

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.

Sight for Surrey has applied for £2,460 towards the costs of its Outreach Worker, Access Technology Trainer and Mobile Sight and Hearing Bus towards enhancing its service in the Borough. The Council previously funded Sight for Surrey in 2016/17 with the sum of £7,700 towards the costs of its Communication Class in Woking which took place during that year.

Regarding the outreach work, there are currently 625 active service users clients living in Woking. The purpose of the work is to give information, support and advice to clients to enable them to live as independently as possible. This is done through a network of volunteers who signpost people with a vision impairment to local services and support people newly diagnosed with a vision impairment. Many of the goals and aims of the project fits within Surrey's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy relating to physical activity, mental health, social isolation, on going independence and more transparent and joined up care. The Group launched its new 5 year strategy at the Lightbox in Woking on 25 September 2017.

The health benefits to the community of extending the outreach work taking place in Woking to enable vision impaired service users to access support are clear. It is therefore recommended that Sight for Surrey be awarded a grant of £2,460 during the 2018/19 financial year, noting that it would be restricted for work taking place in the Borough. It is recommended that a condition is added to seek closer working with Woking Borough Council's Independent Living Services and engagement with wider Woking Health and Wellbeing Network.

Recommendations

Reasons for Decision	To enable the services provided by Sight for Surrey to be enhanced for visually impaired service users in the Borough.
Legal Authority	S142 Local Government Act 1972 S111 Local Government Act 1972
The Executive is requested to:	RESOLVE That a grant of £2,460 be awarded towards the costs of enhancing the outreach work taking place in the Borough.
Conditions	Accounts. 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. 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

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	<p>the support received from Woking Borough Council, including on all literature and leaflets produced.</p> <p>Payments. Unless exceptional circumstances exist all invoices must be received quarterly with details of the costs incurred and monitoring information for the previous quarter.</p> <p>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.</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>In particular, the Group is requested to seek closer working with Woking Borough Council's Independent Living Services and engagement with wider Woking Health and Wellbeing Network.</p> <p>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.</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 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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	<p>Users. The Organisation to provide a breakdown of the users in the past quarter.</p> <p>Activities. The Organisation to provide details of activities and events held during the last quarter.</p> <p>Publicity. The Organisation to advise how the Council's support has</p>

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	<p>been publicised over the last quarter.</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 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 2018/19 does not imply that a similar application in 2019/20 would be supported. In particular, it is emphasised that the Council is unlikely to be in a position to award any sums above the 2018/19 levels.</p> <p>In view of this, the applicant is to be advised to ensure that contingency plans for the Group's operations for 2019/20 have been drawn up in the event that the Council is unable to continue its support beyond April 2019. 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:

2018/19 Application Form.

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1.0 Summary of Application	
1.1 Status and Aims	<p>Sight for Surrey was formed in 1922 and provides support to the blind and partially sighted community and (from February 2016) the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. It is the largest charitable organisation in Surrey working with adults, young people and children who have such a disability.</p> <p>Every year it is contracted to help more than 5,000 registered adults and children, providing them with assessment, rehabilitation and life skills to enable them to live full and independent lives. 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.</p> <p>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	<p>125.</p> <p>55 sessional staff (8 male) - operations staff from Rehabilitation, Children and Adult Services, Outreach and One to One Service.</p> <p>23 full-time staff (9 male) - specialist staff in equipment and technology, charity management and administration.</p> <p>47 part-time staff (3 male) - support and administration staff working across all departments.</p>
1.3 Volunteers	<p>207.</p> <p>Sight for Surrey's volunteers help to increase the awareness and understanding of the organisation, and add value to the services provided. They are crucial in the vision for the future and allow the Group to offer far more support and services to clients than with just staff members.</p> <p>The Group has 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. The volunteers come from all walks of life and many have a vision impairment themselves. Their ages range from teenagers to nonagenarians. Nearly half of the volunteers have been with the Group for over 10 years.</p> <p>The Group recruits its volunteers across Surrey but places them locally in their communities. All volunteers complete a registration form, provide two references and undertake a DBS check. All volunteers receive one day's training which introduces them to the work, common impairments, sighted guiding techniques along with the opportunity to practice them, and includes a visit to the 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>

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1.4 Clients/Users	<p>6,693, comprising:</p> <p>2,455 male</p> <p>4,238 female</p> <p>6,693 disabled</p> <p>360 ethnic minority</p> <p>625 resident in Woking</p> <p>7 aged 0-5</p> <p>13 aged 5-10</p> <p>10 aged 11-18</p> <p>143 aged 19-65</p> <p>452 aged 65+</p> <p>The One to One service users can privately book support workers to assist with specific appointments or events.</p>
1.5 Members	None
1.6 Sum Requested	£2,460 (Revenue)
1.7 Project	<p>With an ageing population, the need for the services Sight for Surrey provides will continue to grow and the Group would like to spend the grant in Woking as follows:</p> <p>Outreach Worker: The Group would like to further engage with existing service users and identify new clients. This role gives information, support and advice to clients to enable them to live as independently as possible; to support a network of volunteers; to signpost people with a vision or hearing impairment to local services; and to support people who are newly diagnosed. The grant would develop its existing work.</p> <p>Access Technology Trainer: The Group is able to offer computer, laptop, smart phone and tablet training with access to 1:1 sessions, either at its offices or in the home. It delivers advice and personalised training on smartphones & tablets enabling users of all ages to access built-in accessibility features, such as voice control, screen magnification and read-aloud software, and explore newly-developed apps and software designed for vision impaired people. This service currently offers support to more than 200 people each year, with more than 400 hours of contact time.</p> <p>Mobile Sight and Hearing Bus: The mobile 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.</p>
1.8 Cost breakdown:	<p>Outreach Worker - £1,560 broken down as 130 hours of outreach work at £12 per hour (including on costs) in Woking.</p> <p>Access Technology Trainer - £450 contribution to supporting service</p>

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	<p>users in Woking.</p> <p>Mobile Sight and Hearing Bus - £450 contribution to supporting service users and those new to the Group in Woking.</p>
1.9 Community Benefit	<p>Sight for Surrey currently has 625 active service users in the Woking area which has increased by 25 a year for the past two years. The Group estimates that this figure will continue to grow at a similar rate and there may well be more out there who are not yet familiar with its work. By continuing to be proactive, engaging and supportive at different venues it can help more vision impaired and deaf people. Its support is available to anyone in the Borough with these conditions and the benefits on offer are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to increase education and skills - to improve health (physical/mental/emotional/wellbeing) - to help tackle disadvantage and exclusion and reduce isolation - to offer support networks and access to relevant services.

2.0 Financial Background	
2.1 Budget	<p>At the time of the application, the Group held £205,921 in the bank. The sum of £12,408 is reserved for Revaluation Reserve and £30,000 for the Emergency Contingency Fund. The Group holds around six months of annual expenditure in its reserves (cash held and investments).</p> <p>The Group has submitted a budget for 2017/18 (advising that the budget for 2018/19 is not yet available) which shows an anticipated income of £2,501,973 against an anticipated expenditure of £2,487,341, resulting in an anticipated surplus of £14,632.</p> <p>Anticipated income includes Adult Services (£1,754,928), Low Vision / Combined Equipment (£247,104), Children’s Department (£157,600), Fundraising (£128,560), and Other Community Costs (£107,000). Items of expenditure include Adult Services (£1,509,838), Low Vision / Combined Equipment (£259,559), Children’s Department (£157,981), Fundraising (£67,649) and Other Community Costs (£31,254).</p>
2.2 Accounts	<p>The Group has submitted accounts for 2016/17 which show an income of £2,422,952 (£1,740,259 in 2015/16) against expenditure of £2,381,165 (£1,951,898 in 2015/16), resulting in an operating surplus of £41,787 (a deficit of £211,639 in 2015/16). The sum of £1,289,260 was carried forward at the end of the 2016/17 year.</p>
2.3 Support over the past five years	<p>2016/17 – £7,700 towards the costs of a Communication Class.</p>

3.0 Assessment of Application		
3.1 Key Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Constitution ○ Registered Charity ○ VAT Registered 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 Yes Yes Yes No No Yes N/A N/A
<p>3.2 Consultee Comments</p>	<p><u>Officer comment</u></p> <p>I would be supportive of this application from Sight for Surrey, subject to the funding being ring fenced to activity for Woking residents, since finding ways, through increased outreach activities, to help and assist those with visual impairment to lead fuller and more independent lives is beneficial not just to the individual concerned, but their family / carer and the community and health network as a whole.</p> <p>In awarding a grant however, I would wish to ensure that there is closer working relationships not only with the Borough Council’s Home Independence Service (as it is likely that we will have shared clients), but also to linking Sight for Surrey into the wider local Woking health and wellbeing network.</p>	
<p>3.3 Assessment</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Around 625 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. In addition, many of the goals and aims of the projects fit within Surrey’s Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy relating to physical activity, mental health, social isolation, on going independence and more transparent and joined up care. The Group launched its new 5 year strategy at the Lightbox in Woking on 25 September 2017 and recently expanded its services to assist those who are deaf or have a hearing impairment.</p> <p>Sight for Surrey is applying for £2,460 towards the costs of its Outreach Worker, Access Technology Trainer and Mobile Sight and Hearing Bus towards enhancing its service in the Borough. The Outreach Workers, Access Technology Trainer and the Mobile Bus visit/work in each of the Surrey boroughs. There is more activity in some boroughs than others and the activity will change year on year depending on the needs of clients. Woking receives a good representation from Sight for Surrey and the funds would be restricted to that work should the application be successful.</p> <p>The Group strongly believes that consultation with service users is an</p>	

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essential part of its development. It evaluates its services on an annual basis looking at statistics and feedback (from user and care forums) and develops its programme accordingly. The Access Technology project gained momentum as a result of technology changes as it was introduced as a result of around 10 callers a week requesting help. Similarly the Mobile Bus was introduced to provide a service for those parts of the County that have poor transport and for those who would find it difficult to travel to its Head Office in Fetcham. Every year the Group sees evidence that by providing support and guidance as outlined above, it can provide a direct benefit to service users in terms of better social inclusion, therefore aiding a fuller and more independent life.

Sight for Surrey ensures that its services are constantly monitored, evaluated and updated to ensure that high quality projects to users are delivered. The targets set are based on previous years' figures together with ongoing requests for help received from the Helpdesk or through referrals. Outreach workers record the numbers of those they help and the services being sought on a monthly basis. The mobile sight and hearing bus visits a variety of places in Woking as part of its countywide support, with numbers of people helped being recorded. The Access Technology Trainer records which part of the county users come from for training courses.

Over the past year, the Group has increased its focus on fundraising and also attended the following events: Surrey County Show, Hampton Court Flower Show, Wisley Flower Show, National Eye Health Week, Information Days, Shepperton Village Fair, Surrey Heath Show. Funds have also been raised through taking part events such as Ride London.

Previously, the Group has received funding for Outreach work in Woking including its communication class from Woking Borough Council. Last year it received a grant of £800 towards Outreach work in Elmbridge from Elmbridge Borough Council. It received a grant of £1136 from Unum Charitable Trust to support Access Technology Training in Mole Valley. The initial costs for the Mobile Bus were provided by The Clothworkers' Foundation, Garfield Weston Foundation and Smiths Ewhurst Charity. Most recently it received £800 from Caterham Parish Council and £400 from Oxted Parish Council to support the bus.

As an independent charity, it works closely with organisations on a national level such as RNIB and Guide Dogs.

The health benefits to the community of extending the outreach work taking place in Woking to enable vision impaired service users to access support are clear. It is therefore recommended that Sight for Surrey be awarded a grant of £2,460 during the 2018/19 financial year, noting that it would be restricted to work taking place in the Borough. It is recommended that a condition is added to seek closer working with Woking Borough Council's Independent Living Services and engagement with wider Woking Health and Wellbeing Network.

REPORT ENDS