

THE LIGHTBOX – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Executive Summary

An application for capital support has been received from The Lightbox, Woking’s premier community arts and heritage organisation which seeks to improve the wellbeing and quality of life of the community through engagement with arts and heritage activity. It hosts widely accessible programmes in its building for visitors of all ages, staging exhibitions and activities throughout the year.

The Lightbox has applied for capital funding of £1,900 to cover the costs of the “Drawing for Adults” class that is held for two hours every fortnight and is free for participants to attend. The funds would go towards 20 new sketching stools to replace the stools purchased in 2007 as they are no longer fit for purpose, along with other equipment used during the sessions. Many participants have mental health issues and use the session time to reflect and find it very calming. It also provides important social interaction for all participants.

It is proposed that the application is supported however due to the amount of pressure on the grants scheme, Woking Borough Council cannot guarantee future funding. The Council’s criteria for capital awards state that capital awards will be limited to 50% unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated. In this case, it is not felt that there are exceptional circumstances to justify a contribution greater than 50% of the costs. However the total project cost is £2,400 and therefore it is recommended that a one-off grant of up to 50% of the costs and up to a maximum of £1,200 be awarded for sketching stools and other equipment for the “Drawing for Adults” session, subject to the standard conditions.

Recommendations

The Executive is requested to:	RESOLVE That a one-off grant of 50% of the costs of replacing the sketching stools is awarded up to a maximum of £1,200 from the Community Fund.
Reason for Decision	To support the learning programme established by the Lightbox.
Legal Authority	S19 (Misc. Provisions) Local Government Act 1976
Conditions	<p>Accounts. 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>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.</p> <p>Publicity. Where possible, the Organisation is required to publicise the support received from Woking Borough Council, including on websites and literature / leaflets produced.</p> <p>Payments. Unless exceptional circumstances exist all invoices must</p>

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	<p>be received quarterly with monitoring information for the previous quarter.</p> <p>Payment Period. 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>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.</p> <p>Invoices / Receipts. In order to claim an element of the funding, the Organisation must submit paid invoices or receipts relating to equipment purchased or services provided.</p> <p>Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. 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> <p>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 Groups hire out their venue(s) they should ensure good processes are in place for record keeping and checking if hirers are appropriate groups to be making the hire arrangements. The following are some areas which should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic details should be recorded to include speaker's address, mobile phone number and organisation details. • Has the identity of the speaker been confirmed and is their organisation bona fide? Are they known to the hirer? • Is the speaker from the area? Are they UK citizens or from overseas and will they travel specifically for this event? • Consider checks on the internet to confirm the status of speakers 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	<p>Publicity. The Organisation to advise how the Council's support has been publicised.</p> <p>Statement of Use. The Organisation to provide a statement stating the use to which the grant money has been put.</p>
Future Support	<p>The grant is based on a one-off award of capital funding. Any future applications will be considered on their own merits, taking into account the budgets available, the comments of consultees and the level of service provision.</p>

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The Executive has authority to determine the above recommendations.

Background Papers:

2020/21 Application Form.

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1.0 Summary of Application							
1.1 Status and Aims	<p>The Lightbox is a community arts and heritage organisation with a social purpose to improve the wellbeing and quality of life of its community through engagement with arts and heritage activity. It hosts widely accessible programmes in its building.</p> <p>The Lightbox has a history of working with the whole community to offer a diverse, high quality programme centred on the visual arts and local heritage. The Centre encourages exploration and learning through play for younger audiences, including under 5's activities and holiday workshops, whilst giving knowledge and allowing for experimentation for older audiences, including those living with dementia and isolated older people. The Centre works in partnership with Woking Borough Council to deliver arts and heritage services to promote a vibrant and healthy community.</p> <p>The Lightbox tells the story of the local community through a museum and stages 20 exhibitions a year in 3 galleries. The Lightbox has in 12 years become a central part of the life of the town.</p>						
1.2 Employees	21 including the Director, Officer manager, Schools Programme Coordinator, Development Manager, Learning and Engagement Officer and Exhibitions Manager.						
1.3 Volunteers	105, whose activities include front of house, education and engagement, administration, gardening, oral history / heritage, exhibitions and collections, events and marketing.						
1.4 Clients/Users	103,000. 76% of visitors are from within the Borough. The main Gallery and Upper Gallery are entered with a day pass (£7.50). The rest of the building, including the Museum, is free to enter.						
1.5 Members	405, comprising: 155 male 250 female						
1.6 Sum Requested	£1,900 (Capital)						
1.7 Project	The application is to fund equipment for the "Drawing for Adults" class. The session is held for two hours every fortnight and is free to attend. Many of the participants have mental health issues and use the time to reflect and relax whilst practising a skill, resulting in feeling more positive. It also provides important social intervention for the participants as there is a group discussion at the end of the session, to encourage friendships and connections – combating issues of loneliness and depression. All of the materials provided are free of charge which makes the class accessible for everyone.						
1.8 Cost breakdown:	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">20x Sketching stools (£104 each)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£2,080</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sketching equipment (2 per month for 12 months)</td> <td style="text-align: right;"><u>£320</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£2,400</td> </tr> </table>	20x Sketching stools (£104 each)	£2,080	Sketching equipment (2 per month for 12 months)	<u>£320</u>	Total	£2,400
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Sketching equipment (2 per month for 12 months)	<u>£320</u>						
Total	£2,400						
1.9 Community Benefit	All members of the community would be able to access this programme free of charge and therefore benefit from the project and						

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the majority of the participants are the elderly, those with mental health issues, the homeless and refugees. Members of the public visiting with younger families, visiting school groups and community groups and clubs such as cubs and brownies will also be able to use the sketching stools and materials on request. All will benefit by being able to use equipment which will enable them to spend time, sketch and immerse themselves in the calming environment of the gallery and to enjoy exhibitions and art works.

It was reported that the current sessions have approximately a 90% return rate from participants and many have been attending the sessions for up to three years.

2.0 Financial Background

2.1 Budget

At the time of the application, the Group held £550,000 in the bank. The sum includes a pre-paid amount for services to be delivered in 2019/20. Restricted funds of £486,000 and a long term reserve of £180,000 are included.

The Group has submitted a budget for its trading activities for 2020/21 which shows an anticipated income of £163,650 against an anticipated expenditure of £124,681, resulting in an anticipated surplus of £38,969. The Group has submitted a budget for its charitable activities for 2020/21 which shows an anticipated income of £704,561 against an anticipated expenditure of £725,690, resulting in an anticipated deficit of £21,129.

Anticipated income includes fundraising (£159,015), directorate (£427,000), exhibitions (£69,506), learning (£16,100), and warehouse facility (£14,900). Items of expenditure include directorate (£49,833), fundraising (£94,492), exhibitions (£153,721), and learning (£44,215), administration (£77,464, building (£130,782), warehouse facility (£48,442) and marketing (£118,898)

2.2 Accounts

The Group has submitted accounts for 2018/19 which show an income of £819,760 (£890,185 in 2017/18) against expenditure of £859,255 (£891,578 in 2017/18), resulting in a deficit of £39,495 (a deficit of £1,393 in 2017/18). The sum of £358,201 was carried forward at the end of the 2018/19 year.

2.3 Support over the past five years

2019/20 – £1,100

3.0 Assessment of Application

3.1 Key Information

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|------------------------------|-----|
| ○ Constitution | Yes |
| ○ Registered Charity | Yes |
| ○ VAT Registered | Yes |
| ○ Equal Opportunities Policy | Yes |

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Safeguarding Policy ○ Reserves Policy ○ Quality Mark ○ Other funding sources pursued ○ Other support by the Council ○ Fundraising ○ Two quotes ○ Regular monitoring provided previously 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>3.2 Consultee Comments</p>	<p><u>Elsbeth Andrews, Development Officer and Rose Blackley, Arts Development Officer</u></p> <p>The Lightbox is a community arts and heritage organisation in the centre of Woking with a social purpose to improve the wellbeing and quality of life of its community through engagement with arts and heritage activity. Having supported their project work with the York Road Project for Diwali, it is really good to see a project being run that the users of York Road Project can engage with. We would like to talk to, and work with them more about their work with Refugee families, with a view to displaying some work and promoting the sessions during the Refugee week celebrations. The Art and Wellbeing work reflects the Council’s priorities and cultural strategy and I can see this benefitting the well-being of local families. I would recommend we award a grant of £1,200 in order to continue their good work within the community.</p>	
<p>3.3 Assessment</p>	<p>The application before the Council has arisen as it has become evident that the quality of some of the equipment used during the “Drawing for Adults” session, such as sketching stools need replacing.</p> <p>The Lightbox has become one of Woking’s key attractions, with over 100,000 visitors each year. It provides a wide range of exhibitions and activities, building around the interaction between the arts and heritage. The Lightbox welcomes children from under five through primary education and secondary education and builds on the view that the early years up to age 8 are crucial to form habits for later in life. This element of Woking’s Story is one which provides a great deal of benefit to local schools and local families and fits well with the Council’s support for healthy living and benefits the well-being of local families.</p> <p>The Lightbox undertakes fundraising for all activities delivered for the community, with funding received through the membership scheme, from individual donors and from charitable trusts. The organisation is a charity serving the local community that operates on a very restricted budget that seeks each year to break even (as can be seen from the accounts). In order to further its work with the local community, the Lightbox has to fundraise to cover the costs of all activities delivered free to the community.</p> <p>The Lightbox works in partnership with a number of community organisations who support those in need of special services. The Centre also works with schools, sixth form colleges and universities. Major partners include Woking Mind, Alzheimer’s Society, Dementia UK, the York Road Project, all Woking primary and secondary</p>	

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schools, Woking Sixth Form College, local community groups and Woking Hospice.

It is recommended that the application is supported, though in accordance with the Council's criteria for capital awards the amount recommended is limited up to 50% of the costs. On the basis of the quotes received, it is proposed that a one-off grant of up to 50% of the costs of sketching stools and other equipment for the "Drawing for Adults" session is awarded up to a maximum of £1,200, subject to the standard conditions.

REPORT ENDS