

BROWNS COMMUNITY SERVICES CIC – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Executive Summary	
<p>Browns Community Services CIC is a newly formed organisation which operates over Berkshire and Surrey. The Group seeks to support individuals excluded, disadvantaged and vulnerable people (18+) with complex and multiple needs. The Group has applied for a grant of £15,000 to run a course which would support individuals from across the County’s of Berkshire and Surrey, including several from the Woking area.</p> <p>The application represents a significant contribution towards the running costs of the Group and it is not felt that the proposals submitted by Browns Community Services CIC connect with the existing work of the Council. In view of this, it is recommended that the application is not supported.</p>	

Recommendations	
Reasons for Decision	The proposals do not connect with the existing programmes undertaken by the Council and would benefit only a very small number of Woking residents.
The Executive is requested to:	RESOLVE That no grant be awarded.

The Executive has authority to determine the above recommendation.

Background Papers:

2018/19 Application Form.

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1.0 Summary of Application	
1.1 Status and Aims	<p>Browns Community Services CIC (Community Interest Company) was established in 2015 to support clients age 18+ with multiple and complex needs to develop a strong sense of self-worth, with significant improvements on reducing re-offending, tackling substance abuse, domestic violence, mental health, wellbeing and employability skills.</p> <p>The applicant has advised that the Group is one of the fastest growing providers of bespoke adult social care in the South East of England. The Group works with service users to identify their specific needs and set achievable goals.</p>
1.2 Employees	1, comprising the Managing Director (40 hours)
1.3 Volunteers	29, who include peer advice and support workers, IT, mentors, course tutors, bid writers, counsellors, marketing and office administrators. Since 2016 Browns Community services has delivered a full time service from 9.30 - 7pm Monday to Friday and 10.30 - 1pm on a Saturday.
1.4 Clients/Users	<p>48, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8 male - 40 female - 5 disabled - 4 ethnic minority - 2 resident in Woking - 52 aged 19-65 - 1 aged 65+
1.5 Members	None
1.6 Sum Requested	£15,000 (Revenue)
1.7 Project	<p>To run four sets of 4Es (Educate, Empower, Encourage and Employment) to employment and self-employment courses with accompanying six weeks support and advice targeting social and economic disadvantage households who are unemployed or on low income and would include offenders, ex offenders and those at risk of offending. These courses will Educate, Empower and Encourage individuals on the pathway to Employment in a safe setting.</p> <p>Alongside this, the Group would offer six weeks of bespoke one-to-one support and advice from a volunteer/staff member for the individual to help with any other issues such as debt support, housing or other needs. Each course will be run by two specially trained professionals, and several volunteers will also be present to provide extra help and support.</p> <p>The Applicant has stated that the courses will motivate and engage individuals to reduce crisis within their family, through enabling them to gain more control and stability in their lives and make informed choices about the education, health, well-being and safety of children</p>

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	and their family as a unit.
1.8 Cost breakdown:	<p>The sum requested is based on the following breakdown:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staff/volunteers: £10,000 ○ Volunteer training: £500 ○ Project management/ admin fees: £2,500 ○ Course for: course booklets, stationary, printing of CVs & covering letters, memory stick £1,750 ○ Marketing: £250
1.9 Community Benefit	<p>The Group has consulted service users, JCP staff, probation staff and early help and family support workers, the results of which highlighted low levels of self esteem around working and limited knowledge around supporting disadvantaged households into employment. It was further noted that there was no local employment course with an understanding of working with offenders and ex offenders. The Group has identified the need for targeted support for low income households.</p> <p>The Applicant has advised that Browns Community Services CIC held a pilot of the course in Woking in 2016/17 which was attended by two residents of the Borough. The course had the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gained support for starting up own business 2 - Volunteer placements 2 - Obtaining job interviews 2 - Gained employment 1 - 1:1 support outcomes - 1 client was supported with housing issues - 1 client was support with housing benefit <p>The course provides opportunities for people who would benefit from improved basic skills so that they increase the choices available to them. The Applicant indicates that the Group creates the opportunity for local people to come together with a shared goal of seeking employment and cultivates an openness in discussions that enables people to speak about their prejudices without feeling judged.</p> <p>The Group has stated that 48 individuals will benefit as a result of participation over the 4 courses. Outcomes of the project include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training opportunity for social and economic disadvantaged households. - Improved employment skills for social and economic disadvantaged households who are unemployed or on low income. - Support with Self employment. - Bespoke CV and cover letters. - Improved emotional health and well-being. - Reduced social isolation - Reduced anti-social behaviour and crime <p>In the event the Council chose to support the application, the Group</p>

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	would prepare a full report showing the outcomes of the project, client feedback, the number of clients signed up and a case study.
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2.0 Financial Background	
2.1 Budget	<p>At the time of the application, the Group held £8,000 in the bank. The sum of £5,000 is reserved from the Surrey Community Foundation towards staff cost for the Rebuild project.</p> <p>The Group has submitted a budget for 2018/19 and has provided details of the funding applied for, as follows: Staffing costs of £40,000, Surrey Community Foundation funding of £5,000, Lottery funding of £10,000, Heathrow Foundation funding of £25,000, Greenham Common Trust funding of £5,000, Berkshire Community Foundation funding of £10,000, Berkshire CCG funding of £30,000, DWP funding of £50,000, Tudor Trust funding of £10,000, Surrey Police Commissioner funding of £20,000 and Thames Valley Police funding of £10,000. The budget would indicate expenditure of £40,000 and income of £175,000.</p>
2.2 Accounts	<p>The Group has submitted unaudited accounts for the period 16 December 2015 to 31 March 2017 which show an income of £16,073 against expenditure of £15,172, resulting in a surplus of £901.</p> <p>Income consisted of fees of £5,833 and donations of £10,240. Expenditure included salary (£8,000), use of residence as an office (£1,000), room hire (£882), advertising (£171), travelling (£1,994), volunteer expenses (£940) and office costs (£656).</p>
2.3 Support over the past five years	New Application

3.0 Assessment of Application		
3.1 Key Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Constitution ○ Registered Charity ○ VAT Registered ○ Equal Opportunities Policy ○ Safeguarding Policy ○ Reserves Policy ○ Quality Mark ○ Other funding sources pursued ○ Other support by the Council ○ Fundraising ○ Two quotes ○ Regular monitoring provided previously 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes Yes No Yes Yes No No Yes No Yes N/A N/A

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<p>3.2 Consultee Comments</p>	<p><u>Officer Comment</u></p> <p>I am supportive of the overall ambition of this Project as increasingly there is a need for households to get into work as soon as possible so as to avoid the benefit cap, which is particularly challenging for some of the client cohort this organisation works.</p> <p>I am concerned however about the level of funding they are requesting from Woking and not, it would appear, from any other Berkshire or Surrey authorities. In addition there appears to have been very limited, if indeed any discussion with local partners about the need for this service, as I do consider that elements of it cuts across the work of other local partners.</p> <p>As a result I would not be supportive of the application at this time, but would be keen to engage with the organisation to see how closer joint working could be explored.</p>
<p>3.3 Assessment</p>	<p>Browns Community Services CIC is a newly formed organisation which operates over Berkshire and Surrey. The Group seeks to support individuals excluded, disadvantaged and vulnerable people (18+) with complex and multiple needs. The Group has applied for a grant of £15,000 to run a course in the Woking area. The anticipated costs include £10,000 for the Managing Director and volunteers and £2,500 for a project management/administration fee. The Group works with the Family Support Services, Children’s Centres, Surrey Early Help, Woking Job Centre and Surrey Women’s Centre.</p> <p>The Applicant has advised that the Group has applied for funding from a variety of organisations, including Surrey Police, Reading Borough Council and lottery funding. No applications have been made to Surrey Authorities, with the Group indicating that it had experienced difficulty in accessing funding from the County Council. Some fund raising has been undertaken by the Group, including a Pimms tent fundraiser (£1,200) and an afternoon tea party (£500).</p> <p>The Group has advised that it holds service delivery contracts within Berkshire and that the funding requested from the Borough Council would be used exclusively for the clients from Woking. At present, the Group works with two clients from the Woking area. The applicant has advised that the funding from the Council would enable the Group to work with 40 residents of the Borough during the funding period. Due to the multiple and complex needs of the individuals attending the courses, the Group has found that by running small bespoke courses it can achieve successful outcomes for the individuals.</p> <p>Since 2016, the Group has run a total of twelve courses, comprising six courses in both Surrey and Berkshire. In total 48 individuals from across Surrey attended the courses with the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 gained start-up support for their own business. - 8 received volunteer placements. - 15 obtained a job interview. - 9 gained employment. <p>1-2-1 support outcomes from the work undertaken included three clients supported with housing issues, ten clients supported with housing benefit issues, twelve clients supported with debt issues and</p>

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four victims of domestic abuse supported.

The application represents a significant contribution towards the running costs of the Group in order to run a course specifically for residents from the Borough of Woking. Whilst the amount of funding requested has been broken down, with the majority covering staffing costs of the Project Manager, the budget for the Group as a whole is unclear, identifying only the expenditure of staffing costs of £40,000 (against grant income of £175,000).

It is not felt that the proposals submitted by Browns Community Services CIC connect with the existing work of the Council and it is therefore recommended that the application is not supported.

REPORT ENDS