

# **The Balsam Centre – Allocation of Healthy Living Centre Funding for 2020/21 (Executive Decision)**

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## **Purpose of the Report**

To consider the allocation of funding to the Balsam Centre.

## **Public Interest**

Supporting and helping the Balsam Centre to improve the work of voluntary community organisations in the town and villages across Area East.

## **Recommendations**

It is recommended that members:

- 1) Award £10,000 to the Balsam Centre for the delivery of the Healthy Living Centre work programme from the Area East Discretionary / project budget.

## **Background**

The Balsam Centre was established in 1998, with the purchase of the former memorial hospital in the centre of Wincanton. The project was established to specifically meet the needs of Wincanton and the surrounding area (this includes some 40 settlements with a population of 30,000) due to an identified gap in services in the area, particularly in mental health services. Extensive refurbishment of the building and the setting up of services was enabled through a Lottery grant and support from a range of funders, including SSDC.

The Balsam Centre delivers a range of integrated health and wellbeing projects and initiatives, most of which directly link with physical activity, healthy eating and mental health support alongside participation in community based activities, supported social engagement and learning.

SSDC has supported the Balsam Centre through both core funding and project grants, since it began. In the past, core funding has been allocated through the Healthy Living Pooled Fund; a budget set up jointly by SSDC, NHS Somerset and SCC and reported annually to the South Somerset Health and Wellbeing Partnership (SSH&WP).

Members will recall that this budget was originally established to support Healthy Living Centres across the whole of the District but, as the only eligible organisation is based in Area East, the budget was transferred and subject to local monitoring by AEC.

Appendix 1. Provides information on the Balsam Centre's outcomes for 2020 and details the effect Covid-19 has had on the Centre. Since lockdown, measures have been put in place to continue supporting the community.

## **Financial Implications**

–There is currently £26,500 available from the Area East discretionary/project revenue budget. If members agree the recommendation £16,500 will remain in the revenue budget.

## **Council Plan Implications**

Focus: Healthy, Self-reliant Communities

To enable healthy communities which are cohesive, sustainable and enjoy a high quality of life we will:

- Embed social value\* into all processes and activities to ensure we maximise the support we give to our communities
- Work with partners to keep, and help our residents feel safe in their homes and communities
- Work with partners to reduce the impact of social isolation and create a feeling of community
- Work with partners to support people in improving their own physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Enable quality cultural, leisure and sport activities
- Support residents facing hardship
- Help tackle the causes of economic exclusion, poverty and low social mobility
- Support older people to live and age well by increasing independence, reducing loneliness, and improving financial security

\*Social value delivers improved economic, social and environmental wellbeing from public sector contracts

## **Area East Chapter Implications**

Focus: Healthy, Self-reliant Communities

- Support a range of improvements to community facilities
- Continue to support the South Somerset community accessible transport scheme
- Tackle social isolation by maintaining the network of volunteer led health walks through promotion, training and support
- Deliver a programme of Play days in towns/villages in Area East.

## **Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications**

The Balsam Centre supports and provides various projects, including health walks, wellbeing/community/partnership groups along with volunteering projects, which negates the need for travel.

## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

The loss of services designed to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged in target communities is likely to have a significant effect over time.

## **Background Papers**

N/A

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