

**WEST SURREY MEDIATION SERVICE – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

**Executive Summary**

West Surrey Mediation Service was set up in 1996 originally under the name Woking Community Mediation Service, and since April 2017 has expanded its operation to the wider West Surrey area. The Group provides help in resolving disputes between neighbours and within communities, contributing towards the reduction of anti-social behaviour and increasing the quality of life for residents of the Borough, whilst reducing demands on statutory enforcement agencies.

The Service aims to help neighbours find solutions to difficulties which suit all the parties involved without the need for the involvement of statutory services or enforcement agencies. Disagreements can be sorted out quickly and confidentially, without the expense and trouble of going to Court. The mediators are impartial and have no formal or legal authority and represent no official body. They are well trained and experienced, and willing to attend lectures and extra training to support work with specific members of the community, younger or older people, and those with mental health issues.

The main areas of dispute are in relation to noise and anti-social behaviour, with around 20-25 new cases taken on each year. Over the past year, around 220 people residing in the areas served by the Group are stated to have made use of the service with no charge levied, with just over half based in Woking. The Group notes that although it may help two families in a neighbourhood directly, the indirect effects may be felt more widely in the surrounding area. Some mediations may only involve two or three people but may have a deep and lasting consequence for a person involved, for example an elderly person feeling vulnerable and threatened in their home may feel happier and supported after mediation and able to stay in their own home and community for longer. Not all the cases can be resolved successfully if one party refuses to mediate or there is no agreement established.

The Group has applied to continue its funding of £4,000 towards the running costs of the mediation service provided to residents of the Borough. It is recommended that the Council's support of £4,000 continues for the 2020/21 financial year.

**Recommendations**

The Executive is requested to:	<b>RESOLVE That</b> a grant of £4,000 be awarded towards the running costs of the service.
Reason for Decision	To enable the mediation service to be available for residents of the Borough.
Legal Authority	S142 Local Government Act 1972 S111 Local Government Act 1972
Conditions	<b>Accounts.</b> The Organisation must submit audited 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.

## West Surrey Mediation Service – Application For Financial Assistance

**Monitoring Information.** 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.

**Publicity.** Where possible, the Organisation is required to publicise the support received from Woking Borough Council, including on all literature and leaflets produced.

**Payments.** Unless exceptional circumstances exist all invoices must be received quarterly with details of the costs incurred and monitoring information for the previous quarter.

**Payment Period.** Final quarter claims must be made by the second week in March. 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.

**Joint Working.** 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.

**Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.** With the introduction of new legislation from April 2018, the council will expect 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 will be 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.

**Venue Hire.** Woking Borough Council has a duty to ensure that publicly-owned venues and resources do not provide a platform for extremists and are not used to disseminate extremist views. This duty extends to organisations that work with the local authority so this includes recipients of any grants from Woking Borough Council. If you hire out your venue/s you should ensure you have good processes in place for record keeping and checking if they are an appropriate group to be making the hire arrangements. The following are some of what should be considered:

- Basic details should be recorded to include speakers address, mobile phone number & organisation details.
- Has the identity of the speaker been confirmed & is their organisation bona fide? Are they known to you?
- Is the speaker from the area? Are they UK citizens or from overseas & will they travel specifically for this event?
- Consider checks on the internet to confirm the status of speaker to include website, YouTube or social media sites.
- How many people are likely to attend (check previous or similar events either locally or online).

Performance Indicators

**Users.** The Organisation to provide a breakdown of the users in the past quarter.

**Publicity.** The Organisation to advise how the Council's support has been publicised over the last quarter.

## West Surrey Mediation Service – Application For Financial Assistance

	<b>Statement of Use.</b> The Organisation to provide a statement stating the use to which the grant money has been put.
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> <p>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.</p>

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

### Background Papers:

2020/21 Application Form.

### Reporting Person:

Ray Morgan, Chief Executive  
Extn: 3333, Email: ray.morgan@woking.gov.uk

### Contact Person:

Frank Jeffrey, Democratic Services Manager  
Extn: 3012, Email: frank.jeffrey@woking.gov.uk  
Doug Davern, Democratic Services Officer  
Extn: 3018, Email: doug.davern@woking.gov.uk

### Portfolio Holder:

Cllr Ayesha Azad  
Email: Cllrayesha.azad@woking.gov.uk

### Shadow Portfolio Holder:

Cllr Will Forster  
Email: cllrwill.forster@woking.gov.uk

### Date Published:

18 February 2020

**West Surrey Mediation Service – Application For Financial Assistance**

## West Surrey Mediation Service – Application For Financial Assistance

<b>1.0 Summary of Application</b>									
1.1 Status and Aims	<p>West Surrey Mediation Service (WSMS) was formed from the merger of the Woking and Guildford Services at the beginning of April 2017. Both of these organisations had been in existence for about 20 years previously, and the Woking Service had been funded by grants from Woking Borough Council, as was the West Surrey Service last year.</p> <p>The Group's aims are to help neighbours who are in dispute with each other. They provide an independent, impartial and confidential mediation service, dealing with issues like noise, boundary disputes, parking and anti-social behaviour.</p>								
1.2 Employees	N/A								
1.3 Volunteers	<p>51 total 23 male 28 female 5 ethnic minority</p> <p>Generally the volunteers mediate disputes between neighbours, communities and families, arranging and attending meetings, and all volunteers help in advertising, marketing and co-ordinating with stakeholders. There is also a volunteer treasurer.</p>								
1.4 Clients/Users	<p>220, comprising: 90 male 130 female 35 disabled 45 ethnic minority 120 resident in Woking 22 aged 11-18 78 aged 19-65 20 aged 65+</p> <p>No charges are levied to users of the Charity.</p>								
1.5 Members	N/A								
1.6 Sum Requested	£4,000 (Revenue)								
1.7 Project	The funding will be used to reimburse the Co-ordinator for expenses including the use of their home as an office, to pay for administrative costs including marketing materials, to pay for expenses associated with casework and to pay for training and CPD for mediators.								
1.8 Cost breakdown:	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">Admin</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£2,920</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Co-ordination Services</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£12,200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hall Hire</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£3,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Training</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£9,000</td> </tr> </table>	Admin	£2,920	Co-ordination Services	£12,200	Hall Hire	£3,000	Training	£9,000
Admin	£2,920								
Co-ordination Services	£12,200								
Hall Hire	£3,000								
Training	£9,000								

## West Surrey Mediation Service – Application For Financial Assistance

	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">Advertising</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£1,350</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Volunteers Expenses</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£1,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>AGM</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£750</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Insurance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£850</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total -</td> <td style="text-align: right; border-top: 1px solid black;">£31,070</td> </tr> </table>	Advertising	£1,350	Volunteers Expenses	£1,000	AGM	£750	Insurance	£850	Total -	£31,070
Advertising	£1,350										
Volunteers Expenses	£1,000										
AGM	£750										
Insurance	£850										
Total -	£31,070										
1.9 Community Benefit	<p>Not only are those who contact the Charity benefitting from its services, but also the wider community by mediating an issue that has an impact on other residents, particularly if the dispute has been longstanding. For example, mediating a parking matter might also ease an anti-social behaviour and noise issue in the surrounding area. West Surrey Mediation Service state that a high number of its referrals are from Woking Borough Council and that their services reduce demands on the Council and Surrey Police.</p> <p>West Surrey Mediation Service can have a deep and lasting positive impact on residents that have been supported after long-standing disputes.</p>										

<b>2.0 Financial Background</b>	
2.1 Budget	<p>At the time of the application, the Group held £33,785 in the bank. The sum of £9,000 is reserved for training new mediators.</p> <p>The Group has submitted a budget for 2020/21 which shows an anticipated income of £22,650 against an anticipated expenditure of £31,715, resulting in an anticipated deficit of £9,065.</p> <p>Anticipated income includes Surrey Police (£10,750), Guildford Borough Council (£4,000), Woking Borough Council (£4,000), Waverley Borough Council (£2,400) and Surrey Heath Borough Council (£1,500). Items of expenditure include Co-ordination services (£12,200), Training (£9,000), Expenses (£4,150), Admin (£2,450), Office (£2,315) and Publicity (£1,600).</p>
2.2 Accounts	<p>The Group has submitted accounts for 2018/19 which show an income of £19,468 against expenditure of £15,016, resulting in a surplus of £4,451. The sum of £33,785 was carried forward at the end of the 2018/19 year.</p>
2.3 Support over the past five years	<p>2019/20 – £4,000 towards general running costs</p> <p>2018/19 – £4,000 towards general running costs</p> <p>2017/18 – £4,000 towards general running costs</p> <p>2016/17 – £4,000 towards general running costs</p> <p>2015/16 – £4,000 towards general running costs</p>

<b>3.0 Assessment of Application</b>		
3.1 Key Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Constitution</li> <li>○ Registered Charity</li> <li>○ VAT Registered</li> </ul>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>No</p>

## West Surrey Mediation Service – Application For Financial Assistance

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Equal Opportunities Policy</li> <li>○ Safeguarding Policy</li> <li>○ Reserves Policy</li> <li>○ Quality Mark</li> <li>○ Other funding sources pursued</li> <li>○ Other support by the Council</li> <li>○ Fundraising</li> <li>○ Two quotes</li> <li>○ Regular monitoring provided previously</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yes</li> <li>Yes</li> <li>Yes</li> <li>No</li> <li>Yes</li> <li>No</li> <li>No</li> <li>N/A</li> <li>Yes</li> </ul>
<p>3.2 Consultee Comments</p>	<p><u>Elsbeth Andrews, Development Officer for Volunteer Woking</u></p> <p>West Surrey Mediation Service was established to attempt to resolve disputes between neighbours and instead promote community spirit and emotional wellbeing within communities, without the expense and trauma of going to court. The continued independent, impartial and confidential support the group delivers is of great benefits to not only the individuals but also the local community who may be affected by anti-social behaviour and the stress of an unhappy living environment.</p> <p>West Surrey Mediation Service has previously been funded by Woking Borough Council to support the service within the Woking Borough for Woking residents. Funding covers day to day administration and running costs of the organisation. It is my recommendation that the application for funding be approved to continue their work in the community.</p>	
<p>3.3 Assessment</p>	<p>Woking Community Mediation Service (now West Surrey Mediation Service) was set up in 1996 and provides help in resolving disputes between neighbours and within communities. The Group provides a highly cost effective means of improving the quality of life for the residents of Woking and reducing anti-social behaviour, thereby reducing demands on statutory enforcement agencies and Woking Borough Council.</p> <p>West Surrey Mediation Service works closely with Woking Borough Council with referrals made to the Group as appropriate. Regular contact continues to be made with Surrey Police, housing providers and Woking Borough Council's Environmental Health and Community Safety officers. In addition to its work dealing with community disputes, the Group is now being asked to assist with more specialised areas, working specifically with families and different ethnic minority groups. The Group also works in the area of homelessness prevention for young people within Surrey County Council's Family Support Service.</p> <p>The main areas of dispute are in relation to noise and anti-social behaviour, with around 20-25 new cases taken on each year. Over the past year, around 220 people residing in the areas served by the Group are stated to have made use of the service with no charge levied, with just over half based in Woking. The Group notes that although it may help two families in a neighbourhood directly, the indirect effects may be felt more widely in the surrounding area. Some mediations may only involve two or three people but may have</p>	

## West Surrey Mediation Service – Application For Financial Assistance

a deep and lasting consequence for a person involved, for example an elderly person feeling vulnerable and threatened in their home may feel happier and supported after mediation and able to stay in their own home and community for longer. Not all the cases can be resolved successfully if one party refuses to mediate or there is no agreement established.

The budget for 2020/21 sets out the income expected to be received from the following organisations: Guildford Borough Council, Surrey Heath Borough Council, Surrey Police and Woking Borough Council. In the current economic climate, many other funding avenues are becoming increasingly difficult to obtain and the applicant has advised that the Group is unable to reduce its future requirement for support from Woking Borough Council, noting that costs rise with the increasing number of cases being taken on.

The Mediation Service has been funded by the Council since its inception in 1996 and the service is free of charge to residents of the Borough. In Surrey, a county-wide comprehensive community mediation service has been established, and the Group collaborates with them to ensure training costs remain low. All Councils in Surrey now contribute towards their Mediation Service, as set out in the budget shown in paragraph 2.1, and it is considered a high priority on the Government's Community Remedy theme.

In view of the valued service provided by the Charity, it is recommended that the Council's support is continued into the coming year and that a grant of £4,000 is awarded for 2020/21.

REPORT ENDS