

# Decision Pathway – Report



**PURPOSE:** Key decision

**MEETING:** Cabinet

**DATE:** 05 December 2023

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Short Breaks Innovation Fund Grant Year 2</b>		
<b>Ward(s)</b>	All		
<b>Author:</b> Gail Rogers	<b>Job title:</b> Head of Service Children’s Commissioning		
<b>Cabinet lead:</b> Cllr Asher Craig - Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Equalities	<b>Executive Director lead:</b> Stephen Peacock, Chief Executive		
<b>Proposal origin:</b> BCC Staff			
<b>Decision maker:</b> Cabinet Member <b>Decision forum:</b> Cabinet			
<b>Purpose of Report:</b> Approval to accept and spend £1.1m grant funding from the DfE Short Breaks Innovation Fund, to extend our existing Pathways to Short Breaks programme for a further year.			
<b>Evidence Base:</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through data analysis and parent/carer engagement work, we identified that there is a cohort of children and young people with Social Communication Interaction Need or Autism who are experiencing Emotionally Based Schools Avoidance and withdrawing from social situations and environments that cause anxiety. Their parent/carers tell us that they are unable to register these young people for Short Breaks services, as they struggle to leave their home due to high levels of anxiety.</li> <li>In 2022 the DfE awarded us £740k from the Short Breaks Innovation fund to deliver the Pathways to Short Breaks Project running 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023-31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. Cabinet accepted this funding in January 2023, and we have now been successful in having our project extended for a further 12 months to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, this will be the final year of available funding. The bid submitted in 2022 was coproduced with parents and carers through four workshops.</li> <li>The project delivers a “bridging” service that supports young people in engaging outside of the home via 1-1 support and commissioned groups, accessing a much needed Short Break for themselves and their families. In-house engagement workers build positive trusting relationships with CYP through identifying an area of special interest or an activity that is going to positively expand the CYP’s experiences, whilst building resilience in managing and experiencing anxiety. Specialist neurodiverse youth groups are also delivered by commissioned partners focusing on wellbeing support, which enables the young people to engage with the wider community, their peers, and Short Breaks.</li> <li>In the second year of the project, with the additional funding, we will expand this offer by increasing capacity and scope of the commissioned services. Psychoeducation workshops will be offered to a cohort of 60 neurodiverse children that we have identified from the first round of referrals, who attend school but struggle socially to engage with their peers and could become non-attenders due to high levels of anxiety. This is an early intervention measure to reduce the likelihood of these young people missing education.</li> <li>In addition, the project will develop therapeutic parenting programmes and run parent workshops that will explore anxiety, identify triggers &amp; teach anxiety management strategies. These will focus on managing emotionally based school avoidance and enable them to build support networks. Termly ‘meet ups’ for this</li> </ol>			

cohort of CYP will be delivered to foster a social community that will increase social connection.

6. As the funding will only run until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 we have built in dedicated time for our Engagement Workers to undertake transition planning with young people. The intention is that the project will create a pathway into existing services; quarter 4 will focus on ensuring the young people are supported into another ongoing youth group or short breaks activity to ensure continuity of support. Some of our external partners on the project run other youth groups, which would provide some familiarity of staff and venues. All internal staff are employed on fixed term basis and contracts will be extended in line with the funding window.

**Cabinet Member / Officer Recommendations**

That Cabinet:

1. Approve the acceptance of £1.1m of grant funding from the DfE Short Breaks Innovation Fund.
2. Authorise the Executive Director Children and Education, in consultation with Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Equalities to take all steps required to accept and spend the funding including entering grant agreements and procuring and awarding contracts for the delivery of the project.
3. Authorise the Executive Director Children & Education in consultation with Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Equalities to submit further funding bids to extend the project in future funding rounds, noting that any successful bids will be brought back to Cabinet for approval to accept and spend.

**Corporate Strategy alignment:**

1. CYP2 – Supported to thrive – Children and young people will be supported to thrive, by engaging them to access 1-1 support and specialist provision to help reduce isolation and anxiety and provide both them and their parent/carers with a short break.

**City Benefits:**

1. The service will benefit the city by working to reduce demand on other, higher cost, service such as Alternative Learning Provision, Hospital Education Service, residential education placements, CAMHs and stop escalation to Tier 4 bed and hospital admissions.

**Consultation Details:**

1. In putting the bid together, we ran four parent/carer focus groups codesign sessions.
2. The bid was written in consultation with the Bristol Autism Team and Disabled Children’s Service.
3. Providers were engaged and submitted proposals for the group activities which formed part of the bid.

**Background Documents:** [SB Innovation Fund Feb 2023.pdf \(bristol.gov.uk\)](#)

<b>Revenue Cost</b>	<b>£1.1m</b>	<b>Source of Revenue Funding</b>	<b>DfE Short Breaks Innovation Fund</b>
<b>Capital Cost</b>	<b>£N/A</b>	<b>Source of Capital Funding</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>One off cost</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Ongoing cost</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Saving Proposal</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Income generation proposal</b> <input type="checkbox"/>

**Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:**

**1. Finance Advice:** The programme of activities outlined within the paper are supported by Department for Education Short breaks Innovation funding of £1.1m. These activities are grant funded and as such will have no impact on the Councils General fund.

**Finance Business Partner:** Stephen Hampson – Finance Manager 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023

**2. Legal Advice:** The submission of bids for grant funding does not raise any specific legal implications. Legal Services will advise and assist in relation to the grant agreements. The procurement process must be conducted in line with the 2015 Procurement Regulations and the Councils own procurement rules. Legal services will advise and assist officers with regard to the conduct of the procurement process and the resulting contractual arrangements.

<b>Legal Team Leader:</b> Husinara Jones, Team Manager/Solicitor 7 November 2023		
<b>3. Implications on IT:</b> I can see no implications on IT in regard to this activity.		
<b>IT Team Leader:</b> Alex Simpson, Lead Enterprise Architect 7 November 2023		
<b>4. HR Advice:</b> The report is seeking approval to accept and spend £1.1m grant funding from the DfE Short Breaks Innovation Fund, there are no significant HR implications arising from this request.		
<b>HR Partner:</b> Lorna Laing, HR Business Partner 15 November 2023		
<b>EDM Sign-off</b>	Reena Bhogal-Welsh	1 November 2023
<b>Cabinet Member sign-off</b>	Cllr Asher Craig	13 November 2023
<b>For Key Decisions - Mayor's Office sign-off</b>	Mayor's Office	6 November 2023

<b>Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix D – Risk assessment (</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix G – Financial Advice</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix H – Legal Advice</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix I – Exempt Information</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix J – HR advice</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix K – ICT</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix L – Procurement</b>	<b>NO</b>