

WOKING DISTRICT SCOUTS (BIRCHMERE) – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Executive Summary

Woking District Scouts is made up of 14 Scout Groups across the Borough covering approximately 850 Woking young people. The designated campsite for the scout groups is the Birchmere Scout Campsite located in Wisley. The campsite is actively pursuing a long-term strategy of site improvements that will bring the facilities, buildings and functions of the campsite in line with Health and Safety Regulations and new Scouting rules.

The Group states that it has over 1,500 members and increases its membership year on year. Over the past few years, the Council has been providing financial support towards provision of the abseiling equipment for the annual Handicamp event (included elsewhere on the agenda).

As part of a wider project to replace the old Campsite activity building which was considered to be around 80 years old, two new buildings have been installed which were offered to the Group by a school in Hounslow, as they were due to be demolished. The buildings were accepted following a site visit and the necessary planning approval being obtained, subsequently being delivered and erected from April 2017. From then, a programme of updates have taken place to ensure that the two buildings became safer and warmer, so that opportunities can be maximised for the youth campsite groups.

The Group is applying for a capital grant of £6,200 towards the roof replacement of the building which has a leaking roof, as part of a wider refurbishment. The aim is to complete the insulation and roof replacement ideally before winter. It is stated that this will occur as soon as there are sufficient finances, as to wait would mean the halls would be more uncomfortable for users and more difficult to heat. In addition, the use of the buildings with a leaking roof may damage the structure and internal equipment.

The Campsite has, at present, a full booking diary which welcomes young people of all sexes, styles and faiths from both the Woking area and outside, to provide an enjoyable, safe and secure outdoor space. The ongoing improvements will enable the campsite to extend its user numbers to offer the outdoor experience to more young people in the future.

Given the benefit to many young people, the majority of whom reside in the Borough, it is felt that the application should be supported as it will contribute to the long-term plan of Woking District Scouts to bring its facilities, buildings and functions in line with modern Health and Safety regulations and Scouting campsite rules. The amount applied for - £6,200 - is within the Council's maximum of supporting 50% of the total project cost of £57,591 and will provide for the roof replacement element of the project. The grant will be subject to the presentation of invoices for the work.

Recommendations

Reasons for Decision	To support the Birchmere Campsite with its programme of improvements to bring its facilities, buildings and functions in line with Health and Safety regulations and Scouting campsite rules, in light of the benefit to a large number of young people each year.
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Legal Authority	S19 (Misc. Provisions) Local Government Act 1976
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The Executive is	RESOLVE That a grant of £6,200 be awarded towards the cost of the
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requested to:	roof replacement from the Community Fund.
Conditions	<p>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.</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 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>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>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>

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	Publicity. The Organisation to advise how the Council's support has been publicised over the last quarter.
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>The Scouting organisation was formed in 1911.</p> <p>The aim of Woking District Scouts is to promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potential, as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local, national and international communities. The method of achieving the aim of the Association is to provide an enjoyable and attractive scheme of progressive training based on the Scout Promise and Law, guided by adult leadership.</p>
1.2 Employees	None.
1.3 Volunteers	<p>254. The volunteers provide support and guidance to the young people in their care by becoming warranted leaders and also setting out a framework of support to those leading the young people, to maintain the scouting standards of training and values. Volunteers carry out activities such as managing finances, undertaking secretarial duties, providing and maintaining meeting areas, carrying out fundraising, and offering logistical support.</p>
1.4 Clients/Users	The users of the Group are also classified as Members.
1.5 Members	<p>1,591, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,224 male 367 female 74 disabled 236 ethnic minority 1,278 resident in Woking 701 aged 5-10 424 aged 11-18 428 aged 19-65 57 aged 65+ <p>Woking District scout members pay an annual fee of £10.25 per head to cover all routine district expenses. Extra charges for camps and trips away may be applicable, depending on the costs involved. Adult leaders, helpers and network scouts do not pay the annual district charge.</p> <p>No user charge is made to members of Woking District, instead £3.85 for each scout member is deducted from the Group's annual District Charge. Users residing outside the District pay a daily fee of £3.80 for Scouts and Guides, or £4.00 for other youth groups.</p> <p>Users to the campsite are mainly from Woking, from the 45 bookings made so far in 2017 a total of 12 originate from outside the Borough.</p> <p>By the end of the year the Group expects the total users to exceed around 3,000, some of whom would have stayed at the Campsite for one night although week-long camps are a regular occurrence during</p>

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	<p>the school holidays. There is a steady increase in bookings each year which means not all can be bookings can be accepted. The Group is striving to increase the capabilities of its campsite and recently added two buildings, both with separate indoor accomodation halls and kitchen facilities.</p>
1.6 Sum Requested	£6,200 (Capital)
1.7 Project	<p>Birchmere Scout Campsite is the campsite of Woking District Scouts and was opened in 1978. The Campsite is actively pursuing a long-term strategy of site improvements that will bring its facilities, buildings and functions in line with modern Health and Safety regulations and Scouting campsite rules.</p> <p>The Campsite is stated to be always overbooked with users often having to be turned away due to their originally being one activity hall and associated kitchen. The building, a wooden structure, was understood to be over 75 years old and did not meet required safety and environmental standards.</p> <p>Late in 2016, the Group was offered two newer prefabricated school buildings, each of a similar size. Planning and environmental consent was obtained, with the buildings dismantled and transported to the Campsite where they were subsequently erected. Since then the new structures have been timber clad to meet planning requirements and have been rewired. A new floor together with underfloor insulation and vinyl covering has been fitted together with two new robust kitchens. The remaining work to complete is the installation of two permanent access steps, a disabled ramp, new soakaways, a new roof and internal decoration.</p> <p>The existing building roof is stated to be leaking and has no insulation. To provide a satisfactory stable solution it needs to be removed and replaced with new insulation and boarding with a fibre covering. The Group has taken recommendations as to the type of roofing material required.</p> <p>The grant request to the Council is to contribute towards the cost of the roof and insulation replacement, estimated at £12,600 against a total project cost of circa £58,000.</p>
1.8 Cost breakdown:	<p>Below are details of the overall project with prices inclusive of VAT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cost to dismantle old building on site and remove waste - £2,640 - Cost to dismantle new buildings at school, transport and erect - £8,514 - Remove existing floor and replace including insulation - £4,776 - Construct sub floor void fencing for insurance requirements - £1,332 - Lay vinyl floor tiles - £2,300 - Renew electrical supply, connections and rewire - £971 - Supply and fit wooden boards to cladding - £8,024 - Remove old internal wall partitions, hang 3 doors - £3,516 - Construct kitchen areas and fit with durable white goods and kichen apparatus including water and waste management -

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	<p style="text-align: right;">£7,048</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construct and fit two sets of steps and one access ramp - £3,730 - Construct rain water soak aways and kitchen waste water digestors - £500 - Completely remove leaking roof and rotten boarding and replace with new boards, fibre covering and roof insulation - £12,600 - Others - external lights, internal lights, internal decoration, notice boards, internal signage, external gas canister stores etc - £2,000 <p>Total – £57,951</p> <p>Two quotations for the roof replacement have been included in the grant application.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 - For complete removal and replacement including insulation - £12,600 2 - For roof replacement plus a separate quote for roof insulation - £10,200 and insulation - £1,668 totalling £11,868.
1.9 Community Benefit	<p>Those who are stated to benefit from the proposed improvements will be all scouts in the Woking District and their leaders (currently 1,610 people) plus youth groups who book the site from both inside and outside of the Woking area.</p> <p>The new buildings will enable users of the Campsite to have the option of two kitchen areas which will increase usage. The new buildings will also be warmer, safer and more convenient to use. The proposed replacement roof will prevent rain water leakage, which occurs at present, and will greatly reduce heat loss as a result of the much improved insulation standards.</p>

2.0 Financial Background

2.1 Budget	<p>At the time of the application, the Group held £91,290 in the bank. The following reserves have been included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birchmere (general repairs) - £7,815 • Birchmere (projects) - £175,000 <p>Reserves are also held towards costs of the International Scout Jamboree and Handicamp 2017.</p> <p>The Group has submitted a budget for Woking District Scouts during 2017/18 which shows an anticipated income of £19,740 against an anticipated expenditure of £14,990, resulting in an anticipated net revenue budget surplus of £4,750. Deductions would then be made for Handicamp (£4,000) and transfers to reserves (£8,825), along with the addition of a small surplus from Birchmere (£210), which would create a budget deficit for the year of £7,865.</p> <p>Anticipated income includes Capitation from Groups (£10,925), Hire Fees (£3,750), Gift Aid (£2,715) and Resource Centre (£1,600). Items of expenditure include Activities, Insurance and Miscellaneous (£3,765), Explorers and Young Leaders (£3,000), Allowance for Service Charge (£3,000), Cleaning costs and Bills (£2,000) and</p>
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	Equipment Replacement (£1,000).
2.2 Accounts	The Group has submitted accounts for 2016/17 which show an income of £98,223 (£104,272 in 2015/16) against expenditure of £81,906 (£90,221 in 2015/16), resulting in a surplus of £16,317 (a surplus of £14,051 in 2015/16). The sum of £145,608 was carried forward at the end of the 2016/17 year.
2.3 Support over the past five years	2017/18 – £3,500 towards the annual Handicamp event 2015/16 – £3,000 towards the annual Handicamp event 2014/15 – £3,000 towards the annual Handicamp event 2013/14 – £3,000 towards the annual Handicamp event

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 <p>* mandatory rate relief, discretionary rate relief, concessionary rent</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>No</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>No</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes *</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
3.2 Consultee Comments	<p><u>Officer Comment</u></p> <p>Having personally visited the campsite, it is clear the extent to which the site is already used and indeed could be further enhanced by these works. The works would enable the opportunity for an increased number of young people to attend the site and gain new life-skills. Bearing in mind the key role that uniform brigades play in the life of many young people in the borough, I would be supportive of this request. It should also be noted that the applicant has been innovative to date in looking to find solutions to match their needs and has sourced funding and resources accordingly so assisting them to meet the last remaining costs of the scheme appear reasonable.</p>	
3.3 Assessment	<p>Woking District Scouts is made up of the following Scout Groups; 1st Brookwood, 1st Byfleet, 1st Goldsworth Park, 1st Horsell, 1st Knaphill, 1st Old Woking, Pyrford, 1st St Johns, 1st Send, Sheerwater, 1st West Byfleet, 7th Woking and 8th Woking. The application before the Executive is for Birchmere Campsite which is overseen by the Birchmere Management Committee, a Sub-Committee of the Woking</p>	

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District Scouts Executive, which is responsible for projects, maintenance and the day to day running of the campsite, reporting to the Scouts Executive as required. The campsite is based in Wisley though the majority of members are from Woking.

Woking District Scouts states that it has over 1,500 members and increases its membership year on year. Over the past few years, the Council has been providing financial support towards provision of the abseiling equipment for the annual Handicamp event (included elsewhere on the agenda).

Birchmere Campsite has undertaken a long-term consultation plan with its users. In 2010/11, the results of a questionnaire showed that the existing toilet areas and the activity room were considered very inadequate. Birchmere has since completed a successful upgrade of both the girls and boys toilet area with new showers. Planning permission was then sought for a new activity room with modern energy efficiency and safe usable spaces.

Another past problem had been an inability to accommodate multiple booking applications due to the availability of just one kitchen area. Larger group bookings often required the ability to cook centrally especially in adverse weather. Birchmere was forced to turn away these bookings as it could not accommodate multiple indoor cooking requirements.

Woking District Scout Executive were aware of the substandard nature of the old campsite activity building, which was an old wooden hall from a school in Guildford. It considered that the building was around 80 years old with no insulation and rudimentary mobile unit calor gas heating.

Two new buildings have now been installed which were offered to the Group by a school in Hounslow, as they were due to be demolished. The buildings were accepted following a site visit and the necessary planning approval being obtained, subsequently being delivered and erected from April 2017. From then, a programme of updates has taken place to ensure that the two buildings became safer and warmer, so that opportunities can be maximised for the youth campsite groups.

The Group is applying for a capital grant of £6,200 towards the roof replacement of the building which has a leaking roof, as part of a wider refurbishment. The aim is to complete the insulation and roof replacement ideally before winter. It is stated that this will occur as soon as there are sufficient finances, as to wait would mean the halls would be more uncomfortable for users and more difficult to heat. In addition, the use of the buildings with a leaking roof may damage the structure and internal equipment.

A professional project manager is undertaking the management of the work. The Campsite Management Committee is also able to seek advice from a surveyor and Health & Safety advisor who are able to monitor the work and its impact on the site.

The provision of the new buildings complete with two fully fitted kitchens would allow future campsite visiting numbers to increase from either the Woking district or elsewhere.

It should be noted that Birchmere has a current tenancy lease with Surrey Wildlife Trust for a further eight years. There has been a

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written agreement with the landlord that a further lease is offered that will last until 2050, which also includes additional woodland. The Group works closely with the Trust to safeguard the flora and fauna of the Campsite and its locality.

The principal fundraising method for Birchmere campsite is to let the campsite to youth groups outside of the district. Over the summer months the site is booked with paying week long camps which require support and occasionally supervision, a team of wardens and helpers being on hand.

The Campsite has, at present, a full booking diary which welcomes young people of all sexes, styles and faiths from both the Woking area and outside, to provide an enjoyable, safe and secure outdoor space. The ongoing improvements will enable the campsite to extend its user numbers to offer the outdoor experience to more young people in the future.

Given the benefit to many young people the majority of whom reside in the Borough, it is felt that the application should be supported as it will contribute to the long-term plan of Woking District Scouts to bring its facilities, buildings and functions in line with modern Health and Safety regulations and Scouting campsite rules. The amount applied for - £6,200 - is within the Council's maximum of supporting 50% of the total project cost of £57,591 and will provide for the roof replacement element of the project. The grant will be subject to the presentation of invoices for the work.

REPORT ENDS