

**Delegated Power**

Specify the particular delegated power being exercised by reference to the Delegation Scheme or Cabinet minute and date.

Council Constitution. Part 3 Responsibilities for Council Functions. Section 2 Functions Delegated to Cabinet Members and Officers – Scheme of Delegation, Functions:

7.12 – Health improvement and promotion including public health and community care

The Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for People and Communities: day to day management

**Decision Taken**

Specify precise details of the decision taken

The Swan Youth Project operates in Downham Market. It provides educational, social and emotional support to circa 300 young people each year aged 8-18. Any young person can get involved in positive activities at these sessions and the Swan Project regularly reach their maximum 48 young people attending these sessions.

The Swan Youth Project receives no statutory funding. Money is raised via donations, grant applications and fund raising. The service costs £170k per annum to provide.

The decision taken is to provide a grant of £15,000 from the covid 'Controlled Outbreak Management Fund' (COMF) to provide funds to support the continued work to support young people in Downham Market.

**Reasons for the Decision**

Specify all reasons for taking the decision

Over the last academic year, the Swan Project has seen a large increase in mental health concerns and family breakdown, directly relating to covid. They are also seeing rises in cases where family relationships have either completely broken down or are causing significant concern. Many blended families have needed support to manage the time spend with each parent due to restrictions during covid, which continues to impact on the way they now function. Mental health in young people is also causing concern with more safeguarding issues being reported over the last year. Self-harm and suicidal thoughts have increased in young people, meaning many have not been able to access appropriate support through Community Mental Health or there is a significant waiting time of up to 2 years. As a result, the Swan Project have commissioned a therapist to provide support the young people. The project has grown over the last 2 years and includes 1:1 provision, Family Support service, Open Access Youth Groups, Young Carers Support, Hygiene Bank and Bike Kitchen.

The Swan Project is also seeing an increase in 'step down' referrals from Children's Services as well as more involvement with cases in their own families and children's services. These are complex, requiring more time, a higher level of reporting. These families can be difficult to engage with and with the financial crisis, it is expected to get worse.

The funding provided is to provide funds to continue to provide the service. The need for support increased following the national lockdowns and the corresponding increased pressure on all services.

**Options considered**

The Swan Project does not receive Statutory Funding and relies on grants, donations and fundraising. The increase in demand and the complexity of the issues young people are facing, costs have increased. The COMF funding was directly for councils to provide a response to the covid pandemic.