

GRANT APPLICATION 2014/15 – ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATION

Priority Corporate Outcomes	<p>To create better life chances for young people</p> <p>To offer personalised support to enable young people who are most at risk of not achieving their potential to close the gap with their peers; make a positive transition into adulthood; and prevent later difficulties</p> <p>To promote a healthy, active, independent and informed over-55 population</p>			
Organisation	PHOENIX CANOE CLUB	<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;">ref</td> </tr> <tr> <td>312/E/CTY</td> </tr> </table>	ref	312/E/CTY
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Address	Phoenix Outdoor Centre, Woodfield Playing Fields, Cool Oak Lane, NW9			

Relevant policy, aims and objectives

The Corporate Plan and the Children and Young People Plan, 2013/16, reflect a focus on improving outcomes for Barnet’s younger population, creating the conditions for children and young people to develop skills and acquire knowledge to achieve their full potential and lead successful adult lives, with support targeted at 16 to 24 year-olds who are not in education, employment or training and those who have disabilities or complex needs. Strategic objectives of the Youth & Community Service include commissioning, supporting and enabling the voluntary sector to develop a wide range of provision, building capacity for vulnerable young people to engage in positive extra-curricular activities and increasing access to regular sport and physical activity as part of leading a healthy lifestyle.

The council is committed to promoting well-being in the community and to encouraging residents to take responsibility for their own health and to age well, a key element of Barnet’s Health and Well-Being Strategy and Integrated Care Model.

Activities / proposal

Phoenix Canoe Club (PCC) is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee, aimed at promoting community participation in water and outdoor sports. It has been operating from the site of the former West Hendon Youth Sailing Base, in conjunction with North Circular Sailing Club, which held the lease of the premises, since the base closed in 2004 pending decisions on future developments under the West Hendon Regeneration Project. Following the surrender of the lease by the sailing club, the council, which owns the 0.4-acre site, granted PCC a new seven-year lease in 2012.

PCC is licensed by the Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority (AALA) to provide kayaking, open canoeing, bell boating, improvised rafting, sailing and windsurfing. Affiliated to Canoe England and accredited with Sport England’s prestigious ‘Club Mark’, it is a recognized Royal Yachting Association (RYA) training centre for dinghy sailing, windsurfing, power boating and first aid. An agreement with the Welsh Harp Sailing Association, which controls activities on the reservoir, enables PCC to use it seven days a week. It operates a progressive programme of water-based activities including white-water and surf training and river trips. Open to the public, it caters for schools, colleges, universities and youth and community groups, based mainly in Barnet and Brent, for which it offers a wide range of courses in the water sports identified.

The club has expanded from having 1,576 attendances in 2011 to 4,418 in 2014, of which 88% were children and young people aged between five and nineteen. 70% of visiting parties were from Barnet, which included special schools, scouts and guides. This year, the club has introduced new power boat and raft building courses and orienteering and other non-water based activities in line with plans to develop the site as a multi-functional outdoor centre. A nine-week programme of activities during the school holidays was especially popular in 2014.

The expansion of water-based activities in general followed an agreement with the Youth & Community Service in 2012 to deliver such as part of its positive activities programme, under which PCC has been loaned sailing and canoeing equipment valued at £60,000, bought with the aid of a Play Builders Capital Grant. The agreement involves provision for children and young people both in the school terms and the school holidays.

This application seeks help to create a new full-time paid post to co-ordinate an ambitious three-year development plan, embracing not only the continued expansion of all water-based activities but also the redevelopment of buildings on the site and surrounding grounds to offer a range of inclusive land-based activities focused around a new purpose-built headquarters. The vision is to provide a borough-wide hub for training and adventure for all sections of the community, linked to partnerships with running, cycling, climbing and orienteering clubs, and agencies such as London Sport (LS). The realisation of these plans will serve to enhance any submission by the club to migrate to a longer lease.

Specific objectives over the next twelve months include the development of work with young people with challenging behaviour, young offenders and those on the 'at risk' register; sail-sport, paddle-sport and orienteering-based projects for children with special educational needs; and new tailor-made team-building challenges for schools and pupil referral units. The club also proposes to target, in consultation with the Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group, adults and older people for whom low-impact activities such as sailing and canoeing will serve to address damaging behaviour and improve health and well-being.

The growth of the club has given rise to the need for the full-time co-ordination of activities, instructors and volunteers, and monitoring and evaluating performance, including compliance with AALA, RYA and British Canoeing standards, in a way that its management committee can no longer achieve alone. Consultation and collaboration with public and voluntary sector agencies and stakeholders on the immediate and longer-term plans and implementation of an expanded fundraising strategy are other key areas in which the post-holder will lead.

The club's proposals and its bids for funding are endorsed by RYA and LS.

The Youth & Community Service commends the expansion of water-sport activities since 2012 and the opportunities that the club offers to young people to improve skills and personal development. Given the investment made through the equipment on loan, however, it is seeking to align its work more definitively with the service's strategic aims and objectives in terms of supporting vulnerable young people. Closer collaboration with the service and agreement of a new working protocol should therefore be conditions of any grant awarded.

Cost and financial need

In 2013/14, PCC incurred expenditure of £52,004, of which £25,797 (nearly 50%) were staffing costs, which include a qualified sailing instructor, who is the only existing full-time paid employee. Activities are otherwise delivered by instructors engaged on a sessional basis and qualified volunteers. The rent negotiated under the new lease (£2,500 pa, increasing annually by £250) reflects the club's plans to generate investment in the site to upgrade it. A review after five years will determine the terms under which its occupancy will continue. Other expenditure includes the purchase and maintenance of equipment; repairs; insurance; and administration.

Income is derived from charges, either on an hourly basis or by way of day or half-day rates for group bookings, including excursions; grants, mainly in support of specific purchases, repairs and building works, and fundraising. The agreement with the Youth & Community Service makes no provision for staffing or the cost of storing the equipment on loan.

In 2012/13, PCC was awarded a corporate grant of £8,500 as a 50% contribution to the first year's cost of the sailing instructor post, matched by two other grants. The post has been sustained through self-generated income, which has increased annually as activities and take-up have grown.

At 31/3/2014, PCC had net current assets of £20,241, a proportion of which was restricted funding spent this year, leaving an uncommitted balance of c£20,000 (30% of estimated 2014/15 expenditure).

The grant request is for £10,000 towards the first year's cost of the new development co-ordinator post, shown as £28,000, on the basis that the shortfall will be met from other grants sought.

The application is supported having regard to the club's development over the last three years and the potential that remains for it to become a hub for physical activity of all kinds for the community at large. The redevelopment of the site is projected to cost in excess of £1m, capital fundraising for phase one of which is expected to gather momentum once the new post is filled. The club should be in a position to contribute to the cost of the new post from reserves. Cumulative three-year cash flow projections show how the post will be fully self-supporting through increased self-generated income over the period.

Grant recommendation, type and conditions

£10,000 (from Edward Harvist Charity)

Start-up grant

One-off grant

Special conditions:

Payment of the award should be made subject to (a) agreement of a future working protocol with the Youth & Community Service, formalising how the club will complement the service's strategic aims and objectives in relation to supporting vulnerable young people; (b) agreement of a work plan for the development co-ordinator, to include targets and milestones for monitoring purposes; (c) confirmation that the balance of funding required for the new post in year one has been secured; and (d) the receipt of quarterly progress reports and an undertaking to provide an evaluation after twelve months.

Target grant outcomes

(a) To enhance and expand opportunities for children and young people to engage in positive activities in support of their development; the acquisition of skills; and the pursuit of a healthy lifestyle and (b) to improve the health and well-being of the community at large through promotion of the club's activities amongst adults and older people.

Date: February 2015