



## Grant Report – Thame Town Council 2022-2023 Award

**Date: 09.06.2023**

We are hugely grateful for the continuing support from Thame Town Council with their annual grant of £10k and with their continued promotion of us to local businesses and other grant awarding bodies & foundations. We are also thrilled to be one of the new Mayor Cllr Adrian Dite's nominated charities.

We would however welcome a review of our annual award as the reality is that the costs to run the centre have increased since we first started due to inflationary increases, increasing Staff costs in order to run more services and of course the impact of the Cost of Living crisis such as energy costs. It will now cost £100-110k a year to run the Red Kite Family Centre. We lost our major funder in December and faced closure at the end of this term, but thanks to our wonderful team and community we can continue to stay open for the next 12-18 months. We are in vital need of more sustainable funding so that we are not in the same situation next year.

The staff and trustees are determined to ensure that this much valued resource for the local community continues at a time when the vital importance of the first 5 years of life is again being highlighted nationally.

### **Historical Context:**

The Red Kite Family Centre was established as a community run charity in 2017 the annual running costs were about £70k. These rose annually in line with inflation up until 2021. Our aim is to 'be there for every family' with children under 5. Our reach in the local community is wide and targeted. Our main site is based in Thame, and we have a satellite site in Chinnor, with outreach taking place in surrounding villages with poor accessibility and proximity to services. We support families' mental and physical wellbeing long term and target our services at families most in need. Our partnerships with local statutory services, charities and community groups are key to reaching these families. We work in close partnership with Oxfordshire Social Services and NHS health professionals, with Health Visitors and Midwives running sessions and surgeries at the Family Centre. We also link with other Early Years professionals in the town and other agencies such as Sharing Life Trust and Citizens Advice. We supported the setting up of the Community Larder that runs at Christchurch each Thursday afternoon.

### **Briefing note for the Thame Town Council on the current financial position of the Red Kite Family Centre. Updated from April 2023**

- The trustees have devised a funding strategy aimed at saving the Family Centre from closure and ensuring that it has a financially sustainable future. This is a two-stage process. The first stage launched in January 2023 is the 'Save our Centre' campaign. Having achieved this goal, the second stage will be a sustainability plan called 'Support our Centre'.
- Within just over 3 months the 'Save our Centre' campaign has meant that we are financially secure for the rest of the 2023-24 financial year, and already have a head start on the deficit for the following year. The campaign will continue until end of June when we launch the sustainability plan in order to secure the centre's on-going future.
- Our fundraising group are actively applying to many grant making bodies which we hope will result in significant additional income. So far this has yielded £20k for 2022/23 & £40k so far for 2023/24
- Our business sponsorship plan has already yielded £10k with more local businesses promising to donate.

- The ‘Save our Centre’ campaign has already been very successful. Individual regular donations through the ‘Friends’ scheme have increased from just under £5k annually to over £16k with membership up from about 30 to 109 people.
- Alongside the fundraising we are working hard to make savings by ensuring that the Family Centre is run as efficiently as possible reducing planned costs for 2022/23 by 12%. We are also launching several user surveys across our groups to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our community.

**Key financial figures:**

Money raised so far for 2022/23 financial year £63.6k

Budget for money raised 2023-24 £103k

The annual running costs for the Family Centre are currently about £100k.

Current bank balances: revenue account £76.1k, contingency reserve £20.1k.

This rise in costs has coincided with the loss of a significant corporate benefactor leaving a shortfall in needed funding of about £40k.

**Grant Award:**

<b>Awarded Amount</b>	£10,000 – Lump Sum – Annual Award
<b>Intended Use</b>	<p>Staffing Costs:            £10,000 covers 15.85% of our annual staffing costs from 2022-2023.            Total Staffing costs for 2022-23 were £63,085.            Total Staffing Costs for 2021-22 were £59,465 (16.82% covered by the TTC award)            Total Staffing Costs for 2020-2021 were £57,270 (17.46% covered by the TTC award)</p> <p>Increase in staffing costs due to inflationary pay rises. Following our recent plea for more funding, and as part of the subsequent cost saving exercises, pay has been frozen at current levels for the next year.</p> <p>Over the last 5 years its value in real terms has dropped because of inflationary pressures.</p>

**User Feedback:**

We have been collecting more feedback as part of our commitment to grant monitoring. We have been thrilled to receive some lovely comments about the impact the Family Centre has on our parent users.

- *“This group has been such a lifesaver for me and my son. It was one of the first groups I came to when I moved to Thame. I don't know where I would be without this group. We are like one big family, and I look forward to coming each week.”*
- *“Mine and my sons wellbeing has improved a lot, having group to come to every week does a lot more than expected for our general wellbeing.”*

**Update on services offered:**

Each week, our 5 part-time staff delivers 9 family sessions open to all under 5's, including social, developmental, wellbeing support groups for new parents. Alongside these there are 4 weekly and monthly targeted groups for young parents, male carers, families supporting children with long term illnesses and disabilities, and families supporting children with autism. We also offer free regular courses such as Money Management, Mental Wellbeing, and Health Exercise and Nutrition in the Really Young (HENRY), and Makaton. We also offer one to one support to vulnerable families in the form of parenting advice, filling out disability living allowance and school applications, confidential access to domestic violence services, support with job applications, access to food banks, and referrals to other services. The Family Centre now has 349 families registered and 256 of these attended at least one activity during the last year. Many attend much more regularly.