

To: City Executive Board

Date: 23 March 2009 **Item No:** 4

Report of: Head of Community Housing and Community Development

Title of Report: Dovecote Out of School Play Facilities and Family Drop in Centre

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To provide a business case for the additional budget allocation of £40,000 to underpin funding for play provision at the Dovecote

Key decision No

Executive lead members: Councillor Turner
Councillor Bance

Report Approved by:

Finance: Chris Kaye/ Andy Collett

Legal: Lindsay Cane

Head of Service: Graham Stratford

Policy Framework: Stronger and more inclusive communities – support social and economic regeneration, particularly in deprived communities

Recommendation(s): City Executive Board is requested to approve the business case .

1. Background

- 1.1 At the Council meeting on 30th June 2008, budget amendments were approved for a number of different initiatives.
- 1.2 Attached is a business case for allocation of £40,000 underpinning funding for the Dovecote Out of School Play Facilities and Family Drop in Centre
- 1.3 The £40,000 proposed funding is comprised £20,000 per year over 2 years to support the core costs of the Dovecote and enable the project sufficient time to develop a sustainable plan for future funding.

2. **Environmental impacts** – none identified.

3. **Equalities impact** – This project and its continued success has a clear equalities impact on children and their families in the area – it is open to all, it reaches hard to reach groups and reduces crime and anti-social behaviour. It provides training and employment for adults with few if any qualifications and limited employment experience.

4. **Level of risk** – see section 4 of the business case for details.

5. **Legal implications** – none identified.

6. **Financial implications** – this application is for short term one off funding, with further training and support to reduce risk of failure in future. Proposed commissioning route is in line with similar projects in future years.

7. Recommendation

City Executive Board is requested to approve the business case.

Name and contact details of author:
Caroline Duffy, Interim Area Co-ordinator
cduffy@oxford.gov.uk
☎01865 252249

Background papers: None

Business Case

Reference number: *Not assigned until approved by the Programme Board*

Project Title: Dovecote Out of School Play Facilities & Family Drop in Centre

Date: 12 February 2009

Responsible Board: City Executive Board

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Antonia Bance/ Cllr Ed Turner

Links to OCC Priority: Stronger and More Inclusive Communities

Sponsor: Caroline Duffy (on behalf of South East Area Committee)

Project Manager: Caroline Duffy

Project Administrator: Julia Tomkins

Version No: 0.0

Approvals: 1.
2.
3.

Distribution: 1.
2.
3.

Business Case

1. Background

The Dovecote Centre

1.1 The Dovecote Centre supports vulnerable children and families by providing all year round affordable play opportunities for children and young people aged 0 to 12 years

- An After School Club for four sessions per week – 24 places
- A winter Saturday Club, October to March each year – 16 places
- An 8 day Easter play scheme – 32 places
- A 4 week summer play scheme – 85 places
- An open access Family Drop In operating all year round Monday to Friday.

1.2 By offering concession places and low cost facilities (below cost of delivery) the Dovecote provision is accessible to all living in Blackbird and Greater Leys. Facilities also provide a much-needed place for children with special needs to be integrated while playing with other children living in their community. Low cost off site activities are also provided to attractions, such as parks, zoo's, museums etc. These often provide children with the only means of escaping from living life on a large estate over the long summer months. The various childcare activities undertaken at the Dovecote provide for stimulating and stretching activities which local children and families may not be able to access outside of the school environment.

Area information

1.3 The Leys (Blackbird Leys & Greater Leys), is a residential area in southeast Oxford, comprising of a mix of council, housing association, private and shared ownership residencies.

The Leys is a nationally recognised area of social disadvantage - on most government indices of deprivation the Leys scores highly.

Several surveys and research projects carried out in The Leys in the last two or three years reveal high indicators of social disadvantage, benefit dependency, high child density, households headed by a lone parent, high unemployment, underemployment, educational under-achievement and low expectations amongst local families.

Leys schools all fall within the Oxford Excellence Cluster (a Government funded programme for improving standards in groups of largely low achieving schools).

The Leys has been the subject of three regeneration programmes funded under the Government's Single Regeneration Budget Scheme.

Current position and reason for funding application to Council

1.4 The Dovecote originally applied for a grant from the main grants budget round in November 2007. The application was not supported because the case for play and out of school provision was not made clear. The project does not provide nursery or day care and is a play and family drop in project. Following this the project leader worked with local councillors to distinguish more clearly the play element of the work carried out by the project – seeking parity with projects such as BLAP, SOAP and Donnington Doorstep Family Centre.

A request for core funding was made to City Executive Board on 11 June 2008, ratified by Council on 30 June 2008. This was approved subject to a business case being prepared.

If the project is supported through this funding over the next 2 years, it can then be considered as part of the Commissioning process for Play projects. Providing funding of £20,000 a year over the 2 years will also support the group to lever in additional funding and maintain this for future viability.

1.5 The Dovecote is applying to a range of funders at present. Including the Volant Trust; Children in Need; Awards for All; St. Michael's and All Saints Charity and the PF Charitable Trust. Oxfordshire County Council only allocates funding for Children's Centres which provide Day Care for under 5s. The Dovecote is a voluntary sector Family Centre which also provides after school care so does not meet the criteria for Oxfordshire County Council funding.

2. Project definition

Current Position

2.1 The Dovecote Centre is seeking core funding for the next 2 years (2009/10 and 2010/11) to enable it to continue providing services which address the following:

2.2 **Improving the local environment, economy and quality of life**

- Providing facilities that are safe, secure and friendly environment for children in which they can socialise and play with a variety of other children living in their area as well as enhance and develop skills and enjoy a wide range of activities and opportunities not normally available to them.

2.3 **Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour**

- Providing facilities that help combat anti social behaviour
- Facilities for children and young people that area a means of escaping the daily tension and anxieties of their family life
- Facilities that are a focus point for children in which to grow, learn, receive support and build positive friendships.

2.4 Reaching “Hard to Reach” groups

- Providing facilities that encourage young people to become more involved within their community, giving them a stronger feeling of belonging
- Employment opportunities for local residents, including training to gain necessary skills and qualifications.

2.5 Project scope

All children and young people living in The Leys. Capacity limited by OFSTED registration for under 8s and health and safety limits for children over 8.

2.6 Project deliverables

The Dovecote’s main objectives are around social impacts, particularly early intervention and preventative strategies and are therefore not easily measured.

2.7 The Dovecote monitors its success and impact by the following

- The numbers attending – approximately 300 children and 200 parents/carers use the provision during a year
- Monitoring and evaluation, involving the children, young people and their families
- Number of children who have accessed the facilities over a number of years and then become volunteers helping other young people, sharing their experiences, which many have done over the years. Approximately 3 to 4 children each year who have attended our schemes return to become volunteer helpers in our summer scheme
- Employment of local residents – currently circa 95%

3. Initial business case *[This will be a summary of the benefits of undertaking this project. It should demonstrate financial savings, reduced overheads, speedier or higher quality service or some other tangible benefit that will justify undertaking the project. This must also detail what other possible options are e.g. options appraisal.]*

3.1 Continuation of a successful, unique local project in an area of high need - Supporting this project will allow it to continue and develop its case for future funding

3.2 Improve the local environment, economy and quality of life by providing quality play out of school hours for local children. The project also provides employment and training opportunities for local people

3.3 Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour by getting children off the street out of school hours and into a caring environment with rules and sanctions

3.4 Reach hard to reach groups by taking children from the local area regardless of income. Training and employing adults with few if any qualifications and limited employment experience

3.5 Options Appraisal:

Do not fund – the project has to continue without a major contribution of funding. This option is likely to result in closure of the project as fundraising is a major factor in its success / failure

Part fund – Funding applied for is part of the overall funding total. The success of funding bids to other agencies may depend on successful match funding

Fully fund – this will result in the project being able to fully concentrate on raising additional funding from other sources. With the success of this application, the profile for match funding is raised. Conditions such as commissioning applications can be applied to ensure a more streamlined approach to funding in future years

4. Risks and Uncertainties *[What events might arise that would jeopardise one or more objective? What can be done to prevent them arising or deal with them if they do?]*

Risk & Description	Likelihood	Impact (High/Medium/Low)	Counter Measures
4.1 Insufficient Funding / fundraising expertise to continue despite Oxford City Council contribution	Medium	High	The Management Committee regularly applies for funding from a variety of sources, and is currently applying to newly established funders for future years Ideally there will be a wide spread of supporters, so that the project is not reliant upon just a few sources of funding
4.2 Insufficient Staff for project to continue	Low	High	Coordinator works with various agencies to access part funded, sometimes free training for staff. Coordinator works with local residents to encourage access to training & holds regular training appraisal for staff. Committee fundraise to pay for training & when possible childcare costs

4.3 Uncertainty about responsibility for project funding – play v care issue	Medium	High	Explore commissioning route, including through County Council. Review provision with other play providers ie BLAP and SOAP in line with commissioning process
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5. Timescales *[Milestones only. These may be decision points or times on the critical path by which essential elements must be completed in order for consequent tasks to be undertaken. They will help measure progress and achievement towards the overall goal].*

Milestone	Start	Finish	Milestone/ decision point	Project Termination Point
5.1 Additional funding plan for future years in place	April 2009	October 2009	Future funding routes for additional funding pin-pointed	Ongoing
5.2 Consideration of entry into Commissioning process for 2111 - 2112	April 2010	November 2010	Possibly part of Grants commissioning process	March 2011

6. Acceptance Criteria *[Define those essential elements of the project (maybe one or all of the objectives) that must be achieved in order for the project to be accepted as complete. Examples of acceptance criteria are:-*

- Meets corporate objectives (not vision)
- Improves service delivery and accessibility
- Value for money, delivers financial or process efficiencies
- Fit for purpose
- Improve organisational governance
- Will improvements be incremental or transformational

6.1 . It is anticipated that the Dovecote Project will meet the following which address corporate objectives

- Stronger and more inclusive communities
- Raising level of income and skill in the most deprived areas
- Projects which support people living on low incomes – not provided by other agencies or show major investment from other agencies

6.2 Funding would enable the project to continue whilst continued development can be carried out to ensure future funding

6.3 The project would have time and support to look at its interface within the locality to see how it fits in

6.4 During the 2 years, Oxford City Council will look at the programme within the context of value for money and whether it does continue to meet corporate objectives

7. Costs *[What is the cost of resource and hardware required to complete the task? Cost of resource may be expressed in either hard cash terms where known (e.g. the cost of an external consultant) or in the number of man-days or a combination of the two. Please detail the internal resources needed and the number of hours' effort required*

Budget 2009 / 2010 and 2010/ 2011

Income		
Fees	10000	
Grants and contributions - anticipated	56650	(including £20k provision from OCC p.a.)
Management fees	2898	
Interest / refunds and sales	1400	
Contributions to trips	2300	
Total Receipts	73248	
Payments		
Wages	58001	
Training	300	
Equipment and materials	5000	
Trips	4000	
Rent	2600	
Insurance and fees	1177	
Office costs	1050	
Advertising and Misc.	1120	
Total Payments	73248	

8. Interfaces *[What other projects or tasks does this project connect with, overlap or depend upon. Often a project will depend on the completion of another project or task before it can be undertaken, .e.g. the project to relocate staff to new premises may depend upon the successful completion of the project to identify the most suitable new premises. Please detail if this project links with any partnerships. List any inter-dependencies e.g. the partnership has to deliver a stage to make the project happen therefore creating a risk to the*

project].

8.1 This is a stand alone, established project

8.2 There are no changes in project structure or day to day business

9. Whole Life Cost/Sustainability *[The project must take into account what the likely environmental impacts might be, e.g. pollution, waste, resource use. What the likely economic impacts might be, e.g. strengthening the local economy, meeting local needs locally, local employment opportunities. What the likely social impacts might be, e.g. encouragement of opportunities to be part of the community, access to informal provisions. Think about any hidden costs that may need to be considered as part of the project, e.g. running costs, storage or handling costs, administrative costs, maintenance costs, spend to save, disposal costs. It also needs to consider what the return on investment will be].*

9.1 Social Benefits

Children are assisted and supported to

- enjoy good physical and mental health;
- be protected from harm and neglect and grow up able to look after themselves;
- achieve educational success and enjoyment, have good opportunities for play and leisure and develop self-confidence and life skills for a creative and positive adulthood;
- make a positive contribution to the community and society

Families are supported in raising and caring for their children

Families are supported by having time for themselves, siblings , relatives and other caring responsibilities

Reduced anti social behaviour and crime in the community

9.2 Economic benefits

Employment and training opportunities, including gaining qualifications, for local residents.

Longer term benefits with tie into City Council objectives

It is widely recognised that the cost of early intervention produces a cost saving of at least 7 times the cost of intervention later