

CABINET – 20 JUNE 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 20 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. A future round was agreed at 20 December Cabinet and this third and final round of applications closed on the 14 April 2017. In this round 14 bids were submitted for consideration.
17. The applications were assessed by the cross party working group against each of the criteria outlined in the guidance notes at Annex 1.
18. Applicants, along with their local county councillor will be notified by e-mail of the Cabinet decision.
19. Applicants will only have the first year of funding transferred initially with subsequent years funding subject to monitoring compliance.
20. 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.
21. Any unspent grant funding will be recovered by the county council.
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 nine bids for funding:
 - Ambrosden 4 Children (Ambrosden Children's Centre)
 - Donnington Doorstep (Florence Park Children's Centre)
 - St Johns Church (Grove & Wantage Children's Centres)
 - HBC Superdads (Marston Northway Children's Centre)
 - Henley Baptist Church (Rainbow Children's Centre)
 - Abingdon Baby Café (North Abingdon Children's Centre)
 - Abingdon Carousel (South Abingdon Children's Centre)
 - Sunshine Centre (Sunshine Children's Centre)
 - Witney Churches (Witney Children's Centre)

24. Whilst one proposal was for the future use of the building without applying for transition funding the panel also assessed this on suitability based on the criteria for the transition fund grant. The cross party working group are recommending the following proposal for asset transfer:

- Afflah Nursery (Florence Park Children's Centre)

25. The cross party working group noted that whilst two proposals had robust service delivery, they had on-going buildings and lease negotiations that are integral to the delivery of the project. The following were therefore recommended for an award in principle subject to the conditions outlined.

- Friends of Britannia Road (Britannia Road)
- The Kings Church (South Didcot)

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:

- Aspire & Nature Effect (Florence Park)
- St Mary's Church

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

28. **Applicant:** Ambrosden for Children (Ambrosden Children's Centre)
Amount: £5,964 over 3 years
Proportion of proposed budget: 38%

Overview: Ambrosden 4 Children wish to fund services for children under five and their families in Ambrosden and surrounding communities.

Ambrosden 4 Children would like to fund the following activities:

- A weekly "Stay and Play"
- A weekly "Mums To Be and Under 1 s"
- A monthly "Rhyme Time".

Panel feedback: The panel agreed that the bid appeared to represent very good value for what the bid would provide for the funding requested.

The panel had concerns that if additional funding was received that the full transition funding would not be needed. The panel asked that OCC be notified if any funding is received from other sources and how this alters the business plan.

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

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

29. **Applicant:** Friends of Britannia Road (Britannia Road Children's Centre)
Amount: £32,229.50 over 3 years
Proportion of proposed budget: 37%

Overview: The Friends of Britannia Road group is looking to create a service for children under five and their families using the space provided within the Britannia Road Children's Centre in Banbury. There are a number 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). The provision of services will be managed by the 'Friends of Britannia Road, who are confident that their complimentary services provide a suitable place for the families of Banbury.

Panel feedback: The panel noted that the property issues had not yet been settled and there is some uncertainty over the future of the building.

The panel agreed that the bid should be funded in line with the lease on the building (expected until December 2017) with further funding conditional based upon the project resolving the property issues after that date.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet approves a year one of £6,414 for funding.

Further funding for years 2 and 3 will be dependent on whether the project has resolved the property issues.

30. **Applicant:** Aflah Nursery (Florence Park Children's Centre)
Amount: £0
Proportion of proposed budget: N/A

Overview: Aflah Nursery are looking to expand their existing provision and move into more suitable premises in the vacant Florence Park Children's Centre. Aflah will continue to offer the 15 hours funded places for 3 year olds and 25 hours for eligible 4 year olds. In addition they will offer places for 2 year olds as part of the new provision along with a breakfast club working in partnership with the local café. The nursery will subsidise free open access classes for parents in parenting, teaching phonics, early years ready and writing and paediatric first aid. The Nursery are also offering a crèche and holiday

time activities including stay and play. The midwives will still be able to operate from the building and it is hoped that health visitors and speech and language services would still want to operate from the site.

Panel feedback: The panel were supportive of the all-inclusive proposal in that it is meeting a statutory need and safeguards the building for community use as well.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet approve this proposal.

31. **Applicant:** Aspire & Nature Effect (Florence Park Children's Centre)
Amount: £10,000 over 6 months
Proportion of proposed budget: %

Overview: Aspire is seeking a £10k interim grant award from the Transition Fund, to support Florence Park community organisations to develop and implement a locally managed, sustainable, community enterprise for children & families at the vacant Florence Park Centre. The enterprise would be developed under local community ownership over the 6 month period from May to October 2017. Aspire would also oversee the delivery of a sub-contracted programme of regular family support activities in and around Florence Park over the summer period while the enterprise is developed further.

Panel feedback: The panel felt the proposal didn't meet the eligibility criteria of the transition fund.

The panel raised further concerns over the viability of the current proposal given that it has now been to the panel three times and no significant change has been seen in the application.

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

32. **Applicant:** Donnington Doorstep
Amount: £32,239.50 over 3 years
Proportion of proposed budget: 50%

Overview: Continuation of Florence Park Children's Centre Services – Donnington Doorstep are seeking £32,239.50 funding over three years to develop and embed our sustainable model for the delivery of community-led, open access children's services for the Florence Park Children's Centre Area.

Doorstep will initially offer 2 open access, sessions per week with the aim of reaching a minimum of 100 people per week. Importantly, through engaging families via the 'drop-in' sessions, we can then offer

specialist support to families who need extra help on a wide range of issues.

Panel feedback: The panel noted that the revised bid was to replace the services previously delivered in conjunction with Florence Park CC.

The bid was considered in line with the other two bids received for this site.

The panel felt that there is merit in funding the services which is relative to the amount of funding that the group was receiving from Florence Park Children Centre prior to it being closed (in line with the criteria of ongoing CC provision)

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

33. **Applicant:** Grove Parish Church (Grove & Wantage Children's Centres)

Amount: £50,000 over 3 years

Proportion of proposed budget: 34%

Overview: Each year we will deliver at least 400 hours of universal-access contact time with early-years practitioners for the under 5s and their carer's. With sessions open to all, but actively promoted to those in areas of social deprivation, we expect to have regular contact with more than 100 families initially and to grow this as services expand and new housing is completed.

We are continuing with a basic "Bumps & Beyond" session run by experienced people on a voluntary basis until May 2017 when we will begin to deliver as quickly as practical sessions similar in number and nature to the popular sessions currently delivered to complement rather than compete with existing activities of the voluntary sector. As soon as possible we will increase the number of sessions to better provide sessions across the age range in both Wantage and Grove catchment areas.

Panel feedback: Concern was raised by the panel over whether enough back office savings have been achieved as this project is sharing back office functions between two centres.

Further concern was raised over the level of support being received for the Grove provision and external funding.

The panel recognised the need within both areas, especially within Wantage, and felt that overall the bid was a strong proposal.

Recommendation: The panel recommended that Cabinet approves a reduced budget of £40,000 phased as:

- £5K for year 1 for each centre (£10K has previously been awarded to the project in an earlier round of the panel)
- £10K for the Wantage centre in years 2 & 3, and the Grove centre to receive £5K in years 2 & 3.

34. **Applicant:** HBC Superdads (Marston Northway Children's Centre)
Amount: £5,940 over 1 year
Proportion of proposed budget: 45%

Overview: Superdads would like to provide one of the most popular activities that MNCC was providing monthly: a time for dads, male carers and their children to socialise and play in a safe and enjoyable environment. In this way, Superdads started as a monthly event in January 2017, just after the final Saturdads (Saturday for dads) event at the MNCC in December 2016. In its first four sessions, Superdads has consistently attracted 17-21 parents and carers, and 26-31 children aged 0 to 8, making an average attendance per session of 48 (adults and children).

Panel feedback: Panel commended the bid, however raised concerns over how the project is purely voluntary and the sustainability of volunteers.

For this reason, the panel encouraged the group to seek further volunteers and external funding to improve their resiliency and long-term sustainability.

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

35. **Applicant:** Henley Baptist Church (Rainbow Children's Centre, Henley)
Amount: £8,000 over 1 year
Proportion of proposed budget: 16%

Overview: Henley Baptist Church was granted £21,900 in the last round of applications to support its plan to provide universal services for children and families in Henley and the surrounding district following the closure of the Rainbow Children Centre in March 2017.

In the aftermath of that grant being made the church entered a recruitment process in an attempt to identify a suitable person to oversee the project development and sustainability. As a result HBC interviewed several people one of whom had both early years qualifications and experience as a primary school teacher and also management experience in running a public facility (Leisure Centre). She scored very high in all competencies and was our clear choice to become the Manager.

HBC are requesting a further £8,000 in the first year of delivery to help cover the additional cost in employing this person.

Panel feedback: The panel agreed that due to the apparent importance of this additional funding in ensuring that this project is a success, that they would support this proposal.

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

36. **Applicant:** Abingdon Baby Café (North Abingdon Children's Centre)
Amount: £5,000 over 3 years
Proportion of proposed budget: 30%

Overview: The Abingdon Baby Café (ABC) is now the only professionally led breastfeeding support group in Abingdon. ABC offer a weekly drop in session held at the parish centre of Our Lady & St. Edmund's RC Church, Oxford Rd, Abingdon from 12.30PM to 2.15PM on Thursdays. They are open to all new families in the Oxfordshire area. Care is free at point of contact. ABC was previously funded through the North Abingdon Children's Centre, and since the closure of this centre no funding has been received to support this important service.

Panel feedback: The panel supported the bid and considered it a strong proposal. However, panel encouraged the group to explore opportunities for working with South Abingdon Children Centre community group.

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

37. **Applicant:** Abingdon Carousel (South Abingdon Children's Centre)
Amount: £30,000 over 3 years
Proportion of proposed budget: 16%

Overview: Abingdon Carousel would like to employ a part time coordinator with a minimum of a level three qualification. Initially this would be subsidised by the transition fund but once the service is in place and gains credibility it is expected to extend staff hours with grants for services on a project basis, with some basic core hours covered by the grant from the Town Council.

Abingdon carousel have surveyed well over one hundred users and former users of the centres to ascertain services are most valued and based on the survey results will initially include within the core services: a drop in session with health visitors, a Saturday activity and the drop in with cooking and healthy lunch run in partnership, as it was previously, with Carbon Cutters, an Abingdon volunteer group.

Abingdon Carousel are also covering the area previously served by North Abingdon Children's Centres and will help support at least one session a week in North Abingdon, there is already one group that wants to work on this. With this in mind, the administrator will also talk to a variety of groups and organisations to see if they can find funding to support sessions at other venues. It is expected to steadily extend time table as funding is gained.

Panel feedback: The panel agreed that this was a strong proposal, and welcomed that the proposal seeks to in-effect create a community hub.

The panel noted the high level of external funding from Abingdon Town Council and commended the group on securing this.

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

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

38. **Applicant:** Sunshine Centre (Sunshine Children's Centre, Banbury)
Amount: £29,889.50 over 3 years
Proportion of proposed budget: 68%

Overview: The Sunshine Centre is at the heart of the area it serves and is trusted and respected by the community. Members of the community played an active role in completing a successful lottery bid twenty years ago. Sunshine Centre have a strong network of partnership working with community, voluntary and statutory organisations. This brings a wealth of experience, knowledge, innovative practice, opportunities and resources. The Sunshine Centre has a long history of writing successful bids and has been a thriving centre for twenty years, providing multi-agency services and a universal point of access for children and families for integrated early learning and childcare, family support, health services, support into employment and training and links to specialist services. The Sunshine Centre are fundamentally a reflective and proactive organisation, both for those who access the services and those who work there.

Panel feedback: The panel raised concern over the level of the project's funding which is being received from the transition fund, especially when in-kind funding is excluded from the total.

The panel also raised concern over the lack of any external funding from other organisations.

This led the panel to question the on-going sustainability of the project beyond the transition fund grant.

The panel felt that given the above that a reduced award should be made and that they should recommend to fund the 'Come and Play' staff member and Baby Massage worker across the three years, minus the income from fees.

Recommendation: The panel recommended that Cabinet approves a reduced budget of £18,585 phased as: Year 1 - £6,735, Year 2 - £5,940, and Year 3 - £5,910.

39. **Applicant:** The Kings Church (South Didcot Children's Centre)
Amount: £45,000 over 3 years
Proportion of proposed budget: 59%

Overview: To relaunch the building as a Community Centre, with the Children's Centre activities taking place within the building. It will be a Community 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 Family Project (a local charity) and other agencies to deliver the services for children and families. A part-time worker will be employed to manage the building and to co-ordinate partnerships with the support of a management committee and advisory board.

Panel feedback: The panel noted the uncertainty at this stage of a lease for the centre and the level of rent to be paid.

The panel noted the low level of secured external funding and encouraged the group to secure more local engagement and funding streams.

Overall the panel were supportive of the bid in principle, but noted that further evidence would need to be provided in the business plan, including the rent and alternative sources of funding.

The panel recommend that the funding for years 2 & 3 would be conditional on the group achieving a peppercorn rent for their venue from Green Square Housing Association.

Recommendation: The panel recommended that Cabinet approves the first year of funding £20,000 subject to the property issues being resolved with a revised business plan as part of the project monitoring.

40. **Applicant:** Witney Methodist Church (Witney Children's Centre)
Amount: £30,000 over 3 years
Proportion of proposed budget: 52%

Overview: Witney Methodist Church aim to fund a part-time co-ordinator to sustain open-access sessions for 0-5s and their families in Witney, across a range of sites. As well as directly organising a schedule of weekly sessions, the co-ordinator will:

- Signpost families with additional needs to other relevant services.
- Engage with the community and statutory services to protect those vulnerable to falling through the net.
- Arrange relevant training and support for volunteers.

Panel feedback: The panel were supportive of the bid, but felt that there could be greater evidence of the need for the project.

The panel were unclear of the age range of the groups being supported and in which sessions and have asked for clarity on this ahead of the recommendations going to cabinet.

Recommendation: The panel recommend that Cabinet approves this bid for funding subject to the clarity of sessions and age ranges provided for.

41. **Applicant:** St Mary's Church, Chipping Norton
Amount: £10,000 over 3 years
Proportion of proposed budget: 36%

Overview: This proposal is to create an open access service for children under five and their families in partnership with St Mary's Primary School by providing a Family Stay & Soft Play Session & Breakfast and a One-to-One Parent Drop in Session. A sustainable future provision will be managed by St Mary's Church & School.

Panel feedback: The panel raised concern over the very close proximity to the ACE Centre, which has been previously funded by the transition fund.

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

42. The county council has approved funding to 26 organisations over the last three rounds of the grant scheme. A full list of these can be found at annex 3.

Financial and Staff Implications

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

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

Centre	Organisation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Funding requested	Capital	Funding Awarded
Ambrosden	Ambrosden 4 Children	£3,918	£1,298	£748	£5,964		£5,964
Britannia Road	Friends of Britannia Road	£6,414	£15,248	£10,567	£32,229		£6,414*
Florence Park	Donnington Doorstep	£16,119	£11,283	£4,835	£32, 239		£32,239
Grove & Wantage	Grove PCC	£10,000	£20,000	£20,000	£50,000		£40,000*
Marston Northway	HBC Superdads	£5,940	£	£	£5,940		£5,940
North Abingdon	Abingdon Baby Cafe	£3,000	£1,500	£500	£5,000		£5,000
Rainbow, Henley	Henley Baptist Church	£8,000	£	£	£8,000		£8,000
South Abingdon	Abingdon Carousel	£14,000	£9,500	£6,500	£30,000	£5,500	£35,500
South Didcot	The Kings Church Didcot	£20,000	£15,000	£10,000	£45,000		£20,000
Sunshine	Sunshine Centre	£10,358	£9,708	£9,823	£29,889		£18,585
Witney	Witney Methodist Church	£12,500	£10,000	£7,500	£30,000		£30,000
TOTAL					£242,022	£5,500	£258,458**

* Denotes an interim award of £10k in the previous round.

** Includes conditional funding allocations.

TOTAL FUNDING AVAILABLE	£1,000,000.00
FUNDING APPROVED IN 1ST ROUND OF APPLICATIONS	£162,984.52
FUNDING APPROVED IN 2ND ROUND OF APPLICATIONS	£305,883
TOTAL FUNDING REQUESTED IN 3RD ROUND	£299,763.50
FUNDING RECOMMENDED UNDER 3RD ROUND OF APPLICATIONS	£258,458**
REMAINING FUNDING	£272,674

** Includes conditional funding allocations

44. The panel when making its recommendations have ensured due diligence in assessing the applications and ensuring value for money is achieved. This has resulted in a proportion of the funds remaining unspent. As this was the third and final round it will be for the cabinet to formally agree the use of this fund at a future meeting.

Equalities Implications

45. 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.'
46. There are no equality and inclusion implications arising directly from this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

47. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**
- (a) **approve funding for the following bids:**
 - (i) **Ambrosden 4 Children (Ambrosden Children's Centre);**
 - (ii) **Donnington Doorstep (Florence Park Children's Centre);**
 - (iii) **St Johns Church (Grove & Wantage Children's Centres);**
 - (iv) **HBC Superdads (Marston Northway Children's Centre);**
 - (v) **Henley Baptist Church (Rainbow Children's Centre);**
 - (vi) **Abingdon Baby Café (North Abingdon Children's Centre);**
 - (vii) **Abingdon Carousel (South Abingdon Children's Centre);**
 - (viii) **Sunshine Centre (Sunshine Children's Centre);**
 - (ix) **Witney Churches (Witney Children's Centre).**
 - (b) **approve the asset transfer for the following proposal:**
 - (i) **Afflah Nursery (Florence Park Children's Centre).**
 - (c) **approve funding for the following bids subject to buildings and leases being resolved:**
 - (i) **Friends of Britannia Road (Britannia Road);**
 - (ii) **The Kings Church (South Didcot).**
 - (d) **decline funding for the following bids:**
 - (i) **Aspire & Nature Effect;**
 - (ii) **St Mary's Church, Chipping Norton.**
 - (e) **approve the maximum 12 months' rent free period for the following buildings:**
 - (i) **Ambrosden;**
 - (ii) **South Abingdon.**

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

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April 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

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.

- 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

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.

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

CA6

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Oxfordshire County Council
County Hall
New Road,
Oxford OX1 1ND

Email: localities@oxfordshire.gov.uk

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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

CA6

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

<p><i>How will you monitor progress towards the achievement of your outcomes?</i></p>

6. Sustainability

<p><i>How will you ensure the sustainability of the activity? How will the activity be funded in the long term?</i></p>

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:

<p>Name:</p> <p>Signed:</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>On behalf of (organisation):</p>

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.**

ANNEX 3

Transition Fund Grant Recipients (alphabetically by centre)

1. The Ace Centre (Ace Children's Centre)
2. Ambrosden 4 Children (Ambrosden Children's Centre)
3. Barton Community Association (Barton Early Intervention Satellite)
4. Employment Action Group (Berinsfield Children's Centre)
5. Friends of Britannia Road (Britannia Road)
6. Bloxham Primary School (Butterfly Meadows)
7. Carterton Town Council (Carterton Children's Centre)
8. Chalgrove & Watlington (Chalgrove & Watlington Children's Centre)
9. Botley Bridges (Elms Road Children's Centre)
10. Faringdon (Faringdon Children's Centre)
11. Donnington Doorstep (Florence Park Children's Centre)
12. Grandpont Nursery (Grandpont Children's Centre)
13. St Johns Church (Grove & Wantage Children's Centres)
14. Kidlington with Hampton Poyle PCC (Kaleidoscope Children's Centre)
15. Friends of Maple Tree (Maple Tree Children's Centre)
16. HBC Superdads (Marston Northway Children's Centre)
17. St Nicholas Primary School (Marston Northway Children's Centre)
18. Abingdon Baby Café (North Abingdon Children's Centre)
19. Cutteslowe Primary School & Cutteslowe Community Association (North Oxford Children's Centre)
20. Henley Baptist Church & D:two (Rainbow Children's Centre)
21. Sharing Life Trust (Red Kite, Thame)
22. Abingdon Carousel (South Abingdon Children's Centre)
23. The Kings Church (South Didcot)
24. Sunshine Centre (Sunshine Children's Centre)
25. Witney Churches (Witney Children's Centre)
26. Wallingford Town Council (Wallingford Children's Centre)

Community services will complement the council's new service for 0-19 year-olds, which will meet the needs and aspirations of children at risk of abuse and neglect in Oxfordshire, and ensure that families who need extra help are identified at an early stage.

On top of this, open access sessions are continuing at the eight Children and Family Centres and two satellite centres at the heart of the council's new Children's Service.

1. Banbury
2. Bicester
3. Witney
4. Abingdon
5. Didcot
6. Barton
7. Rose Hill
8. Blackbird Leys
9. East Oxford (satellite centre)

10. Banbury (satellite centre).

In addition to these a number of sites have extended their nursery provision to improve the offer to communities. These sites are:

1. Bicester Brookside Children's Centre
2. Bicester Glory Farm Children's Centre
3. Didcot Ladygrove Children's Centre
4. North Abingdon Children's Centre
5. North East Abingdon Children's Centre
6. North & West Witney Children's Centre
7. North Banbury Children's Centre
8. Orchard Children's Centre
9. Stephen Freeman Children's Centre
10. Willow Tree Children's Centre