

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

25 September 2019

Report of the Head of Transformation - A.Thomas

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected:

Pontardawe

Project Proposal made to the Members Community Fund

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek Cabinet approval to fund a project proposal that requests financial support under the Members Community Fund. The project has been tabled by one of the respective Ward Members.

Executive Summary

2. The Members Community Fund is to be used to address local needs and to support projects and initiatives that will contribute towards creating vibrant and sustainable communities.

The Project Development & Funding Unit (PDFU) within ELLL is charged with the governance of the Fund and will act as the Grant Management Organisation.

Bids can be made for projects that enhance existing Council services, assist voluntary sector provision or form part of a larger initiative that is in need of additional financial support.

Eligible projects will include those that enrich the environment, promote non - statutory education and learning, assist Health & Well Being, and promote culture and / or recreation in all its forms.

Another project proposal now seeks funding and has been formally submitted to the PDFU. The bid has been checked for completeness, accuracy and deliverability and is 'fit for purpose' and ready for determination by Cabinet.

Background

3. Convert and adapt an underutilised room at Rhydyfro Primary School into a multi-functional venue for wider community use.

This bid has been developed to 'Enhance Existing Council Services', and has been generated in partnership with the Local Authorities Building Surveying Officer.

The proposal is to repurpose an existing room by installing a fully equipped kitchen with wash hand basin, induction hobs and extractor fan, and to decorate the area by painting the walls and ceiling, installing new carpets, and new LED lighting. The grant monies will also be used to procure items of equipment including weighing scales, cutlery and crockery, to assist in the delivery of community activities.

Once complete, the room will be used to stage community focused learning programmes and informal events such as 'Cuppa with a Copper', where the local PCSO will have the opportunity to meet with parents and members of the wider community. There will be a timetable of structured sessions on toilet training, e-safety and how to cook healthy meals on a budget. These sessions will be changed and adapted on a needs basis following ongoing consultation between the School and local residents, parents and carers. In addition to this, the School will use the room to start a non-statutory pre-school playgroup provision, and it will be used by the ELSA Teaching Assistant as a 'Nurture Room.'

The need for the project has been highlighted by the Headteacher. There is currently no playgroup provision within the local area and the School have not been able to introduce one due to the lack of suitable facilities on site. In order for a playgroup to run effectively, there needs to be a kitchen area for a snack to be prepared and a safe, nurturing environment, which this proposal will realise.

Members of teaching staff have become increasingly aware that when children reach statutory school age, some of them do not yet possess the necessary life skills to attend Reception class (toilet training, for example). It is hoped that by encouraging parents to bring their children to playgroup, these issues can be identified and remedied early, so that the children are 'ready' to attend school once they reach statutory age. A number of children on roll at Rhydyfro are on the Child Protection Register or have involvement from Team Around the Family (TAF) and Social Services.

Through interaction with parents and local residents, school staff have recognised the need for parents and members of the wider community to be taught essential life skills, particularly in relation to healthy eating and exercise. The cookery sessions will focus on preparing whole foods such as fruits and vegetables, and changing perceptions, particularly amongst the younger generation, with regards to where their food comes from and how it arrives in their homes.

The long term community benefits associated with the project include community members being upskilled in essential life skills, improved health and wellbeing, and the establishment of a new playgroup provision.

The total cost of this scheme is £15,126.00, 72% of which has already been secured via a grant from the Mynydd y Betws Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund, a contribution from the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and a contribution from the school's allocated budget. The request for Grant aid from the Members Community Fund is for the remaining £4,239.68 from Councillor Linet Purcell's portfolio, this would complete the funding package and make the proposal a reality.

Financial Impact

4. In order to win favour in Cabinet all projects must be sustainable. Projects must have a robust exit strategy that places no additional revenue or financial burden on the Council.

The project will be maintained using the School's allocated budget. Minor repairs will be undertaken by the School Caretaker. Any major issues will involve the Local Authority and consultation with the Building Surveying Officer. The capital works have been designed and competitively tendered using approved contractors from the Local Authority's Select Tender List, to ensure that they comply with Building Regulations and health and safety legislation.

The School has a very active PTA, who will continue to fundraise in order to improve provision at the School, for the benefit of pupils, parents, carers and the wider community of Pontardawe.

Integrated Impact Assessment

5. A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010), the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well - being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

The first stage assessment has indicated that a more in - depth assessment is not required as the summary concludes there are positive outcomes for the sustainable development principle, collaboration and involvement, with no impact on equalities or the Welsh language.

Valleys Communities Impacts

6. No implications

Workforce Impacts

7. There are no workforce impacts associated with this report.

Legal Impacts

8. The delivery of the Members Community Fund will come within the purview of the Local Government Act 2000 which introduced well-being powers which enable every Local Authority to have capacity to do anything which it considers likely to promote an improvement to economic, social or environmental well-being in the area. Under section 56 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 sanction is given for both Executive and Non - Executive Members to invest within their own Ward.

The Council's Constitution should be referred to for explicit guidance on governance.

Risk Management

9. There are no risk management issues associated with this report.

Consultation

10. There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations

11. That the project proposal to convert and adapt an underutilised room at Rhydyfro Primary School into a multi-functional venue for wider community use be approved, and that Cllr Purcell's allocation of £4,239.68 under the Members Community Fund be awarded.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

12. To approve the Application for funding that has been received under the Members Community Fund. Full Funding Applications can be made to the Members Community Fund until the 03.02.2020 in readiness for Cabinet decision on the 19.02.2020. The Fund will then close. Funds left unallocated will be returned to Reserves.

Implementation of Decision

13. The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

List of Background Papers

14. This Pontardawe initiative has been developed from the Members Community Fund Application Form submitted by Councillor Linet Purcell, which has been retained for future reference. The first stage Impact Assessment documentation associated with this project proposal has also been retained.

15. Officer Contact

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