

Division(s):

CABINET – 21 FEBRUARY 2017

Transition Fund for Community Initiatives for Open Access Children's Services

Report by the Assistant Chief Executive

Introduction

1. The council is currently developing a brand new service for 0-19 year olds which will combine children's social care and early intervention in one seamless service, removing the need for children and families to be referred between the two.
2. As part of the council's continuing investment in early intervention, new teams of 'locality workers' will advise and support staff who continue to provide universal services to children and families throughout Oxfordshire – such as teachers in schools, health workers and staff in early years settings. The approach will ensure that children at risk who require support are identified as early as possible and appropriate services are provided to them and their families.
3. Alongside these developments, the council has been holding positive discussions with local communities, town and parish councils and the voluntary sector to encourage community-led solutions for delivering open access services for children and families. The aim is for these local solutions to complement the funded service as part of a safe and effective system that ensures support for the most vulnerable families, while harnessing the work of schools, health services, voluntary and community groups as part of a wider early intervention approach.
4. The 2016/17 budget agreed by Council in February 2016 included the creation of a 'one off' £1m fund to provide pump priming to support community-led solutions for delivering open-access services for children and families.
5. A cross party group of county councillors has been established to consider the maximum benefit of this fund. Councillors were nominated for this group by the party leaders. The group consists of Cllrs Stratford, Mathew, Gray, Hards and Fawcett.
6. The group has agreed terms of reference agreed previously at Cabinet on 20th September and is chaired by Councillor Stratford, the Cabinet Member for Finance. Cabinet approved the guidance and grant application form set out in Annexes 1 and 2 of this report.

Transition Fund Approach

7. The purpose of this £1m fund is to provide pump priming grants to communities to enable them to create sustainable solutions for open access children's services. The approach will be flexible recognising the different needs across the county. Through the current support provided to community groups, individual solutions will be developed with differing funding requirements.
8. The working group was keen to ensure that the process is open and transparent allowing as many groups as possible to access the funding. It was felt that a grant scheme would be the most appropriate way to ensure this.
9. Any proposals for funding will need to be supported by a business plan that includes all of the relevant information requested in the guidance document.

Grant Criteria

10. The following are the key criteria used when assessing proposals:
 - Sustainable solution for open access children's services in the local community
 - Ability to self-fund in the long-term, as outlined in the business case
 - Clearly defined costs and timescales for implementation
 - Evidence of the need for the project
 - Community buy-in
 - Engagement, partnership working and collaboration
 - Projects must benefit Oxfordshire communities, be inclusive and provide good value for money.
 - To what extent we can have confidence that the project will have a lasting impact, beyond the funding period.
11. In addition to these criteria, the motion from the 12 July Council to only fund those centres at danger of closing resulting from the changes in Children, Education and Families transformation project was upheld.
12. The full list of criteria is contained within the guidance set out in Annex 1 along with the types of organisations that can apply and also the types of projects and organisations that are not eligible to apply for funding.
13. Grants will be awarded on a one-off basis but expenditure can be phased over a period of up to three years.

Process

14. The first round of applications closed on the 21 October 2016. In this round 17 bids were submitted for consideration.

15. The second round of applications closed on the 9 January 2017. In this round 20 bids were submitted for consideration.
16. The applications were assessed by the cross party working group against each of the criteria outlined in the guidance notes at Annex 1.
17. Applicants, along with their local county councillor will be notified by e-mail of the Cabinet decision.
18. Applicants will only have the first year of funding transferred initially with subsequent years funding subject to monitoring compliance.
19. Successful applicants will be expected to comply fully with the monitoring requests from the council and signing of the funding agreement will be viewed as acceptance of these requests.
20. Any unspent grant funding will be recovered by the county council.
21. A future round was agreed at 20 December Cabinet. It is proposed that this third and final round is prepared for the June Cabinet. To allow for communities to re-submit proposals and to accept the remaining few that weren't in a position to submit for this round a number of the applications have been awarded less than requested.
22. In addition to the grant funding criteria, the panel were asked to assess the business cases against the 20 December Cabinet decision to offer a defined, short-term rent-free period of up to a maximum of 12 months to support mobilisation, where the business case would otherwise not be viable.

Assessment of Applications

23. Having carefully assessed all the bids received against the established eligibility criteria, the cross party working group are recommending the following ten bids for funding:
 - Ace Centre Charity (Ace Children's Centre)
 - Barton Community Association (Barton Early Intervention Satellite)
 - Employment Action Group (Berinsfield Children's Centre)
 - Chalgrove & Watlington (Chalgrove & Watlington Children's Centre)
 - Faringdon (Faringdon Children's Centre)
 - Kidlington with Hampton Poyle PCC (Kaleidoscope Children's Centre)
 - Friends of Maple Tree (Maple Tree Children's Centre)
 - Cutteslowe Primary School & Cutteslowe Community Association (North Oxford Children's Centre)
 - D:two (Rainbow Children's Centre)
 - Wallingford Town Council (Wallingford Children's Centre)
24. The cross party working group noted that whilst two proposals had robust service delivery, they lacked financial support from external funders. The

following were therefore recommended for an interim award to keep the services going whilst other funding sources are secured with a revised financials presented to the next panel:

- Britannia Road
- Grove & Wantage

25. A further six bids were considered to require further support to ensure a robust and sustainable model. As such Cabinet is recommended to defer the following bids to the next round of applications:

- Aflah Nursery
- The Nature Effect
- Mortimer Hall
- The Kings Church Didcot
- Sunshine Centre
- Witney Methodist Church

26. There were two bids that the cross party working group felt did not meet the overall eligibility criteria of the grant scheme, and as such Cabinet is recommended to decline their request for funding. These are:

- Donnington Doorstep
- Thomas Gifford Trust

27. A summary of all the bids received under the first round of applications for the Transition Fund is included below:

28. **Applicant:** The Ace Centre Charity (Ace Centre, Chipping Norton)

Amount: £29,983 over 3 years

Proportion of proposed budget: 51%

Overview: ACE wish to develop a well-known pathway for parents of young children in Chipping Norton, which will work in partnership with health colleagues. Initially this would start as a universal service, moving to a sustainable model, which would be subject to a charge. The intention is to offer a percentage of the subsidised places to vulnerable identified families.

Panel feedback: The panel noted that to make this proposal work the service will be offered from within the existing Ace Centre Nursery and not from the previously designated children's centre.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet approves this bid for funding.

29. **Applicant:** Barton Community Centre (Barton EI Satellite)

Amount: £29,698.80 over 3 years

Proportion of proposed budget: 100% excluding in-kind

Overview: The transition fund if awarded would be used to re-establish a 'stay and play' group in Barton offering sessions for the under 5's. The absence of this group has left a considerable gap in service delivery for the disadvantaged residents and low income families living on the estate. The group would operate one day a week during term time.

Panel feedback: The panel expressed concern over the percentage of the cost that the funding is being expected to cover leading to questions over the sustainability of this project.

The panel noted that without additional income it was felt that this project would not have the ability to self-fund in the long term.

The panel raised concerns over the sustainability of the project, particularly the predicted future income from service users.

The panel queried the value for money of the sessions being offered.

The panel also queried the proximity to the Roundabout Centre.

Overall the panel were supportive of the bid in principle. The panel agreed not to recommend awarding the group the full requested amount as it was considered that costs for the sessions offered were not justifiable.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet approves a reduced budget of £14,000 phased as Yr1 £7,000 YR2 £5,000 YR3 £2,000 for funding.

30. **Applicant:** Employment Action Group (Berinsfield Children's Centre)

Amount: £50,000 over 3 years

Proportion of proposed budget: 19%

Overview: The proposed new service will continue to provide relevant health and support services for children under 5 from the existing Children's Centre building. Our vision for the future is to provide an all through service incorporating youth provision up to 18 years of age. The Berin centre will offer:

Children's Support Services extended to cover children from birth to 18 years of age.

It will continue to be a base for health visitors and midwives.

Working with families. Providing health advice and training to achieve economic and personal wellbeing.

Employment support to include Job Club, 1:1 appointments and training courses run independently and in partnership with Abingdon & Witney College and Soha. Drop-in computer facilities with IT support.

Run child-minding courses to increase the provision for working parents in the village and surrounding areas.

A community café initially open for two days a week increasing if and when demand is there.

Panel feedback: The panel raised concern of the high staffing costs however these issues were viewed as acceptable within the overall proposal.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet approves a reduced budget of £30,000 phased as Yr1 £15,000 YR2 £10,000 YR3 £5,000 for funding.

Recommendation: The panel recommended that Cabinet approves an additional £5k for immediate maintenance of the building subject to the building not being repaired as part of the lease transfer which property will undertake to repair. This money will not be devolved to the group and held in reserve for the works.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet approves a 12 month rent free period.

31. **Applicant:** Friends of Britannia Road (Britannia Road Children's Centre)

Amount: £92,895 over 3 years

Proportion of proposed budget: 75%

Overview: The proposal is to create a service for children under five and their families using the space provided within the Britannia Road Children's Centre in Banbury. This will be a consortium of agencies within the buildings; The Children's Centre run by 'The Friends of Britannia Road (already a registered charity); Home-Start (already tenants); MIND (already tenants); and Let's Play who will move from their present premises to the larger centre. The provision of services will be managed by the 'Consortium' of agencies, who are confident that their complimentary services provide a suitable place for the people of Banbury.

Panel feedback: The panel were informed that the group have not had long to work on this proposal as they were only recently informed that the site would be available.

The panel recognised this and as a result of this accepted that the limitation of the proposals should be viewed in relation to this.

The panel agreed the need to ensure that the service could continue until the group could return with a revised proposal. For this reason, the panel wanted to provide an interim award until a further bid is submitted to the next panel.

The panel noted that further work is required in numerous areas, particular regarding financial information and future sustainability.

Overall the panel were supportive of the bid in principle, but noted that further evidence be provided in the business plan, including alternative sources of funding. The following were therefore recommended for an interim award of £10,000 to keep the services going whilst other funding sources are secured with a revised financials presented to the next panel.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet approves an interim award of £10,000.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet approves a 12 month rent free period.

32. **Applicant:** Chalgrove School (Chalgrove & Watlington Children's Centres)
Amount: £31,000 over 3 years
Proportion of proposed budget: 29%

Overview: The centre supports families in the two named villages and wider local community. The main centre building is in Chalgrove, attached to Chalgrove School with a designated room in Watlington School. The Chalgrove & Watlington Working Group's overall aim is to ensure the continuation of some services offered by the children's centre in Chalgrove and Watlington. As a result over £14,500 has been committed, with more to be confirmed from other local parishes.

Panel feedback: The panel noted that the proposed model meets all of the fund's eligibility criteria, and were supportive of the bid.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet approves a reduced budget of £30,000 phased as Yr1 £10,000 YR2 £10,000 YR3 £10,000 for funding.

33. **Applicant:** Faringdon Town Council (Faringdon Children's Centre)
Amount: £37,500 over 3 years
Proportion of proposed budget: 29%

Overview: The Place children and family project aims to improve outcomes and life chances for children and their families, with particular focus on those with greatest need. We will work with families to help them tackle daily challenges, regardless of their background or family circumstance. This project offers help to families including parenting support and health promotion. It offers universal services, that are open to all, and gives parents relaxed place to meet within an inclusive community. It will be a thriving facility providing lifeline groups and services for local residents.

Panel feedback: The panel noted that the proposed model meets all of the fund's eligibility criteria, and were supportive of the bid.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet approves a reduced budget of £30,000 phased as Yr1 £12,500 YR2 £10,000 YR3 £7,500 for funding.

34. **Applicant:** Aflah Nursery (Florence Park Children's Centre)
Amount: £138,000 over 3 years
Proportion of proposed budget: 100%

Overview: Aflah Nursery are the first Muslim faith based nursery in Oxfordshire that welcomes children, aged 3-5yrs, from all cultural, ethnic, religious and social groups. They are set up as a private enterprise and the core of their foundation is to offer the children of our community a unique learning experience that encompasses all facets of a child's life, without compartmentalising faith from one's pre-school experience. Aflah Nursery is a child care provider offering 15 hours (LEA funded) of free Early Years education for 3 year olds and 25 hours for eligible 4 year olds. As a private nursery they also operate extra child care provision which is fee based at a very nominal hourly rate.

Panel feedback: The panel felt that this proposal was not sufficiently worked up to be able to assess against the criteria.

If the project were to be awarded funding for open access children's services, the funding of this service would have to be clearly delineated from the wider nursery's services.

Recommendation: The panel recommends to Cabinet that this bid is deferred to the next round.

35. **Applicant:** The Nature Effect (Florence Park Children's Centre)

Amount: £35,000 over 2 years

Proportion of proposed budget: 10%

Overview: The centre will build on the existing open access provision for families by providing much needed childcare places, and offering families a healthy, welcoming cafe, meeting and making space. It will also offer community groups a hub, and local individuals space to work and rooms to hire. The centre's name is reflective of their vision; this will become an OASIS with wellbeing at heart and Nature in mind, where all visitors leave feeling nurtured and replenished.

Panel feedback: The panel noted that the proposal had not changed since they saw the first submission and were inclined to decline it at this stage.

The panel are aware that the landlord would not consider a sublet of the premises whilst the proposal includes a café.

The panel raised concerns over the viability of the project in relation to the need to underwrite any loss from the existing café within the park.

The panel queried the suitability of the project to income generate to the level suggested from retail sales in year two and three.

The panel queried the overspend in year 1 and that this does not present a balanced business plan.

The panel noted that it was hard to see what open access children's services provision would be available and eligible for transition fund grant.

The panel were unable to assess if this represented good value for money.

The panel were unable to assess the proposals' ability to have a lasting impact.

Recommendation: The panel recommends to Cabinet that this bid is deferred to the next round subject to revisions in line with delivering open access children's services.

36. **Applicant:** Grove Parochial Church (Grove & Wantage Children's Centres)

Amount: £60,000 over 3 years

Proportion of proposed budget: 100%

Overview: The proposal is to ensure the immediate continuation of non-statutory services currently led by the Children's Centres in 2 sites at Wantage and Grove. Thereafter the vision is to establish and support a network of sustainable community-led universal access services supporting families in the OX12 area with babies (including postnatal support) and children under five. They will achieve this by seeking alternative funding from businesses and organisations in the local community, as well as service users; using services that encourage the development of a marketplace for skilled sessional workers; and facilitating capacity building and skills transfer to the voluntary sector.

Panel feedback: The panel noted that the proposed model meets most of the fund's eligibility criteria, however required more work.

The panel raised concerns over the sustainability of the project beyond the three years of transition funding, due to the high proportion of costs covered by the transition funding.

The panel commented that there was demonstrable need for the service, but questioned the value for money of the service.

Overall the panel were supportive of the bid in principle, but noted that further evidence be provided in the business plan, including alternative sources of funding. The following were therefore recommended for an interim award of £10,000 to keep the services going whilst other funding sources are secured with a revised financials presented to the next panel.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet approves an interim award of £10,000.

37. **Applicant:** Kidlington with Hampton Poyle PCC (Kaleidoscope Children's Centre)

Amount: £35,000 over 3 years

Proportion of proposed budget: 29%

Overview: This proposal outlines plans for St John's Hall Church in Kidlington to offer open access children's services in the Kidlington area, following the closure of the Kaleidoscope centre in March 2017. They propose to use the building at St John's to run or host sessions which currently take place in the Kaleidoscope building, and to form a governance team to oversee these sessions. There are two aspects to the proposal. First, they propose to employ staff to work alongside church staff and volunteers in the running of sessions. Second, they propose to transform part of our outdoor space into a usable, educational outdoor play area, with storage and additional office space.

Panel feedback: The panel noted that the proposed model meets all of the fund's eligibility criteria, and were supportive of the bid.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet approves this bid for funding.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet approves an additional £5k to provide match funding for the outdoor works.

38. **Applicant:** Friends of Maple Tree (Maple Tree Children's Centre)

Amount: £45,000 over 3 years

Proportion of proposed budget: 17%

Overview: FMTCC are proposing a management and funding structure that would allow the Centre to continue to provide high quality activities, play, information and support from professionals and trained staff working in a wide range of fields for children under 5 and their families, whatever their background or circumstances, in the rural community around Wheatley. In addition, once the Centre is up and running under the new management, FMTCC are looking to expand the services provided to include breakfast and after school clubs. These fee-based services will provide additional income. The programme increases the use of the Centre from four to six days, as the current outreach activities carried out during Tuesdays and Thursdays, will now be delivered from the new children & family centres.

Panel feedback: The panel noted that the proposed model meets all of the fund's eligibility criteria, and were supportive of the bid.

The panel noted that rent and business rates were included in the financial plan. As per the recommendation below it was felt that the award should be adjusted to reflect this.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet approves a reduced budget of £30,000 phased as Yr1 £12,500 YR2 £10,000 YR3 £7,500 for funding.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet approves a 12 month rent free period.

39. **Applicant:** Mortimer Hall (Marston Northway Children's Centre)

Amount: £21,322.67 over 3 years

Proportion of proposed budget: 100%

Overview: Mortimer Hall would like to run a "stay and play" session one day a week during term-time in the Children's Centre space at New Marston Primary School. This would be a continuation of the service that has up until now been provided by the Children's Centre. They would like to run the session from 10 am until 12 pm with one hour before and after to set up and clear away.

Panel feedback: The panel felt that this proposal was not sufficiently worked up to be able to assess against the criteria.

The panel recommended that further work be completed on the business plan, including more accurate financials, with a view to submitting to the next panel.

Recommendation: The panel recommends to Cabinet that this bid is deferred to the next round.

40. **Applicant:** Cutteslowe Primary School & Cutteslowe Community Association
(North Oxford Children's Centre)

Amount: £30,000 over 3 years

Proportion of proposed budget: 45%

Overview: To ensure the continuation of open access Children's Services in North Oxford, based in the Cutteslowe area. The following open access services have been identified as first priorities (Priority 1) to retain:

- Stay and Play
- Baby Group
- Health Visitor Drop in
- Midwife Clinic
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Dad's Saturday group
- Baby Café

The group will work with the School, the CCA, the North Oxford Association (NOA), healthcare professionals, local churches, and local residents to ensure as many services as possible can be retained in the local area. This will be achieved through fundraising; employing a part-time fundraiser to follow up all possible sources of grant funding and to approach local businesses for sponsorship.

Panel feedback: The panel noted that the proposed model meets all of the fund's eligibility criteria, and were supportive of the bid.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet approves this bid for funding.

41. **Applicant:** D:two (Rainbow Children's Centre)

Amount: £30,000 over 3 years

Proportion of proposed budget: 31%

Overview: To continue to provide universal services for children and families in Henley and the surrounding district. Seeking to provide a quality, safe and friendly environment for pre-school children and their parents/carers that will enable children to learn, thrive and have fun through a range of activities including soft play, open sessions that could include messy and stay and play activities. Programmes and activities will encourage healthy exercise and lifestyles as well as providing enjoyment. The Town Council have backed this proposal and will be contributing to the running costs.

Panel feedback: The panel noted that the project is sustainable as evidenced by the strong business case. So much so that it was noted that only year one of funding was required.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet approves year one of this bid for funding totally £21,900.

42. **Applicant:** Sharing Life Trust (Red Kite Children's Centre)

Amount: £6,588 rent free period

Proportion of proposed budget: N/A%

Overview: Sharing Life Trust was successful in the previous round of the transition fund and had included the rent as a budget pressure. There is now a request following the cabinet decision to offer a defined, short-term rent-free period of up to a maximum of 12 months to support mobilisation, where the business case would otherwise not be viable to seek additional support in the term of a rent free period.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet approves a 12 month rent free period.

43. **Applicant:** The Kings Church Didcot (South Didcot Children's Centre)

Amount: £60,000 over 3 years

Proportion of proposed budget: 47%

Overview: To relaunch the building as a Community Centre – a Centre which works with Voluntary Sector agencies and with statutory services to offer children, young people and families a safe place to access services, drop in and receive support. As part of this vision The King's Church will manage the building and will provide services for children and parents along with youth work provision, debt counselling support, and will work in partnership with Balsam (a local families charity) and other agencies. The open access services would start in April 2017, a part-time worker will be required to manage the building and to co-ordinate partnerships.

Panel feedback: The panel commented that further work was required on this proposal, before it can be recommended for funding.

The panel noted that this appears to be a consolidation of existing activity provided by a range of providers and does not necessarily reflect the open access delivered by the current children's centre.

Recommendation: Overall the panel were supportive of the proposal in principle, and felt that many aspects of it met the criteria. The panel recommends to Cabinet that this bid is deferred to the next round.

44. **Applicant:** The Sunshine Centre (Sunshine Children's Centre)

Amount: £25,989 over 3 years

Proportion of proposed budget: 100%

Overview: The proposal is for a weekly Come and Play session offering mum, dads and carers an opportunity to get together in a relaxed and stimulating environment, where they can find support, advice, friendships, share experiences and skills. Come and Play sessions will also offer positive early learning experiences for babies and children.

Panel feedback: The panel felt that this proposal was not sufficiently worked up to be able to assess against the criteria.

The panel noted that further work is required in numerous areas, particular regarding financial information and future sustainability.

Recommendation: Overall the panel were supportive of the bid in principle, but noted that further evidence be provided in the business plan, including accurate financials. The panel recommends to Cabinet that this bid is deferred to the next round.

45. **Applicant:** Wallingford Town Council (Wallingford Children's Centre)
Amount: £36,000 over 3 years
Proportion of proposed budget: 31%

Overview: The Wigod Way Family Service and Advice Centre business plan outlines the proposal to create a community-led, open access Centre which provides accessible, inclusive activities and support for all local children and their families. The proposed model will support a community-led welcoming, social environment that is open to all, providing child and family led advice and services, as well as self-help and peer assistance. The universal services will support those from disadvantaged areas and utilise methods to attract those that are hard to reach, as well as providing holistic activities for all.

Panel feedback: The panel noted that the project is sustainable as evidenced by the strong business case.

The panel noted that in light of the significant number of applications that the award be reduced to £30,000.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet approves a reduced budget of £30,000 phased as Yr1 £12,000 YR2 £10,000 YR3 £8,000 for funding.

46. **Applicant:** Witney Methodist Church (Witney Children's Centre)
Amount:
Proportion of proposed:

Overview: Witney's aim is to complement the statutory services provided by OCC by nurturing and supporting high quality open access sessions for children and families from 0-19. They will bring together the existing skills and resources of Base33 (serving the 11 -24 yr age group) as well as the willing volunteers previously involved in Children's Centre groups in Witney, who helped facilitate the open drop-in sessions which formed the most well attended aspect of the Action for Children provision. In order to achieve this aim, we propose the recruitment of a part time trained co-ordinator.

Panel feedback: The panel noted that it was unclear from the application what amount was being sought from the transition fund.

The panel felt unable to assess the financial criteria due to the lack of financial information.

The panel questioned the evidence of need for the service given that the Children and Family centre is in close proximity to the proposed service.

The panel would consider a future application if it can demonstrate how this will complement the new Children & Family centre in Witan Way.

Recommendation: The panel recommends to Cabinet that this bid is deferred to the next round.

47. **Applicant:** Donnington Doorstep
Amount: £75,674 over 2.25 years
Proportion of proposed budget: 50%

Overview: Donnington Doorstep has been delivering high-quality and much loved drop-in (stay and play) sessions for over 32 years. From our purpose-built centre in East Oxford, we offer fun activities for parents, carers and pre-school babies and children four days a week from 10am – 1pm. In the school holidays our expert staff team are able to adapt our weekly activities to enable families to bring their older children along too, and our youth team offer additional support. This means our offer is of benefit to the whole 0-19 age range.

Panel feedback: The panel noted that the overall eligibility criteria were not met in particular the requirement of funding those centres in danger of closing resulting from the changes in Children, Education and Families transformation project.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet decline this bid for funding.

48. **Applicant:** Thomas Gifford Trust
Amount: £7,754 over 1 years
Proportion of proposed budget: 50%

Overview: Charlbury Community Centre will open in Autumn 2017 and funding is requested for the children’s area. They would like to purchase child friendly furniture and equipment to encourage more users to attend the Story Time and Rhyme Time sessions and to run a supported reading scheme.

Panel feedback: The panel noted that the overall eligibility criteria were not met, in particular the requirement of funding those centres in danger of closing resulting from the changes in Children, Education and Families transformation project.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet decline this bid for funding.

Financial and Staff Implications

49. The financial implications are set out in the main body of the report.

Further information in relation to the bids recommended for funding is included below:

Centre	Organisation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Funding request	Funding Award
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Ace Centre	Ace Charity	£10,841	£9,994	£9,148	£29,983	£29,983
Barton El Satellite	Barton Community Association	£11,265	£10,765	£6,667	£28,698	£14,000
Berinsfield	Employment Action Group	£20,000	£15,000	£15,000	£50,000	£35,000
Britannia Road	Friends of Britannia Road	£32,250	£30,116	£30,528	£92,894	£10,000*
Chalgrove & Watlington	Chalgrove Primary School	£10,000	£11,000	£10,000	£31,000	£30,000
Faringdon	Faringdon Town Council	£12,500	£12,500	£12,500	£37,500	£30,000
Grove & Wantage	Grove PCC	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£60,000	£10,000*
Kaleidoscope	Kidlington with Hampton Poyle PCC	£16,000	£10,000	£9,000	£35,000	£35,000
Maple Tree	Friends of Maple Tree	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000	£45,000	£30,000
North Oxford	Cotteslowe Community Association	£14,000	£10,000	£6,000	£30,000	£30,000
Rainbow	D:two	£21,900	£5,600	£2,500	£30,000	£21,900
Wallingford	Wallingford Town Council	£12,000	£12,000	£12,000	£36,000	£30,000
TOTAL		£195,756	£161,975	£148,343	£506,074	£305,883

* Denotes an interim award to keep services going pending submission to the next panel.

TOTAL FUNDING AVAILABLE	£1,000,000.00
FUNDING APPROVED IN 1ST ROUND OF APPLICATIONS	£162,984.52
TOTAL FUNDING REQUESTED IN 2ND ROUND	£912,062.04
FUNDING RECOMMENDED UNDER 2ND ROUND OF APPLICATIONS	£305,883
REMAINING FUNDING	£531,132

Equalities Implications

50. The Public Sector Equality Duty, under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, places a responsibility on local authorities to exercise 'due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.'
51. There are no equality and inclusion implications arising directly from this report.

RECOMMENDATION

52. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to**

(a) Approve for funding the following bids:

- a. Ace
- b. Barton Community Association
- c. Employment Action Group
- d. Chalgrove Primary School
- e. Faringdon Town Council
- f. Kidlington & Hampton Poyle PCC
- g. Friends of Maple Tree
- h. Cutteslowe Primary School and Community Association
- i. D:two
- j. Wallingford Town Council

(b) Approve interim funding for the following bids:

- a. Friends of Britannia Road
- b. Grove & Wantage

(c) Ask that further work is conducted to develop more robust business plans and reapply for funding under the next round of applications:

- a. Aflah Nursery
- b. The Nature Effect
- c. Mortimer Hall
- d. The Kings Church Didcot
- e. Sunshine Centre
- f. Witney Methodist Church

(d) Decline for funding the following bids:

- a. Donnington Doorstep
- b. Thomas Gifford Trust

(e) Approve the maximum 12 months' rent free period for the following buildings:

- a. Berinsfield
- b. Britannia Road
- c. Maple Tree
- d. Red Kite

MAGGIE SCOTT
Assistant Chief Executive

Background papers: Transition Fund Guidance Notes & Transition Fund Application Form.

Contact Officer: Sarah Jelley, sarah.jelley@oxfordshire.gov.uk, 07554 103437
January 2017

ANNEX 1

GUIDANCE NOTES

TRANSITION FUND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES FOR OPEN ACCESS CHILDREN'S SERVICES

September 2016

Background

In February 2016 the council agreed to set aside £1m for creating a transition fund to provide pump-priming grants for establishing universal provision of children's services in communities across Oxfordshire.

Further details about the council's decision are available at:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/news/2016/feb/joint-statement-budget-political-leaders-oxfordshire-county-council>

This approach supports the council's commitment to a new way of delivering open access services across communities. Under Oxfordshire Together we have been working with town and parish councils, voluntary sector organisations and local community groups to encourage the continuation of open access sessions such as stay and play and youth group sessions where the council can no longer provide funding for these services. Further information about this work is available at: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/childrens-services>.

Our approach

The purpose of this £1m transition fund is to provide pump priming grants for sustainable community solutions for open access children's services. In awarding the grants, our approach will be flexible, recognising the different needs across the county. We will work with community groups on an individual basis to develop individual solutions, so if you would like to apply for a grant you are advised to contact us at an early stage. To get in touch with us, please email us at: localities@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

Any proposals for funding will need to demonstrate sustainability and the ability to self-fund in the long term. This will be a key criterion for assessing all applications. In addition match funding is strongly encouraged, and we will be asking all applicants to put together a robust business case showing how the project will self-fund in the long-term.

There will be two rounds of applications with deadlines in October 2016 and January 2017, so if your bid is not successful in the first round, we will be happy to work with you to help develop a strong business case and re-apply for funding. Further rounds of applications will be considered, if appropriate, post-January 2017.

What do we fund? (eligibility criteria)

Funding is available for sustainable community solutions for open access children's services. As the county council is withdrawing funding for some non-statutory children's services, we want to see communities come forward with their proposals for open access services for children and their families, reflecting local need and priorities.

It is entirely up to each community to decide what the new arrangements might look like. In order to be eligible for transition funding, projects must meet a number of key eligibility criteria, and we require all applicants to submit a fully developed business case that demonstrates how the criteria will be met.

If you need help developing the business case, you can contact OCVA, who will be able to offer guidance, or you can consult the government's advice on writing a business plan at: www.gov.uk/write-business-plan.

To make sure you have included all the relevant information in your business case we have put together a suggested checklist:

- Description of the project/ activity
- Needs analysis
- Desired outcomes & beneficiaries
- Costs
- Sources of funding & long-term sustainability
- Performance Measures (how results will be monitored)
- Governance

Grant criteria

- Sustainable solution for open access children's services in the local community
- Ability to self-fund in the long-term, as outlined in the business case
- Clearly defined costs and timescales for implementation
- Evidence of the need for the project
- Community buy-in
- Engagement, partnership working and collaboration
- Projects must benefit Oxfordshire communities, be inclusive and provide good value for money.
- To what extent we can have confidence that the project will have a lasting impact, beyond the funding period.

We want to see projects which are rooted in their communities and which have grown out of a specific local need. All applicants must work closely with their local community to ensure their project is properly connected locally, responds to recognised need and does not duplicate other provision. We would also ask to see evidence of a strong buy-in from the local community, and any successful initiative would need to be accessible, inclusive and open to all.

Funding will only be awarded on a one-off basis and must be spent within a maximum of 3 years (*depending on your business plan, it could be by end of financial year; set number of years or as per the milestones identified in the business case*).

Funding can be awarded for salaries and overheads if these were part of the sustainable business plan. It is important to emphasise though that the grant will be a one-off payment so organisations need to take this into account when building their business case.

Who can apply:

In order to be deemed eligible for funding, applying organisations must have a committee and/or a constitution or appropriate rules setting out aims and objectives and how the group will operate, and a bank account¹.

- Not-for-profit community groups
- Town and parish councils
- Schools
- Social enterprises
- Charity organisations
- Community associations
- Companies limited by guarantee
- Parent teacher associations
- Cooperatives
- Friendly societies
- Youth Clubs

What don't we fund?

Organisations:

- Individuals or sole traders
- Profit-making organisations
- Organisations not established in the UK
- Organisations that give funds to other charities, individuals or other organisations

Projects:

- Projects that duplicate an already existing service
- Activities which a statutory body is responsible for
- Activities with a religious or political purpose
- Activities that contradict or act against any of the Council's agreed policies such as [Equalities](#) and [Safer Recruitment](#), or fail to comply with all the other relevant statutory requirements, such as health and safety legislation

¹ Please note we will not make any payments into individuals' bank accounts, so it is very important that your group has a bank account.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list and if you are not sure whether you are eligible for funding you should get in touch with us at: localities@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

How to apply

Application process:

- 1) Expression of interest with outline business case
- 2) Initial review
- 3) Application form & business case
- 4) Review of bid by transition fund cross party group with recommendations to Cabinet
- 5) Assessment of bid by Cabinet
- 6) Decision
- 7) Notification to bidders

Deadlines

There are two applications round, with deadline dates of:

- 1) 21 October 2016 and
- 2) 09 January 2017

We encourage applicants to contact us early with their expressions of interest or any questions they might have, to avoid any delays in the council assessing the bids and making a decision.

How will applications be assessed?

We will assess your application against the key criteria set out above and we may also seek feedback from community stakeholders and the local county councillors.

A cross party panel will review all applications and then make recommendations to Cabinet. The final decisions will be made by Cabinet meeting in public on 29 November 2016 (first round) and 21 February 2017 (second round). The Cabinet will judge each application on its own merits, giving due regard to local circumstances and need.

Cabinet decisions can be called-in by the Performance Scrutiny Committee, which can decide to approve the decision, ask Cabinet to reconsider, refer it to full council for further debate, or require further information of further work to be done.

Awarding the grant

Applicants, along with their local county councillor, will be notified by email of the Cabinet's decision within a week of the decision being made.

Successful applicants will be asked to sign a legal agreement with the council (for any grants over £5,000). Once the legal agreement is signed, we will then transfer the funding into the organisation's bank account.

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For larger grants/ where appropriate, funding might be phased depending on the outcomes achieved following the first stage of delivery.

Unsuccessful applicants will be offered feedback on their proposal and, where possible, we will work with organisations to help them identify alternative funding opportunities.

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.

All successful applicants need to be prepared for a review of their project.

This may include:

- Receipts recording how the money was spent
- Reports on the activity funded
- Feedback from individuals impacted
- Any other record of the activity funded (e.g. promotional flyers and posters)

Successful applicants will be strongly encouraged to keep us informed about the progress of their projects. Any setbacks to the implementation of the projects should be reported to the Transition Fund Team. Delivery of the projects will be monitored as per milestones identified in the business case/ project proposal.

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

Other sources of support and funding available

- Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action (OCVA)
- Oxfordshire Community Foundation
- Community First Oxfordshire

Contact us

Sarah Jelley
Policy Team
Oxfordshire County Council
County Hall
New Road,
Oxford OX1 1ND

Email: localities@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Telephone: 07554103437

ANNEX 2

GRANT APPLICATION FORM

TRANSITION FUND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES FOR OPEN ACCESS CHILDREN'S SERVICES

The Scheme and Guidance

In February 2016 the council agreed to set aside £1m for creating a transition fund to provide pump-priming grants for establishing universal provision of children's services in communities across Oxfordshire.

In awarding the grants, our approach will be flexible, recognising the different needs across the county. We will work with community groups on an individual basis to develop individual solutions, so if you would like to apply for a grant you are advised to contact us at an early stage. To get in touch with us, please email us at: localities@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

Any proposals for funding will need to demonstrate sustainability and the ability to self-fund in the long term. This will be a key criterion for assessing all applications. In addition match funding is strongly encouraged, and we will be asking all applicants to put together a robust business case showing how the activity will self-fund in the long-term.

Please read carefully the **guidance notes** available on the Council's website to check whether your organisation or the activity you wish to fund is eligible for funding under the scheme's criteria.

The Application Process

- 8) Expression of interest with outline business case
- 9) Initial review
- 10) Application form & business case
- 11) Review of bid by transition fund group with recommendations to Cabinet
- 12) Assessment of bid by Cabinet
- 13) Decision
- 14) Notification to bidders

Deadlines

There are two applications round, with deadline dates of:

- 3) 21 October 2016 and
- 4) 09 January 2017

Contacting Us

Sarah Jelley, Policy Team
Oxfordshire County Council
County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND
Email: localities@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Telephone: 07554103437

TO BE FILLED IN BY APPLICANT

Name of your organisation:

Type of organisation:

Organisation Address:

If a registered Charity, please specify number

Contact Name

Telephone

Email

Payment Details

Please provide your organisation's payment details (note: payments will not be made to an individual's bank account).

Account Name	
Bank or Building Society Name	
Account number	
Sort code	

ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

1. Name

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2. Summary

Please describe the activity you wish to fund.

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3. Activity Dates

Please state when you would spend the funding. Please include start and end date for the activity and major milestones, if any.

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PLEASE NOTE: ALL FUNDING MUST BE SPENT WITHIN A MAXIMUM OF 3 YEARS (depending on your business plan, it could be by end of financial year; set number of years or as per the milestones identified in the business case).

4. Analysis of Needs

Please explain how the activity will address a recognised need in your community.

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5. Success Measures

How will you monitor progress towards the achievement of your outcomes?

6. Sustainability

How will you ensure the sustainability of the activity? How will the activity be funded in the long term?

7. Costs

Description	Cost
<p><i>Please provide us with a breakdown of costs of your proposed activity. E.g. Volunteer Training, Transport, Information & Promotion, Equipment & Materials, Refurbishment etc.</i></p>	

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TOTAL	

8. Other funding received

Please include details of any other grant funding you have received, including any awarded by Oxfordshire County Council or any funding that has been committed to the activity in principle.

Applicant Agreement

The organisation undertakes that:

- The information provided on this form is true and accurate.
- Any funds awarded will be spent in accordance with the details provided above.
- For all bids £5,000 and over, or if requested, it will provide details of how funding has been spent and cooperate fully with any other monitoring process undertaken by the Council to ensure the proper use of funds.
- It will advise the Council of any potential difficulties in complying with this agreement as soon as possible so that mutually acceptable solutions can be found.
- Funding awarded will not be spent on activity that does not comply the abovementioned policies of the Council.
- Details of the activity will be listed on the Council's website and may be communicated to a wider audience (e.g. via the local press).
- The funds awarded will be reimbursed to the Council if the organisation is in breach of these terms.
- The activity will be carried out in compliance with all relevant laws.

We hereby agree to these terms:

Name:

Signed:

Date:

On behalf of (organisation):

Please ensure that you have signed the application form before submission to the Policy Team. Please note that while we can accept scanned signatures, **we cannot accept typed signatures.**

