

CABINET MEMBERS DELEGATED DECISION

Open/Exempt		Would any decisions proposed :		
Any especially affected Wards Downham Market	Mandatory/	(a) Be entirely within Cabinet's powers to decide YES/NO		
	Discretionary /	(b) Need to be recommendations to Council YES/NO		
	Operational	(c) Is it a Key Decision YES/NO		
Lead Member: Cllr Elizabeth Nockolds E-mail: cldr_elizabeth.nockolds@west-norfolk.gov.uk		Other Cabinet Members consulted:		
		Other Members consulted: Cllr Jackie Westrop		
Lead Officer: Lorraine Gore E-mail: Lorraine.gore@west-norfolk.gov.uk Direct Dial: (01553) 616432		Other Officers consulted: Sarah Dennis		
Financial Implications YES/NO	Policy/Personnel Implications YES/NO	Statutory Implications YES/NO	Equal Impact Assessment YES/NO If YES: Pre-screening/ Full Assessment	Risk Management Implications YES/NO
If not for publication, the paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Local Government Act considered to justify that is (are) paragraph(s)				
Date advertised: 1 st August 2016		Date decision to be taken: 8 th August 2016		
Deadline for Call-In: 15 th August 2016				

SOUTHERN NEIGHBOURHOOD YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES CENTRE (SWAN)

Summary

This report sets out the work of the South West Norfolk Youth Opportunities Project (SWAN) and requests Members approval of project funding.

Recommendation

To approve funding for the SWAN project at the following levels:

2016/17 - £10,000
 2017/18 - £10,000
 2018/19 - £10,000
 2019/20 - £10,000

Funding to be subject to the following conditions:

- 1) The project actively seeks funding from other statutory agencies, for e.g. the West Norfolk CCG, the Police and Crime Commissioner and Downham Market Town Council
- 2) The project actively engages in the Youth Advisory Board (YAB) process with the Discovery Centre and works alongside the Discovery to bid for YAB funds

Recommendation contd

- 3) The project aims to move towards a self-sustainable position and not rely on the Borough Council for funding after 2019/20
- 4) The Borough Council receives quarterly reports regarding outcomes of the project, numbers using the Centre etc. This report should include feedback from young people using the Centre and any feedback from the local Police regarding the impact of the Centre's activities on reducing anti-social behaviour
- 5) The Centre actively grows the number of young people using the Centre.

Reason for Decision

Determination of funding under the Financial Assistance Scheme.

1. Background

- 1.1 The SWAN project was set up formally in 2011 in response to the West Norfolk Partnership's Quality of Life survey, which identified that there was very little in the Southern Neighbourhood for young people to do.
- 1.2 Following a series of workshops held in the neighbourhood, it was decided that a youth hub would be set up in Downham Market (but to serve the whole of the Southern Neighbourhood, not just the town) and would provide a variety of activities for young people of all ages to participate in.
- 1.3 The Borough Council via the West Norfolk Partnership has previously provided financial and staffing resource to the SWAN project, and commissioned consultants to review the work of the project and help them apply for funding from a number of sources.

2. Management and Support

- 2.1 During 2014, the project, with the aid of a consultant, spent time working on an action plan and identifying any crucial issues that needed addressing, such as a lack of trustees. The consultant role was very successful in ensuring that regular committee meetings were held, with formal minutes, the keeping of accurate records and accounts and the drafting of job descriptions for the two staff members working at the centre.

3. Financial Information

- 3.1 Funding from Norfolk County Council's Participatory Budgeting Fund was obtained during 2009/10. The project has also been successful in obtaining a number of funding streams from external sources – between February 2012 and January 2016 they were successful in receiving funding for specific projects and towards running costs and activities. The Borough Council has also provided funding for the project.

3.2 In an attempt to engage the statutory sector with funding the project, Trustees have been in contact with the Police and Crime Commissioner, Clinical Commissioning Group and Norfolk County Council regarding the possibility of funding, but without success. The Police and Crime Commissioner did not see the area as a funding priority and Norfolk County Council have made it clear that not only do they not fund centres like this directly, there is also no possibility of funding in the near future. The Commissioning, Partnerships and Community Manager at Norfolk County Council has recommended that SWAN engage more fully with the Youth Advisory Board (YAB) process, alongside the North Lynn Discovery Centre. There may then be a possibility of bidding for funding from the YAB commissioning fund.

3.3 The Centre appears to rely heavily on external grants to operate, although attendees at the centre do pay an entrance fee.

4. Centre Staffing and Activities

4.1 Currently there are two members of staff – a Centre Manager and Workshop Co-ordinator. They report to the Trustees regularly. There are also five fully trained and accredited adult volunteers and 12 young leader volunteers.

4.2 SWAN is currently running the following activities:

- Open 4 nights per week for children aged 8 to 13 years and 13 years and upwards
- Therapeutic Intervention sessions are also held every three weeks with 20 young people in attendance
- Music studio and dance – approximately 30 to 60 young people attend music nights
- Launched a ‘team scheme’ whereby every young person under the age of 14 would be mentored by one or two leaders
- Skate ramp in place
- Internet café
- Gym equipment
- Running job / apprenticeships opportunities fairs

4.3 Over the previous 12 months, the following sessions have been delivered:

- 48 weeks of twice weekly general ‘drop in’ style sessions
- 14 in number 4 hourly sessions for special group work provision. These are set sessions on a Tuesday morning
- 10 in number 4.5 hour sessions of therapeutic group work on a Thursday evening
- 24 hours of studio sessions
- 30 hours of music sessions

4.4 During the last 12 months a total of 2,880 young people attended the Centre (with an average nightly attendance at the open sessions of 48 young people). This is continuing to increase.

4.5 Attendees for the special group work are referred by Downham Market Academy, based on those young people who will benefit from this approach. All other sessions are available to anyone who wishes to attend.

4.6 A 'Young Leaders' Programme is also run at the Centre which provides a structured youth work programme for young people (aged 8 years and upwards), to encourage a range of personal development goals. It includes leadership skills and encourages the young people to work towards specific qualifications if they so wish.

4.7 In terms of reducing anti-social behaviour in the area, a great deal of the data around the impact of the Centre, and indeed other centres like SWAN, will be based around perception, particularly in relation to crime and anti-social behaviour. It is hard to attribute any drop in these statistics directly to SWAN, although local officers say that there are periodic drops in anti-social behaviour when the Police use the Centre as an alternative means of dealing with problems in the town.

5. Future Plans

5.1 The Discovery Centre in King's Lynn has submitted a Lottery bid and this should incorporate some of the activities at SWAN. The SWAN project is very similar to the North Lynn Discovery Centre (who hold a Service Level Agreement with the Borough Council) in that its primary purpose is to provide a safe, caring environment for young people to better themselves and improve their physical and mental well-being.

5.2 The SWAN project has now requested a continuation of funding from the Borough Council. If this is approved the project will need to have an SLA in place and be managed in the same way as the other SLA's held by the Council. However, the Centre needs to look to being self-sustaining in the long term. Trustees recognise that they need to create a diverse range of income streams, using the accreditation of their young leaders to sell this service to others. There will always be a need for an element of their income to be funded by grants.

6. Policy Implications

None.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 The latest financial accounts for the SWAN project show that the project is not yet self sustainable and there is a funding shortfall. It is recommended that Members approve grant funding for the SWAN project of £10,000 per year for four years from 2016/2017, subject to the listed conditions.

7.2 The grant to be funded from the second homes council tax income received from the County Council.

8. Personnel Implications

None.

9. Statutory Considerations

None.

10. Equality Impact Assessments (EIA's)

Pre- Screening Questionnaire attached.

11. Risk Management Implications

None.

12. Declaration of Interest / Dispensations Granted

None.

Background Papers

Information gathered from Trustees.

Signed:
Cabinet Member for Culture and Health

Date