

**SIGHT FOR SURREY – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

**Executive Summary**

The Surrey Association for Visual Impairment works under the name of Sight for Surrey. Sight for Surrey works with blind and partially sighted people in Surrey, providing services to enable people to lead fuller, more independent lives. Services include rehabilitation work, children’s services, home visiting, benefits advice and a resource centre through which items can be purchased to assist people with visual impairment.

The Organisation has applied for revenue funding towards three of its services – the Swimming Event for Children and Young People (£350), Mobile Sight and Hearing Bus (£450) and Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (£2,500). The total funding requested is therefore £3,300.

The Swimming Event would enable children who have a visual impairment to enjoy the facilities at the Pool in the Park with their families outside of a general public session, as Sight for Surrey has proposed that it hires the pool for a 2-3 hour period. Taking into account the consultee comments, the Council has contacted Freedom Leisure which advised that the Group has initiated discussions directly, and anticipates that it will be able to assist. In addition, Sight for Surrey could submit an application to the Council’s Small Grants Scheme which awards up to £500. On this basis, it is not felt that funding should be awarded from the Community Grants Scheme.

The Mobile Sight and Hearing Bus service has been running for six years and was introduced to reach more visually impaired people who could not travel to the offices of Sight for Surrey. The bus regularly visits community and day centres, care homes and clubs for the elderly, visually and hearing impaired, and provides a presence at events. The consultee comments state that the Bus regularly visits three of the Council’s Community Centres and alleviates pressure on the local GP surgeries and pharmacies. It is recommended that the funding of £450 requested towards the service be awarded.

The Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO) facilitates emotional and practical support from diagnosis and treatment of a sight or a combined sight and hearing impairment. The application includes a request for funding towards an ECLO attending a full day’s clinic at St. Peter’s Hospital for six months or a half day’s clinic for a year. The consultee comments state that it is difficult to determine the number of patients benefitting who live in Woking. It is recommended that this portion of the grant request should not be supported.

Accordingly, it is recommended that funding of £450 be awarded towards the work of the Mobile Sight and Hearing Bus in Woking. In addition, it should be noted that Sight for Surrey is liaising with Freedom Leisure regarding the proposed Swimming Event for children and young people who have a visual impairment.

**Recommendations**

The Executive is requested to:	<b>RESOLVE That</b> funding of £450 be awarded towards the work of the Mobile Sight and Hearing Bus in Woking.
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Reason for Decision	To enable residents in Woking who have a visual impairment to benefit from the visits of Sight for Surrey at nearby locations within the Borough.
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Legal Authority	S142 Local Government Act 1972 S111 Local Government Act 1972
Conditions	<p><b>Accounts.</b> The Organisation must submit accounts for the year in which the grant is awarded, including an income and expenditure account and balance sheet. Please note that accounts for other years may also be required.</p> <p><b>Monitoring Information.</b> The Organisation must submit quarterly monitoring information as a measure of its achievements. Failure to provide details will jeopardise the award. E-mail requests will be sent to the applicant on a quarterly basis.</p> <p><b>Publicity.</b> Where possible, the Organisation is required to publicise the support received from Woking Borough Council, including on websites and literature / leaflets produced.</p> <p><b>Payments.</b> Unless exceptional circumstances exist all invoices must be received quarterly with monitoring information for the previous quarter.</p> <p><b>Payment Period.</b> Final quarter claims must be made by the second week in April. Unclaimed awards will not be available at a later date unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated to the Council before the end of the award year.</p> <p><b>Joint Working.</b> WBC expects the Organisation to engage positively on health and wellbeing multi-agency joint work affecting Woking. Groups which refuse may place their Council support at risk, e.g. grant, concessionary rent and other assistance.</p> <p><b>Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.</b> Following the introduction of new legislation from April 2018, the Council expects the support of partner agencies in identifying people at risk of homelessness as early as possible to maximise the opportunities to prevent such. Partner agencies / organisations are expected to be engaged in joint working arrangements to assist in finding suitable housing and support solutions, and where appropriate to undertake and respond to the new 'duty to refer'. Groups which do not support this new legislation and way of working positively may put their Council support at risk.</p>
Performance Indicators	<p><b>Users.</b> The Organisation to provide a breakdown of the users.</p> <p><b>Activities.</b> The Organisation to provide details of activities and events held.</p> <p><b>Publicity.</b> The Organisation to advise how the Council's support has been publicised.</p> <p><b>Statement of Use.</b> The Organisation to provide a statement stating the use to which the grant money has been put.</p>
Future Support	<p>The financial pressure on the Council's budgets is expected to continue in the coming years and accordingly the overall level of support available in future years may be reduced. The applicant is therefore to be advised that the award of funding for 2020/21 does not imply that a similar application in 2021/22 would be supported. In particular, it is emphasised that the Council is unlikely to be in a position to award any sums above the 2020/21 levels.</p>

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In view of this, the applicant is to be advised to ensure that contingency plans for the Group's operations for 2021/22 have been drawn up in the event that the Council is unable to continue its support beyond April 2021. All applicants are strongly recommended to pursue alternative sources of funding and are encouraged to approach Woking Borough Council's Community Support Team for advice and support.

**The Executive has authority to determine the above recommendations.**

### **Background Papers:**

2020/21 Application Form.

### **Reporting Person:**

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### **Contact Person:**

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### **Portfolio Holder:**

Cllr Ayesha Azad  
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### **Shadow Portfolio Holder:**

Cllr Will Forster  
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### **Date Published:**

18 February 2020

## **Sight for Surrey – Application For Financial Assistance**

## Sight for Surrey – Application For Financial Assistance

<b>1.0 Summary of Application</b>	
1.1 Status and Aims	<p>Sight for Surrey was formed in 1922 and offers a lifetime of support to people who are blind or partially sighted, deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing. Its mission is to support people to overcome their day to day challenges, achieve their potential and lead an independent life.</p> <p>It is the largest charitable organisation in Surrey working with adults, young people and children who have such a disability. Every year it is contracted to help more than 7,500 registered adults and children, providing them with assessment, rehabilitation and life skills to enable them to live full and independent lives. 80% of the service users are over 65 years old.</p> <p>Sight for Surrey offers a holistic, person-centred approach, focused on meeting the needs of each adult/young person/child and providing support for their families. Its charitable activities include Volunteering Support, ICT, Communication Class, Eye Clinic Liaison Officer, Low Vision Aids and Gadgets, Assessment and Training for Computers, Mobile Sight and Hearing Bus, Outreach Service and a Children and Young People's Inclusion Programme.</p>
1.2 Employees	121, divided into the following departments: Adult Services, Children's Service, Fundraising, Finance and Administration.
1.3 Volunteers	<p>123.</p> <p>Sight for Surrey's volunteers help to increase the awareness and understanding of the organisation, and add value to the services provided. There are a range of volunteer opportunities with varying amounts of time and input required, for example drivers, home visitors, virtual befrienders, IT support, sighted guides, fundraisers and admin support.</p> <p>Many of the volunteers have a vision impairment themselves and nearly half have been with the Group for over 10 years. All volunteers are DBS checked, receive training and visit the Group's Low Vision Resources Centre. Volunteers are offered out of pocket expenses, an update on volunteer's news and local support meetings twice a year.</p>
1.4 Clients/Users	<p>7,542, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2,833 male</li> <li>4,709 female</li> <li>7,542 disabled</li> <li>605 ethnic minority</li> <li>632 resident in Woking</li> <li>8 aged 0-5</li> <li>6 aged 6-10</li> <li>14 aged 11-18</li> <li>153 aged 19-65</li> <li>451 aged 65+</li> </ul>

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	<p>Users have access to the following services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchasing of sight and hearing equipment aids from the Resource Centre</li> <li>• Paying for Communicator Guide Services (for those with a combined sight / hearing loss)</li> <li>• Paying for an Interpreter (mainly hearing impairment) to help out at meetings, appointments and social activities).</li> </ul> <p>Users receive a bi-annual Charity newsletter containing sight and hearing impaired news. They are mailed at other times in the year with information on events, fundraising news and volunteering opportunities.</p>
1.5 Members	N/A
1.6 Sum Requested	£3,300 (Revenue)
1.7 Project	<p>Sight for Surrey has applied for funds towards three initiatives which benefit sight / hearing impaired residents in Woking.</p> <p><u>Children and Young People Programme (CYPS) - £350 requested</u></p> <p>Sight for Surrey provides early intervention services for those aged 0-18 years old who have a vision impairment or multi-sensory impairment. Its Inclusion Programme supports self-esteem / emotional resilience / confidence, giving the young people being assisted chances to try new experiences that their sighted peers take for granted. This helps to address issues such as bullying, mental ill health, and difficult family circumstances. The programme offers a wide range of social, leisure, careers activities and training such as gymnastics, horse-riding, ice-skating, craft activities, theatre trips, family days, cooking etc. The Charity runs 2-3 activities a month, mostly 2-3 hours long although some lasting the full day and focused on the whole family.</p> <p>The Charity would like the Council to fund a Swimming Event to be held at Woking Leisure Centre, a family event for around 50-70 participants. The grant would cover the hire of the pool and the flumes exclusively for Sight for Surrey children, young people and their families for a session of 2-3 hours. The benefit to the users is there would be less crowding, less noise, less splashing and the children feel safer than during a public session. Most of the children would also not have experienced the flumes. Swimming as an activity helps to support health and wellbeing of these children and young people.</p> <p><u>Mobile Sight and Hearing Bus - £450 requested</u></p> <p>The Mobile Sight and Hearing Bus service carries a wide range of equipment for both vision and hearing impairments. Specially trained workers give advice and information and are able to sell the equipment. The majority of visits are to care homes, day centres and hospitals as well as supermarkets, libraries, high streets and events. The following visits are planned to Woking in the coming months: St Mary's Day Centre (Sept), Moorcroft Day Centre (Sept), and The Vyne Centre (Oct). On average 20-40 people are supported at each visit with equipment advice and repairs. The Group is seeking a grant to help continue the visits to Woking.</p>

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	<p><u>Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO) - £2,500 requested</u></p> <p>Sight for Surrey is seeking funding for its Eye Clinic Liaison Officer project, which provides the bridge from Health Service diagnosis and treatment to Social Care and support in the community and at home. The ECLOs provide the emotional and practical support for those who are diagnosed with a sight impairment or combined sight / hearing impairment. The service ensures people receive early intervention and access to emotional support following a diagnosis. Three ECLOs deliver the service at 12 eye clinics at 6 hospitals across Surrey. Residents from Woking are often referred to St Peter's Hospital where Sight for Surrey's ECLO supports medical and nursing staff for one day a week in the eye clinic throughout the year.</p> <p>The ECLO makes referrals to Sight for Surrey's Specialist Sensory Workers / Rehabilitation Workers / Habilitation Specialists (for children and young people). These professionals are trained to assess needs, prescribe equipment and train people who have significant vision impairment to learn different strategies for undertaking daily tasks without vision. Last year 100 Woking residents were supported through this service.</p>
1.8 Cost breakdown:	<p>Children and Young People Programme – £350 is the cost of hiring the swimming facilities at Woking Leisure Centre.</p> <p>Mobile Sight and Hearing Bus – £450 contribution to supporting service users and those new to us in Woking.</p> <p>Eye Clinic Liaison Officer – £2,500 will pay for the ECLO to attend a full day's clinic once a week for 6 months or half a day's clinic for a year at St Peter's Hospital. (The full cost for the year is £5,450.)</p>
1.9 Community Benefit	<p>Sight for Surrey anticipates that more than 100 people will benefit from the ECLO service as not only are those diagnosed with a sight/hearing loss being supported, but also indirectly their friends, family and carers.</p> <p>The Group expects that 40-60 will benefit from the CYPS swimming event. These will include the sight impaired children but also their parents and siblings.</p> <p>The mobile sight and hearing bus regularly support 20-30 people on each visit, with the Group planning 4-6 visits to Woking in the coming year.</p>

<b>2.0 Financial Background</b>	
2.1 Budget	<p>At the time of the application, the Group held £500,000 in the bank. The Charity aims to hold no less than £480,000 to cover its calculated contingency requirements.</p> <p>The Group has submitted a high level budget for 2020/21 which shows an anticipated income of £2,565,000 against an anticipated expenditure of £2,730,000, resulting in an anticipated deficit of £165,000.</p>
2.2 Accounts	The Group has submitted accounts for 2018/19 which show an

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	income of £2,374,464 (£2,452,143 in 2017/18) against expenditure of £2,501,055 (£2,407,570 in 2017/18), resulting in a deficit of £126,591 (a surplus of £44,573 in 2017/18). The sum of £1,222,437 was carried forward at the end of the 2018/19 year.
2.3 Support over the past five years	2019/20 – £2,460 towards outreach and Mobile Sight and Hearing Bus 2016/17 – £7,700 towards outreach and communication class

<b>3.0 Assessment of Application</b>																									
3.1 Key Information	<table border="0"> <tr><td>○ Constitution</td><td>Yes</td></tr> <tr><td>○ Registered Charity</td><td>Yes</td></tr> <tr><td>○ VAT Registered</td><td>Yes</td></tr> <tr><td>○ Equal Opportunities Policy</td><td>Yes</td></tr> <tr><td>○ Safeguarding Policy</td><td>Yes</td></tr> <tr><td>○ Reserves Policy</td><td>Yes</td></tr> <tr><td>○ Quality Mark</td><td>No</td></tr> <tr><td>○ Other funding sources pursued</td><td>Yes</td></tr> <tr><td>○ Other support by the Council</td><td>No</td></tr> <tr><td>○ Fundraising</td><td>Yes</td></tr> <tr><td>○ Two quotes</td><td>N/A</td></tr> <tr><td>○ Regular monitoring provided previously</td><td>N/A</td></tr> </table>	○ Constitution	Yes	○ Registered Charity	Yes	○ VAT Registered	Yes	○ Equal Opportunities Policy	Yes	○ Safeguarding Policy	Yes	○ Reserves Policy	Yes	○ Quality Mark	No	○ Other funding sources pursued	Yes	○ Other support by the Council	No	○ Fundraising	Yes	○ Two quotes	N/A	○ Regular monitoring provided previously	N/A
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3.2 Consultee Comments	<p><u>Jade Buckingham, Health and Wellbeing Manager</u></p> <p>The funding request is for 3 separate activities. I recommend that part of the grant is awarded to support the Mobile Sight and Hearing Bus, £450. I recommend that we do support this part of the requested funding as I know it is highly used by our residents and it does help to alleviate pressures on the GP Surgeries and pharmacies as it provides residents with an alternative to get equipment advice and repairs. The bus regularly visits 3 of our day centres and it is well used. It would be detriment to our residents if this service stopped operating in Woking.</p> <p>I however am not in support of providing funding (£350 requested) to support the Children &amp; Young People’s programme for swimming pool hire. I’d recommend they have conversations directly with Woking Leisure Centre, alongside our Sports Development Officer to establish whether they are able to offer anything in kind etc.</p> <p>I am also suggesting to not to support of the Eye Clinic Liaison Officer funding request (£2500). We do not know how many Woking residents would benefit from this service as it is based out of St Peters hospital plus 5 other hospitals in Surrey. They have also already secured £20k of funding and waiting on an additional 8 funding applications.</p>																								
3.3 Assessment	Sight for Surrey works with blind and partially sighted people in Surrey, providing services to enable people to lead fuller, more independent lives. Services include rehabilitation work, children’s																								

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services, home visiting, benefits advice and a resource centre through which items can be purchased to assist people with visual impairment.

Around 630 active service users in Woking are supported through a range of services. By continuing and expanding its projects it can continue to work in partnership with local organisations and provide a deeper level of service support to existing users, whilst identifying and engaging with relevant individuals currently not accessing its services.

The Organisation has applied for revenue funding towards three of its services – the Swimming Event for Children and Young People (£350), Mobile Sight and Hearing Bus (£450) and Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (£2,500). The total funding requested is £3,300.

The Swimming Event would enable children who have a visual impairment to enjoy the facilities with their families outside of a general public session as Sight for Surrey has proposed that it hires the pool for a 2-3 hour period. The application notes that the children would feel safer in this environment, included as part of the Group's wider Children and Young People Programme, which helps address issues such as bullying and mental health. Taking into account the consultee comments, the Council's Sports Development Officer has contacted Freedom Leisure which advised that Sight for Surrey has initiated discussions directly, and anticipates that it will be able to help. The organisation could also apply for funding from the Council's Small Grants Scheme which considers awards up to a maximum of £500. On this basis, it is not felt that funding should be awarded from the Community Grants Scheme.

The Mobile Sight and Hearing Bus service has been running for six years and was introduced to reach more visually impaired people who could not travel to the offices of Sight for Surrey. The bus regularly visits community and day centres, care homes and clubs for the elderly, visually and hearing impaired, and provides a presence at events. The consultee comments state that the Bus regularly visits three of the Council's Community Centres and alleviates pressure on the GP surgeries and pharmacies. It is recommended that the funding of £450 requested towards the service be awarded.

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REPORT ENDS