norton	West Oxon	£25,620.00
11	Chipping Norton Town Council	Chipping Norton 12-18s Youth Club	Chipping Norton	West Oxon	£14,200.00
12	Got2B	Got2B Youth Work Witney	Witney	West Oxon	£42,369.94
13	Sunrise Multicultural Project	Youthie	Banbury	Cherwell	£43,839.08
14	Kingsmere Community Centre (KCC)	Active Kingsmere Youth	Kingsmere (Bicester)	Cherwell	£44,416.00

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15	The Sweatbox Youth Centre	The Out of the Box Project	Wantage, Grove and surrounding villages	Vale	£54,927.48
16	The Abingdon Bridge (TAB)	The Youth Intervention Programme	Abingdon	Vale	£69,569.00
17	Cholsey Youth Club	Drop-in Sessions and 1:1 Youth Support	Cholsey and surrounding villages	South Oxon	£22,000.00
18	Berry Youth Centre	Beat the Streets!	Berinsfield and surrounding wards	South Oxon	£33,500.00
19	Thame Youth Projects Group	Detached Community Youth Work for Thame and surrounding district	Thame and surrounding district	South Oxon	£35,000.00
20	Didcot TRAIN - Inspiring Young People	Didcot Youth Club	Didcot and its immediate surroundings	South Oxon	£44,048.00
21	Nomad Detached Youth and Community Project	NOMAD Targeted Activity Programme for 11-18 year olds	Henley and surrounding villages	South Oxon	£29,000.00
22	Oxfordshire Youth	Youth Apprentices Work	Across Oxfordshire	Across	£64,058.00
23	Yellow Submarine	BEAM	Across Oxfordshire	Across	£63,207.96
24	KEEN Oxford	Community Buddies	All Oxfordshire, from 'hubs' in Banbury, Oxford, Abingdon, and Witney	Across	£48,550.00
Total					£999,800.000