

**STATEMENT FROM CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

**SHIRE COMMUNITIES AND SHIRE ENVIRONMENT GRANTS SCRUTINY REVIEW**

**PANEL – 12 APRIL 2023**

Children and Family Services have been pleased to support the Shire Grant programme by commenting on applications made which aim to support children and families. Staff from the service have been able to advise on whether the applications support areas of high demand, plug gaps or if there is risk of duplication, etc. The grant programme has supported a lot of charities over the years that can have a positive impact on children and families, but which also complement local authority provision, plug gaps, and provide alternatives for families.

We know that some families may be less willing to seek support from public sector organisations and are more likely to accept support from charitable organisations. Some of the awards made in past years have added to provision where demand is high, for example, awards made to the Centre for Fun and Families has increased the available provision for parents seeking support with behaviour management and supporting their child's mental wellbeing.

This is an area of high demand on Children and Family Services, so this has supported reducing demand on the Children and Family Wellbeing Service. Some further examples: In the last year, the award made to Menphys has supported children and families who may otherwise be requesting a costly short break from the council, as has a grant to Spectrum Sensory Sports. Grants made to Glebe House and SENSE have both benefited disabled children who are open to Disabled Children's Service. There have been various awards to organisations around the county such as Positive Impact Foundation and MPND who target vulnerable young people and provide something different to our own youth provision, i.e. mentoring and creative arts projects. But in addition to the more obvious awards for children and young people, many of the families that the service works with have benefited from awards which support general community vulnerability, for example grants made to Charity Link, Cruse Bereavement Support and community organisation supporting the relief of poverty.

The SHIRE Grants offer an opportunity to trial new and innovative approaches and we have seen value in this from CFWS in terms of new interventions we can refer into and additionality in Localities where demand for support is high.

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