

HUNGARIAN SCHOOL WOKING – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Executive Summary

The Hungarian School Woking has been providing its Saturday school to the local community since 2015, with an increasing number of families bringing their children to its sessions, so that the children can learn the Hungarian language and develop understanding of their cultural heritage. The aims of the Group include creating a strong community of Hungarian families within the Borough, whilst also enabling an environment where they can meet and network with others.

The Group struggles to find volunteers and keep them within the organisation. Following consultation with other Saturday schools, it is seeking to reimburse volunteer expenses and provide discounts for children whose families find it hard to pay its membership fees.

The Hungarian School Woking looks to be a well run organisation working to provide tangible benefits to families from Hungary living in the Borough. The Group has applied for funding of £3,240 towards the cost of its venue hire (18 sessions at £180) at the United Reformed Church, Woking.

There are stated to be 199 members, however as the consultee comments state, only 25% of this number reside within Woking. It is noted that the budget submitted for 2020/21 sets out a small projected deficit of £160 with circa £7,000 being collected from membership fees, and that if the grant was approved it would be likely that the funding would be expected to continue in future years. Therefore it is recommended that no grant be awarded.

However, if the Group wished to explore the possibility of being able to provide further discounts who were struggling to pay its membership fees, it could liaise with the Council's Funding Officer to establish possible sources of external funding which may be able to assist.

Recommendations

The Executive is requested to:

RESOLVE That no grant be awarded.

Reason for Decision

It is not felt that the organisation has provided sufficient justification for a grant award within its application.

The Executive has authority to determine the above recommendations.

Background Papers:

2020/21 Application Form.

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Hungarian School Woking – Application For Financial Assistance

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Hungarian School Woking – Application For Financial Assistance

1.0 Summary of Application	
1.1 Status and Aims	The Hungarian School Woking was formed in 2014 for the public benefit of Hungarian families or those with Hungarian background; and the advancement of education of their children by organising a Saturday school where families can meet and practice the Hungarian language, keep their cultural heritage, and learn about their history, literature and folklore traditions.
1.2 Employees	None.
1.3 Volunteers	20. The volunteers carry out the work necessary to run the Saturday school including: communication with families belonging to the school; working out the curriculum for each school year; running sessions for six age groups of children; purchasing materials for arts and crafts sessions; organising four annual events for the public; taking care of finance and bank reconciliation; and organising informative sessions for parents.
1.4 Clients/Users	See below.
1.5 Members	<p>199, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80 male 119 female 3 disabled 192 ethnic minority 51 resident in Woking 35 aged 0-5 45 aged 6-10 4 aged 11-18 115 aged 19-65 <p>Annual Fee of £180 per child, 10% discount after second child (£162), 20% off after third child (£144). Of the 199 members, only 84 are aged under 18, giving a potential income through fees of £15,000 p.a.</p> <p>Some families cannot afford to pay the full fee per child and the Group is keen for all Hungarian families to be able to bring their children to its school sessions, and therefore offers discounts of interest free instalments agreed on a case by case basis.</p>
1.6 Sum Requested	£3,240 (Revenue)
1.7 Project	The Group has applied for funding towards its main expenditure of rent for its meetings held at United Reformed Church Woking. The cost is stated to be covered by the membership fees, however the Group cannot currently reimburse its volunteers with their costs such as travel, or provide families in need with further discounts to help them attend the school sessions. The grant is therefore sought towards the cost of rental hire, which would enable the School to pay its volunteers' expenses associated with their work and also offer

Hungarian School Woking – Application For Financial Assistance

	membership discounts to families in need.
1.8 Cost breakdown:	18 school days are held annually (two per month during school terms), with the rental cost of each session being £180. Therefore the total cost, and grant applied for, is £3,240.
1.9 Community Benefit	The Group notes that all of its volunteers would benefit from the extra funding through reimbursement of travel costs and occasional expenses towards their work for the school. There would also be a more stable organisation in operation as a result.

2.0 Financial Background	
2.1 Budget	<p>At the time of the application, the Group held £9,602 in the bank. The sum of £7,686 is reserved for a week of Holiday Club organised for October 2019.</p> <p>The Group has submitted a budget for 2020/21 which shows an anticipated income of £9,200 against an anticipated expenditure of £9,040, resulting in an anticipated deficit of £160.</p> <p>Anticipated income includes Membership fees (£7,200), Donations (£1,000) and Public / fundraising events (£1,000). Items of expenditure include Venue Hire (£3,240), Folkdance, arts and crafts, other sessions (£3,000), Insurance and internet (£1,000), Presents (£600), Books (£500), Workshops (£500) and Other (£200).</p>
2.2 Accounts	The Group has submitted accounts for 2018/19 which show an income of £10,207 against expenditure of £10,520, resulting in a deficit of £313. The sum of £2,067 was carried forward at the end of the 2018/19 year.
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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes No No Yes Yes No No No No Yes

Hungarian School Woking – Application For Financial Assistance

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Two quotes ○ Regular monitoring provided previously 	<p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>3.2 Consultee Comments</p>	<p><u>Refeia Zaman, Senior Policy Officer</u></p> <p>The Hungarian School Woking provides a Saturday school for children to enable them to learn the Hungarian language and about their cultural heritage, history, literature and folklore traditions. They have requested £3,240, which will contribute toward running costs, mainly volunteer expenses and to enable them to provide subsidised classes for those facing financial difficulty. As currently only 25% of users are Woking residents and this is a new application I would not support the application.</p>	
<p>3.3 Assessment</p>	<p>The Hungarian School Woking has been serving the local community with its Saturday school since 2015 and has an increasing demand from families to bring its children to the sessions, so that the children can learn the Hungarian language and discover their cultural heritage. It also aims to create a rich and vibrant community of Hungarian families within the Borough and an environment where they can make new friends, share values, discuss problems and find happiness.</p> <p>The Group struggles to find volunteers to assist with its work and also has difficulty in keeping them within the organisation. Following consultation with other Saturday schools, it is looking at the option of reimbursing volunteer expenses and providing discounts for children whose families are finding it hard to pay the membership fees.</p> <p>It should be noted that the Group has not sought funding from any other bodies other than Woking Borough Council, however three public events have been organised: the Autumn Harvest Fair, the Christmas Fair and Children’s Day. The application notes that the events tend to break-even, however the money remaining after paying all the costs such as hiring venues is used to fund the School. Donations of £650 were received in the 2018/19 financial year.</p> <p>The available bank balance of the Group is circa £2,000 after the deduction of ringfenced monies of £7,700 reserved for a Holiday Club in October 2019. The Annual Membership Fees are on a tapered scale depending on the number of children within a family, starting at £180 per child. The Group states that discounts can be offered on a case by case basis to those families who would struggle to pay the membership fees.</p> <p>The Hungarian School Woking looks to be a well-run organisation working to provide tangible benefits to families from Hungary living in the Borough to meet and socialise, whilst providing their children with an opportunity to develop their language and cultural skills through activities such as arts and crafts sessions and folkdance.</p> <p>The funds applied for equate to £3,240 towards the venue hire (18 sessions at £180) at the United Reformed Church, Woking. There are stated to be 199 members of whom only 84 are aged 18 or under, however as the consultee comments state, only 25% of this number reside within Woking. It is noted that the budget submitted for 2020/21 sets out a small projected deficit of £160 with circa £7,000 being collected from membership fees, and that if the grant was approved it would be likely that the funding would be expected to continue in future years. Therefore it is recommended that no grant</p>	

Hungarian School Working – Application For Financial Assistance

be awarded.

However, if the Group wished to explore the possibility of being able to provide further discounts who were struggling to pay its membership fees, it could liaise with the Council's Funding Officer to establish possible sources of external funding which may be able to assist.

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