

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to the Executive Member for Leisure and Community for Decision 12 October 2023

Portfolio:	Leisure and Community
Subject:	Community Fund Application – Hampshire SEN Den
Report of:	Assistant Director (Democracy)
Corporate Priorities:	Leisure Opportunities for Health and Fun

Purpose:

This report presents an application for funding under the Council's Community Funding Programme.

Executive summary:

An application for Community Funding has been received from Hampshire SEN Den for £919.52 as a start-up grant. The grant would be used to establish a group which aims to provide 'positive and meaningful experiences' out of school hours for children aged 5 – 13 years of age with Special Educational Needs.

Hampshire SEN Den aims to be a non-judgmental space to help the local community of parents to offer informal support to one another in a safe space in which their children can play and socialise with other SEN children.

The group has run trial sessions for two months at Portchester Parish Hall, to determine demand. Over the course of this period, 22 separate people attended. Many more showed interest and support on the group's Facebook page, which currently has nearing 300 followers.

Social Prescribers have identified the deficit of support groups for children with SEN, and their parents, in this area.

As some costs such as insurance, hall hire and volunteer training have had to be paid upfront to meet the stability and safeguarding requirements of such a group, Hampshire SEN Den is requesting funds to pay for:

- 2 DBS for additional volunteers;
- sensory toys;

- play equipment;
- craft materials;
- polo shirts to identify the volunteers;
- an I-Pad,
- speakers and a projector;
- one-year Microsoft office subscription;
- a printing plan for one year and;
- a card payment machine to enable parents to easily donate.

The group plans to request a donation of £3 per child and £1 per adult, with refreshments also being supplied at a reasonable price to generate an additional income stream.

The group has projected that within one year, once the initial outlay has been covered, the group will generate enough income to cover costs.

All Portchester East Ward Councillors, Councillors Bainbridge, Nother and Davis, are supportive of this application.

Recommendation/Recommended Option:

It is recommended that this application be approved.

Reason:

This application meets the Community Fund criteria for financial support for community capital projects.

Cost of Proposals:

The total allocation towards the project will be £919.52, which can be met from the existing budget for the Community Fund Programme.

Risk Assessment:

There are no risks associated with this report.

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Claire Benfield, Leisure and Community Officer (Tel: 01329 824495)