



REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

PORTFOLIO AREA: HEALTH & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Date of Meeting: 15th March 2010

Public

Key Decision: Yes

Recorded in Forward Plan: Yes

Inside Policy Framework

Title: Sure Start Carlisle South – Proposal to Transfer Outstanding Balance of Grant

Report of: Head of Community Support

Report reference: CS.11/10

Summary:

To seek approval for the release of the balance of the Sure Start grant, for the purposes outlined in proposals attached to this report as Appendix 'A'

Recommendations:

Members are requested to approve release of the budget, currently held in reserve, to be transferred to Barnardos for use in the manner proposed within Appendix 'A'

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Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND OPTIONS

- 1.1 Following the transfer of the management and operation of the Sure Start Carlisle South programme to Barnardos in 2008, there remains an outstanding balance on the grant available to the programme , after all expenditure on projects up to the date of the transfer have been accounted for.
- 1.2 This amounts to £133,000 and has been placed in a separate reserve account since 2008/9
- 1.3 The County Council, as the official Accountable Body for the programme have completed their accounting processes for the programme and have no further claim to it and therefore Barnardos, having inherited the management of the programme from the Sure Start Executive Board have presented proposals, based on the original brief for the Carlisle South programme, which was to provide services which would improve the physical, intellectual and social development of babies and young children in the area, so that they can flourish at home and when they get to school and thereby break the cycle of disadvantage.
- 1.4 The proposal is attached as appendix 'A'

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 Consultation to Date – Consultation has taken place with the County Council as the Accountable Body for the Sure Start Carlisle South Programme and with Barnardos, the current contracted service deliverer. The proposals outlined in Appendix 'A' have been developed from needs identified following extensive consultation with children, parents and carers in the Carlisle South area.
- 2.2 Consultation proposed – Barnardos should continue to communicate and consult with Ward Members on the delivery of the proposals set out in Appendix 'A'

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members are requested to approve release of the budget, currently held in reserve, to be transferred to Barnardos for use in the manner proposed within Appendix 'A'

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To allow the transfer of the balance of the Sure Start grant to Barnardos as the contracted provider for Children's Centre Services in Carlisle South, in succession to the Sure Start Carlisle South Executive Board, to provide activities in keeping with the original intentions of the Sure Start Carlisle South programme.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- Staffing/Resources – There are no staffing implications as far as the City Council is concerned.
- Financial – There is currently an earmarked reserve totalling approximately £133,000 which was established, based upon the residual funds from the Sure Start scheme, as part of the 2008/09 accounts . The release of the reserve is a matter which is delegated to the Executive, and if approved, will be transferred to Barnardos to fund the schemes as set out in the report.
- Legal – The Grant relates to a function which the Council no longer carries out. With the consent of the Accountable Body, the monies should be passed to the approved body now providing the service.
- Corporate – None
- Risk Management – The County Council, as the Accountable Body for the Sure Start Carlisle South Programme, have confirmed that they have no claim on the remaining grant and are happy for it to be released for the purposes outlined in Barnardos report. As the projects proposed are designed to provide services that are in line with the original Sure Start Carlisle South brief, there is no risk of any intervention from the Grantors, who have already signed off the grant.
- Equality and Disability – The proposals as set out by Barnardos meet the requirements as set out in the original Sure Start bid for Carlisle South and will enable the continuation of services particularly to children and families with additional support needs.
- Environmental – None
- Crime and Disorder – None

- Impact on Customers – These proposals will have a positive impact on children and families in the Carlisle South area, offering additional support to those most in need of it.

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RB/VH

4th March 2010

Proposal for the use of Sure Start Carlisle South Reserve Funds currently held by the City Council.

Following a recent meeting between the City Council's Finance Officers, Community Support Manager and Children's Centre staff, a proposal has been drawn up for the use of the remaining funding from the Sure Start grants, held in a reserve fund by the City Council.

Background:

As many of you will know, the City Council was the lead agency for the Sure Start programme in Carlisle South from 2001 to 2008, although throughout that time the Accountable Body was the County Council. In 2008 the County Council put out Children's Centres to tender, and the successful bidder for Carlisle was Barnardo's, who have a 3-year contract to provide Children's Centre services from April 2008 – March 2011. At the final meeting of the Sure Start Exec Board, 18/3/08, it was agreed that any credit or indeed deficit would be passed on to Barnardo's.

The City Council Exec have previously received and approved a report proposing the setting up of the Sure Start Reserve Fund from the Council's S151 officer. We understand that the County Council has completed its accounting processes and makes no claim on this money

Proposal:

The reserve amounts to approximately £133,000. The funding should be used for the purpose for which it was originally intended – i.e. – **to benefit under 5's and their families in Carlisle South.**

1. Community Parents programme

Some funds were previously committed by the Sure Start programme but due to accounting and auditing processes were never paid. We propose that this commitment should now be honoured.

This amounts to £1115.85 due to the Community Parents programme currently running across Carlisle, providing a regular home visitor to families in need during a child's first year of life. It is a research-based family health programme targeting those in greatest need, and provides a trained, fully supervised volunteer who makes a monthly visit to each family to deliver a planned programme of work and family learning, devised and agreed with the family. The Community Parents programme is run in partnership by Barnardo's Carlisle and the PCT.

2. Project Workers

From our knowledge of the area, the needs of families and the current provision, we have identified some gaps. We would like to propose the following:

- that the bulk of the money is spent over a 2-year period, to provide **two project workers** based in Carlisle South Sure Start Children's Centre
- that the funding be paid into a ring-fenced account in Barnardo's, who are the current children's centre providers, and who have agreed to host these posts. They have also agreed that, should the provider change in the next round of

tendering, due to be completed for April 2011, the remaining funding shall be transferred to the new provider and used for the purposes set out in this document.

Portage Project worker.

Portage is a home-visiting educational service for pre-school children with additional support needs and their families, and aims to support parents to help their disabled child to develop their fullest potential. The Children's Centre is currently a registered Portage service, complying with all of the standards and requirements of the National Portage Association. www.portage.org.uk

We currently deliver Portage using a number of staff who are each linked to a single family, and we have a special needs coordinator who supervises and directs them. This is not particularly efficient since, as demands on staff have changed, Portage is only a small part of their work and, because of the numbers, supervision is time-consuming for the coordinator. As staff move on and are replaced we lose their specialist skills, the number able to deliver Portage has become depleted and we have a waiting list for this service.

The training is quite expensive and on review it would seem that a project worker dedicated to Portage would be more efficient. This proposal would enable us to train a new worker to take on the home visiting role, to become skilled in this specialised work, to address the need demonstrated by the waiting list we currently have, and to lay foundations for a continuing scheme when this funding is spent. The post would be supervised by the existing special needs coordinator, and all the infrastructure is in place to enable this post to be advertised and filled quickly. A Portage training course is planned for Cumbria in the late Spring.

The cost would be around £27,828 in year 1 and £25,688 in year 2, total cost £53,516

Group Development Worker.

Again, due to staff changes, many of the skills previously held within the children's centre team have been lost. We have identified a need for a development worker to support the development of a number of groups which run as part of the children's centre programme.

These could include:

- Pow-Wow (for women who are affected by domestic abuse)
- Teen Parents Group
- Friday family Group (for parents dealing with drug/alcohol issues)
- Mental Health Drop-in

We have staff that attend the groups, run the groups and who support group members and their families, but do not have capacity to develop the groups and move members on into more suitable activities when their need for the group is diminished, but they are not confident to move on independently. A group development worker would be able to work across these and other groups to ensure that the specialist groups are available to those most in need and those who have had input are enabled to move on and to develop their skills further in another setting.

Again, we have the infrastructure in place to ensure that this post will be supported within the community development section, being supervised by the current section leader.

The cost of this would be around £26,828 in year 1 and £25,688, total £52,516

We are hopeful that, given the additional funding to rebuild the necessary skills within the team, the tasks undertaken by these workers will become part of the general work of an upskilled, more confident team, when the two-year project funding ends.

Total cost for 2 project workers for two years, £106,032

3. Play facilities in Botcherby

Finally, we have been approached by **'Together We Can'** to contribute towards the costs of a new playground in Botcherby Ward.

Since Botcherby was the only one of the five wards which we covered in Carlisle South that missed out on Sure Start investment into play areas when spending our capital grant, it would seem fitting to put that anomaly right by allocating some of the Reserve Fund for that purpose. Phil Grey, Green Spaces Manager has kindly provided some information about the proposals and the play equipment to be included for under 5's in the project. (Appendix 1)

I therefore propose that the **balance** of the Sure Start Reserve Fund – **approximately £15,000**, be paid over to the **'Together We Can'** project, to be spent on **play equipment suitable for under 5's in the Botcherby area.**

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