

BROWNS COMMUNITY SERVICES CIC – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Executive Summary

This is an application from a Group which supports the most vulnerable in society: men, women and young people with a history of offending, chaotic lifestyles and complex needs, substance use, mental health issues, domestic violence and long-term unemployment. The Group has developed bespoke packages of support to meet their specific needs and lead them towards brighter futures.

The application is for £10,000 to cover the costs of providing support to 20 families whose children have been victims of child exploitation. The support would be delivered for 52 weeks and funding from Woking Borough Council would allow the Group to support families on its waiting list and those waiting for a referral.

This is without doubt a valuable service across Berkshire and Surrey. The funding requested is to provide additional services in the Borough and should therefore be considered as a likely ongoing commitment for which funding would be needed from Woking Borough Council annually. In view of this, and taking into account the comments of the consultee and the limited funds available to the Council, it is recommended that the application is not supported.

Recommendations

The Executive is requested to:

RESOLVE That no funding be awarded.

Reason for Decision

The application has not demonstrated sufficient justification for the Council to enter into a new funding commitment for additional services in the Borough which would be likely to lead to an ongoing requirement for revenue funding by the Council.

The Executive has authority to determine the above recommendation.

Background Papers:

2020/21 Application Form.

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Date Published:

18 February 2020

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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 with the aim of supporting the most vulnerable in society: men, women and young people with a history of offending, chaotic lifestyles and complex needs, substance use, mental health issues, domestic violence and long-term unemployment. The Group has developed bespoke packages of support to meet their specific needs and lead them towards brighter futures.</p> <p>Each year, the Group works with over 120 disadvantaged adults and young people across Berkshire and Surrey through services including employment, counselling, community outreach, advice, guidance, and mentoring, and child exploitation. The application before the Executive deals with the child exploitation services (known as Rebuild).</p> <p>Rebuild works with children, young people, and parents together to positively impact their lives, helping them better manage crisis situations, gain greater control and stability over their lives, and make informed choices and decisions about their health, wellbeing and safety, reducing risks of further abuse.</p>
1.2 Employees	<p>8, comprising the CEO (37.5 hours), two support officers (Building Family Bridges) (37.5 hours), Project Support Officer (30 hours), Project Lead (37.5 hours), an Administrator (18 hours), a New Parents Support Officer (Roma and Traveller Community) (37.5 hours) and a Project Worker (37.5 hours).</p>
1.3 Volunteers	<p>35. The volunteers work across all services, carrying out different tasks and duties depending on the nature of the project itself, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing administrative support to project teams. • Acting as peer mentors to the people supported. • Supporting tutors in the delivery of courses (including the #intheknow online awareness raising course and employability courses). • Providing BACP accredited counselling (offered free for 26 weeks to those on the Rebuild project). <p>All volunteers receive training to carry out their roles successfully including Equality & Diversity and Safeguarding. They receive ongoing support and supervision from members of the project team and are paid for their travel and out-of-pocket expenses. For volunteers looking to move into paid employment, they are provided with the opportunity to apply for any paid role.</p>
1.4 Clients/Users	<p>155, comprising:</p> <p>70 male</p> <p>85 female</p>

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	<p>35 disabled</p> <p>20 ethnic minority</p> <p>9 resident in Woking, aged 19-65.</p> <p>The Group supports vulnerable, disadvantaged and hard-to-read adults, children and young people across Surrey and Berkshire. The majority of people supported have multiple and complex needs, including addictions, adult exploitation, chaotic lifestyles, child exploitation, debt/financial difficulties, domestic violence, poor diet/nutrition, poor physical and mental health, social isolation, substance use and unhealthy relationships.</p> <p>The children and young people supported through the Rebuild Project are vulnerable and face a range of issues including poverty, homelessness, exclusion from mainstream education, substance use, and mental ill health. Many come from families with chaotic home lives. Their parents often feel disenfranchised, unable to help their own children. As a result, they suffer from poor mental health and wellbeing and feelings of guilt and helplessness. Many struggle to maintain employment and relationships with family and friends.</p>
1.5 Members	None.
1.6 Sum Requested	£10,000 (Revenue)
1.7 Project	<p>The Group wants to provide support to 20 families whose children have been victims of child exploitation. The support will be delivered for 52 weeks and built around the family. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educating parents on what child exploitation is, the methods perpetrators use (e.g. drugs, alcohol, food and treats), and how it can be identified (e.g. changes in a child's behaviour). • Ways to reduce future risks to their child's safety, e.g. online awareness, including delivery of our #intheknow online awareness course. • Helping parents support children who may be suffering from the effects of trauma, e.g. PTSD, depression, flashbacks, self-harm, suicidal thoughts, or aggression. • 26 weeks free BACP accredited counselling to address feelings of self-blame, disempowerment, stress, anxiety and depression. • Developing self-care techniques and tools, including how to look after their mental health and wellbeing e.g. managing health conditions, eating well and sleep patterns. • Working with them to (re)learn life skills that increase their self-confidence and self-esteem, re-engage with their communities, reconnect with friends and family, and for parents who are unemployed, make positive steps towards employment. <p>It will be offered to parents, children and young people who have been affected by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child criminal exploitation • Child sexual exploitation

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- Trafficking
- Modern slavery
- Serious and organised crime
- Gangs

Support will be based on need and not time-bound and include emergency out-of-hours support as needed.

Each family member will develop a person-centred support plan and agree outcomes based on the Family Star Plus which looks at ten life domains including physical health, wellbeing, emotional needs, keeping children safe, social networks, education/learning, boundaries/behaviours, home, money and employment.

The Group will monitor the progress families make against the star as part of regular reviews (at least every six weeks). Outcomes will be mapped to KPIs agreed with Woking Borough Council and reviewed on a monthly basis. Action plans will address areas of under-performance. The Council will receive an end of project report but can request updates at any time.

As a result of the project:

- 75% of participants will improve their quality of life, e.g. ability to manage crisis situations, relationships, home life and mental health/wellbeing.
- 30% of participants will access the Group's free BACP-accredited counselling.
- 100% of participants will increase awareness of what child exploitation is and how to reduce the risks of children becoming victims.
- 50% of participants will access the Group's #InTheKnow online safety workshops.

80% of participants will improve their socio-economic situation by accessing education or training (including children returning to school) or maintaining or regaining employment.

1.8 Cost breakdown:

Staff Costs

1 x Part-time Rebuild Worker (in-post) salary including NI, pension etc.: £8,405.73. The Rebuild Worker will work 16 hours per week.

Requested amount £8,405.73.

Operational/activity costs

Delivery of 2 x 1 day #intheknow online safety workshops (venue hire, refreshments, materials): £366.27

Requested amount £366.27.

Office, overhead, premises costs

Staff Training as % of training budget: £60

Travel estimated at 25 miles per week @ 45p per mile: £540

IT support as % of IT budget to cover laptop, software, mobile phone: £100

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	<p>Mobile phone @ £34 per month: £408 Requested amount £1,108.00.</p> <p>Publicity costs £25 per month for first 6 months. Requested amount £150.</p> <p>Volunteer Costs The Group would cover the costs of volunteers, including training and expenses, estimated at £4,325.10 based on one volunteer working one day a week at the equivalent rate of £11.09 per hour.</p>
1.9 Community Benefit	<p>Under the proposals, the Group will work with 20 families in the Borough of Woking over the course of the year. Assuming the average family size is four people (two adults and two children), the Group estimates that it will work with 80 people.</p> <p>As support is designed around the individual as well as the family, each adult, child and young person will benefit in different ways. All will improve their quality of life reduce the likelihood of ongoing child exploitation. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved mental health and wellbeing and ability to manage crisis situations • Increased awareness of what child exploitation is and how to reduce risks • Increased awareness of how to remain safe online • Higher levels of school attendance • Reductions in the number of children going missing • Increased levels of employment, leading to financial security and reductions in debt • Improved family relationships <p>The Applicant has advised that these improvements will have a knock-on effect across the wider community. For example, as family relationships improve, the Group has seen reductions in instances of anti-social behaviour, which has led to improved relationships with neighbours.</p>

<h3>2.0 Financial Background</h3>	
2.1 Budget	<p>At the time of the application, the Group held £38,302.62 in the bank.</p> <p>The funds are reserved to cover staffing costs, operational costs (rents and rates), and project delivery (grants awards from other funders and ring-fenced for specific pieces of work). The Group maintains reserves to cover unforeseen costs/emergency expenditure, ensuring it can continue to operate. Reserves are also used to cover the costs of volunteers and to reinvest in service delivery where funding is insufficient.</p> <p>The Group has submitted a budget for 2020/21 which sets out the</p>

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applications of funding made and the confirmed funding awards. The Group has received funding from a number of sources to deliver its services including Berkshire Community Foundation, Thames Valley Police and the Safer Slough Partnership, the Big Lottery and Spelthorne Borough Council. The funding from Woking Borough Council would be used to support new clients.

Outside of grant applications, the Group does not carry out any fundraising activities.

The Group is looking to deliver Rebuild across Berkshire and Surrey in the long-term. The Group has put in place a plan to do this, including applying for funding from Woking Borough Council and other grants that will allow the Group to provide support to a growing number of families (approximately 75 a year in total). To show how successful its support is, the Group is developing an evidence base that includes costs savings to local authorities which will allow the Group to apply for larger, long-term, funding and expand the service. This project will help Browns Community Services CIC to gather the evidence needed to demonstrate the need for the service, and secure this larger scale funding, reducing the need to ask for ongoing support from Woking Borough Council.

2019/20 Funding

Rebuild Surrey Funding

Community Fund awarded £10,000 for Support Worker.
Spelthorne Borough Council awarded £1,000 for Project Manager.
Surrey PCC (£60,000) – not awarded.
Channel Foundation (£60,000) – not awarded.
Reducing Partnering Fund (£100,000) – not awarded.
Youth Endowment Fund (£3m) – Outcome awaited.

Rebuild Berkshire Funding

Slough YOT awarded £60,000.
Berkshire Community Foundation awarded £2,500 for Support Worker.

Building Family Bridges

Community Foundation and EU Funding of £150,000.

Counselling Services

Schroder Charity awarded £3,000 towards counselling.

Training Courses

The Prince Phillip Trust awarded £1,000.
Cala Homes awarded £1,000.
Tesco Bags awarded £2,000.
Santander Foundation (£5,000) – Outcome awaited.
Runnymede Borough Council (£10,000) – not awarded.

Intensive Support Services

Slough Borough Council and Thames Valley Police awarded £79,000 for the Project Lead.
Berkshire Community Foundation awarded £7,000 for the Support Worker.
Surrey PCC (£60,000 for Project management) – not awarded.
DWP (£25,000) – Outcome awaited.

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2.2 Accounts	<p>The Group has submitted accounts for 2018/19 which show an income of £132,773 (£66,520 in 2017/18) against expenditure of £152,125 (£47,173 in 2017/18), resulting in a deficit of £13,086 (a surplus of £19,347 in 2017/18).</p> <p>Grants of £82,083 were received during 2018/19, comprising West Berkshire Council (£9,300), Spelthorne Borough Council (£1,000), Runnymede Borough Council (£7,500), Workers Education Association* (£47,500), Thames Valley Police (£2,500), Liv Char and V (£1,000), Berkshire Community Foundation (£7,500), the Schroder Charity Trust (£783) and Elizabeth Fry** (£5,000).</p> <p>*Charity dedicated to bringing high-quality, professional education into the heart of communities.</p> <p>**Charity which provides support to women, mostly on licence from prison, who have a range of complex needs.</p>
2.3 Support over the past five years	<p>2018/19 – £15,000 requested to establish employment and self-employment courses targeting socially and economically disadvantaged households who are unemployed or on low income. The application was not supported (December 2017).</p>

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 No Yes Yes Yes Yes No Yes No No N/A N/A
3.2 Consultee Comments	<p><u>Adam Thomas, Family Support Manager</u></p> <p>Browns Community Services are requesting £10,000 of revenue funds. This is to cover the costs of staff supporting 20 families with children at risk of Child Exploitation. It is unclear if the money will support Woking families specifically as the service covers Berkshire and Surrey. The support, approaches and tracking are very similar to the work of the Family Support Programme. Due to current high levels of grant applications I do not feel that we are able to support this application at this time.</p>	

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3.3 Assessment

This is an application from a Group which supports the most vulnerable in society: men, women and young people with a history of offending, chaotic lifestyles and complex needs, substance use, mental health issues, domestic violence and long-term unemployment. The Group has developed bespoke packages of support to meet their specific needs and lead them towards brighter futures.

The application is for £10,000 to cover the costs of providing support to 20 families whose children have been victims of child exploitation. The support will be delivered for 52 weeks and built around the family. The Applicant has indicated that funding from Woking Borough Council would allow the Group to support families on its waiting list and those waiting for a referral.

Having delivered the Rebuild programme since 2017, the Applicant has advised that the Group can evidence how well the programme works, and that it delivers excellent value for money. To date, the Group has worked with 30 families (20 in Surrey and 10 in Berkshire). Referrals were received from the police, social workers, children's services and self-referral. Of the 30 families supported:

- 75% have seen an improvement in their quality of life
- 30% accessed free BACP-accredited counselling
- 15% sought help from their GP for their mental health problems
- 20% saw increased school attendance/a reduction in children going missing
- 40% returned to education
- 40% retained or found work.

The Applicant has advised that since 2001 reported cases of child sexual exploitation have increased locally and nationally. Surrey police began recording cases in 2014 and in the three years to 2017, 673 crimes involving CSE were reported.

When a child is identified as experiencing, or at risk of exploitation, multiple agencies quickly become involved in the care of that child and in keeping them safe. The Applicant has stated, however, that their families can become lost in this process, and agencies can lose sight of the fact that child exploitation impacts not just the child being exploited but the whole family. The need to support parents whose children are victims of CSE was recognised as early as 2009 by the Government, which drew attention to the psychological and practical implications for parents on both their wellbeing and their ability to appropriately deal with the needs of their child.

To ensure there is no duplication of work, the Group actively engages with the community, attending meetings, network events and forums. And, while not working in partnership to deliver this service, it was designed/developed with input from community-based groups and referral agencies (e.g. the police, family services and children's services).

This is without doubt a valuable service across Berkshire and Surrey. It is worth noting that the support, approaches and tracking are very similar to the work of the Council's Family Support Programme. The funding requested is to provide additional services in the Borough and should therefore be considered as a likely ongoing commitment

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for which funding would be needed from Woking Borough Council annually. The Council's funding for the voluntary sector, whilst substantial, has to be carefully managed to have the most significant impact for residents, recognising that the need for funding in the community far exceeds the budget available. In view of the likely ongoing nature of the funding requested, and taking into account the comments of the consultee and the limited funds available to the Council, it is recommended that the application is not supported.

REPORT ENDS