

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Report to the Executive for Decision 8 February 2016

<b>Portfolio:</b>	Leisure and Community
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Fareham Community Savers Reallocation of Funding</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Operations
<b>Strategy/Policy:</b>	Leisure Strategy
<b>Corporate Objective:</b>	Strong and Inclusive Communities Dynamic, Prudent and Progressive Council

**Purpose:**

To agree the reallocation of funding that was designated for Fareham Community Savers following the termination of this arrangement.

**Executive summary:**

In March 2012 the Council established a Credit Union in Fareham in partnership with First Wessex Housing Association and The Southern Co-operative. The aim of this initiative, known as Fareham Community Savers, was to promote financial inclusion, safe borrowing and savings opportunities to communities predominantly living in the Fareham Park and Broadlaw Walk areas of the Borough.

The Executive agreed to fund the initiative for five years, subject to satisfactory performance. It was anticipated that this initiative would complement the work of the Fareham Park Project, which is a corporate priority aimed at improving the life opportunities for residents in the Fareham Park area.

On 10th March 2015 a meeting of the Fareham Community Savers Management Board concluded that the initiative had reduced to a level that no longer made it sustainable. There remains £12,938 available from the now defunct initiative and this is available to share equally between the Council and First Wessex Housing Association.

This report proposes that the Council's share of the funding is redirected to enable the continuation of the Fareham North West Youth Club, which was set up and initially funded as part of the Fareham Park Project. It is anticipated that the Youth Club's strong connections with many young people from this community will enable the funding to be utilised for the specific purpose of improving young people's links to education, skills and training through mentoring and signposting.

The Council is seeking to make an agreement with First Wessex to use its share of the fund to support youth services in the Borough of Fareham.

**Recommendation/Recommended Option:**

That the Executive agrees:

- (a) that the Council's £6,469 share from the now defunct Fareham Community Savers initiative be utilised for the provision of the Fareham North West Youth Club (subject to agreeing appropriate terms with Fareham North West Community Association); and
- (b) that First Wessex be asked to allow their share of the funding to be allocated for the provision of youth services in the Borough of Fareham.

**Reason:**

To ensure that the operation of the Fareham North West Youth Club can continue with the aim of improving young people's links to education, skills and training through mentoring and signposting.

**Cost of proposals:**

This proposal seeks to redirect the Council's £6,469 share of the funds that have been previously allocated to a now defunct project.

**Appendices:**                      **None**

**Background papers:**

**Reference papers:**

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### Executive Briefing Paper

<b>Date:</b>	8 February 2016
<b>Subject:</b>	Fareham Community Savers Reallocation
<b>Briefing by:</b>	
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Leisure and Community

#### INTRODUCTION

1. In March 2012 the Council established a credit union in Fareham in partnership with First Wessex Housing Association and The Southern Co-operative. The aim of this initiative, known as Fareham Community Savers, was to promote financial inclusion, safe borrowing and savings opportunities to communities living in priority areas of Fareham.
2. Each partner agency committed to provide £5,600 per year for an initial two year period, with an extension of this funding for a further three years subject to satisfactory performance.
3. £12,938 remains available from the now defunct Fareham Community Savers initiative and this is available to share equally between the Council and First Wessex Housing Association.

#### BACKGROUND

4. Fareham Borough Council, in partnership with First Wessex Housing Association and The Southern Co-operative, established 'Fareham Community Savers', a local arm of the Hampshire Credit Union movement that would serve the communities living in the Fareham Park and Broadlaw Walk areas of the Borough of Fareham. These areas had been designated as a result of the recognition of higher unemployment and high levels of social housing in these locations.
5. Each partner agency committed to funding the initiative for five years, at a level of £5,600 per annum, subject to satisfactory performance, with an agreement that a Management Board comprised of a representative from each funding partner agency would monitor progress and effectiveness.
6. Measures of success included securing new members to join the savings scheme, running events to raise awareness of money management and referring residents to support services such as Citizens Advice Bureau for more specialised advice.

7. In order to achieve the primary objective of the initiative, the services of United Savings and Loans (USAL) were utilised as the 'banking partner'. However, in September of 2014 USAL withdrew their services and, in response to the absence of a reliable banking partner. Following this decision, the Fareham Community Savers Management Board decided that in future the focus would be on promoting effective money management skills and signposting to sources of support for those individuals experiencing difficulties with managing their finances.
8. In March 2015, at the meeting of the Fareham Community Savers Management Board, an update on progress with the project reported that, despite continued commitment and significant effort put into all components of the project, the anticipated success rates had not been achieved.
9. As a result of these identified difficulties with Fareham Community Savers, the decision was taken at the March Management Board meeting to end the initiative.

## **TARGETING EDUCATION, SKILLS AND TRAINING**

10. Open access youth provision is currently provided at both Fareham North West and Broadlaw Walk. The Fareham North West Youth Project was set up, and initially funded, as part of the Fareham Park Project, a Council initiative to improve life chances of the residents in this area.
11. The aim of the Youth Project was to form positive relationships with young people from the Fareham Park area, providing appropriate role models and creating opportunities to raise the aspirations and achievements of the young people attending. The Fareham North West Youth Project currently runs two sessions per week, one for 10 to 13 year olds and one for those aged 13 to 17.
12. Broadlaw Walk currently has two youth clubs which operate from the community space in this location. Broadlaw Walk Youth Club (Junior) runs for two hours after school one day per week for young people aged from 8 to 13 years of age. This club is run by volunteers from the community and is activity based.
13. Broadlaw Walk Youth Club (Senior) was set up in 2014 in response to raising levels of anti-social behaviour in the area, linked to young people. The Senior Youth Club was initially funded for one session per week by a community grant from the Council. Its aim is to establish positive relationships with young people aged 12 to 17 from this priority area, encourage these young people to be accountable for their actions and engage them in issue-based work.
14. The Broadlaw Walk Youth Club (Senior) secured a grant from the Blue Lamp Trust after its initial funding from the Council ceased. This club, too, is in the process of seeking funding to ensure the continuation of this provision.
15. Both Fareham North West Youth Project and Broadlaw Walk Youth Club (Senior) offer, through their existing positive connections, strong opportunities to involve local young people in overcoming the issues that are of most concern in their communities. With regards to the identified lack of engagement with education, skills and training, it is proposed that these existing positive relationships are utilised to tackle these issues through targeted mentoring and signposting.

16. The Council is currently working in partnership with First Wessex and youth providers to determine how the existing provision in these two areas can best be utilised and supported to tackle the identified Education, Skills and Training needs.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

17. The funds remaining at the suspension of the Fareham Community Savers initiative are £12,938. The legal agreement relating to the management of the funds for this initiative states that 'the Parties agree to return any funds remaining in the Pooled Fund to the Council and the Arrangement Parties, in the percentages contributed, when the agreement is terminated'. As Southern Co-operative has relinquished its claim to its share of the remaining funds, the £12,938 will be divided equally between Fareham Borough Council and First Wessex Housing Association, representing £6,469 per organisation.
18. The Fareham Park Project provided £8,407 of external funding to run the two open access youth provision sessions at Fareham North West Youth project and this funding has now expired. This report proposes that the £6,469, which constitutes the Council's allocation from the Fareham Community Savers agreement, is reassigned to support the continuation of this Youth Project.
19. An appropriate funding agreement will need to be reached with Fareham North West Community Association. Any funding provided will be under the condition that the open access sessions will have a focus on engaging the local young people in accessing education, skills and training.
20. As a result of the identified need in the Broadlaw Walk area, and the Fareham Community Savers initiative's previous operation in this location, this report proposes that the Council continues to work in partnership with First Wessex to promote the reassignment of the Housing Association's allocation to support the Broadlaw Walk Youth Club and to have an equivalent focus.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

21. Open access youth projects operate at both Fareham North West and Broadlaw Walk. These youth clubs offer positive role models and mentoring, improve links to support agencies and effectively challenge young people's perceptions.
22. This report proposes that the funding which is currently allocated to the now defunct Fareham Community Savers initiative would be most effectively utilised by reallocating it to the respective youth projects to support young people from these communities to increase their engagement with education skills and training.

**Enquiries:** For further information on this report please contact Claire Benfield, Community Development Officer. (Ext 4495)