

WOKING SHOPMOBILITY – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**Executive Summary**

An application for financial support has been received from Woking shopMobility to assist with the Charity's running costs. ShopMobility was set up with the aim of enabling barrier-free access to shopping and business facilities in Woking by providing self-driven motorised equipment or manual wheelchairs. Users of the service can also ask for the assistance of a wheelchair pusher if required.

The Group is applying to extend its existing revenue funding of £12,500 in 2018/19. It should be noted that prior to 2012/13, the funding level approved for the Group was set at £22,494. However in 2012/13, a grant of £10,000 was received from the Town Centre shopping centres in Woking for a period of three years which reduced the level of funding required from the Council by the same amount. The purpose of the grant is to enable the Group to provide a regular service six days a week and maintain the wide range of equipment needed to meet the requirements of their clients.

The Group highlights that over the course of the past year approximately 250 members made around 3,000 visits. There was also an estimated 670 visits made by non-members. Since opening in 1989, there have been over 73,000 visits. It is recommended that a grant of £12,500 be awarded for 2018/19.

Recommendations

Reasons for Decision	To ensure the continued services of the Group for Woking residents.
Legal Authority	S132 Local Government Act 1972 S106 Transport Act 1985
The Executive is requested to:	RESOLVE That a grant of £12,500 be awarded towards running costs.
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. 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</p>

Woking Shopmobility – Application For Financial Assistance

	<p>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>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 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</p>

Woking Shopmobility – Application For Financial Assistance

	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.
--	--

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

Background Papers:

2018/19 Application Form.

Reporting Person:

Sue Barham, Strategic Director
Extn: 3810, Email: sue.barham@woking.gov.uk

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 Ian Eastwood
Email: cllrian.eastwood@woking.gov.uk

Date Published:

6 December 2017

Woking Shopmobility – Application For Financial Assistance

Woking Shopmobility – Application For Financial Assistance

1.0 Summary of Application	
1.1 Status and Aims	<p>Woking Shopmobility was set up in 1989 as a mayoral charity and the unit opened in 1992. Its aim is to provide barrier free access to shopping and business facilities in Woking by provision of self-drive motorized equipment or manual wheelchairs. A pusher can be provided for manual wheelchairs if required. The service is open to all but traditionally the clients have been the elderly and registered disabled, with the addition of accident sufferers, or people recovering from operations or sufferers of other medical conditions.</p> <p>The Charity aims to provide freedom and independence and promotes social inclusion, noting that users contribute significantly to the economic viability of the town.</p>
1.2 Employees	5 Administrators who do not have set hours. They work a flexible rota agreed with them in advance. The Chairman/General Manager is a volunteer.
1.3 Volunteers	19, including the roles of Treasurer, Secretary, Chairman/General Manager, Trustees, Maintenance, Pushers and Administrator.
1.4 Clients/Users	<p>781, comprising:</p> <p>261 male</p> <p>520 female</p> <p>781 disabled</p> <p>78 ethnic minority</p> <p>531 resident in Woking</p> <p>1 aged 11-18</p> <p>351 aged 19-65</p> <p>429 aged 65+</p> <p>Users can also apply to be members and pay £12 per annum plus £3 per visit or single users who pay £5 per visit.</p>
1.5 Members	<p>214, comprising:</p> <p>69 male</p> <p>145 female</p> <p>214 disabled</p> <p>20 ethnic minority</p> <p>146 resident in Woking</p> <p>1 aged 11-18</p> <p>96 aged 19-65</p> <p>117 aged 65+</p> <p>There is an annual charge levied at £12 for each Member plus £3 per visit.</p>
1.6 Sum Requested	£12,500 (Revenue)

Woking Shopmobility – Application For Financial Assistance

1.7 Project	<p>The grant funding enables the Group to provide a regular service six days a week at charges clients can afford, while maintaining the wide range of equipment needed to meet their needs. The increasing demand for its facilities plus the ongoing Woking Shopping development pointg towards a strengthening of the community need.</p> <p>The Group notes that Saturday has become its busiest day and and it is considering a Sunday opening if it can be resourced.</p>												
1.8 Cost breakdown:	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">Salaries -</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£31,300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Office Running Costs -</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£3,900</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Premises Costs -</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Equipment Maintenance -</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£4,200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Insurance -</td> <td style="text-align: right;"><u>£2,800</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total -</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£42,300</td> </tr> </table>	Salaries -	£31,300	Office Running Costs -	£3,900	Premises Costs -	£100	Equipment Maintenance -	£4,200	Insurance -	<u>£2,800</u>	Total -	£42,300
Salaries -	£31,300												
Office Running Costs -	£3,900												
Premises Costs -	£100												
Equipment Maintenance -	£4,200												
Insurance -	<u>£2,800</u>												
Total -	£42,300												
1.9 Community Benefit	<p>The community benefit that the group provides can be summarised threefold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Woking residents in need of help directly benefit from the provision of scooters and wheelchairs, such that they are not excluded from shared spaces in the town centre. The group notes “constant demand” in this regard. - The same residents are able to contribute to the economic viability of the town. The group notes that development in the town centre should bolster their case, in that new retail spaces will precipitate more demand for Shopmobility services. - Lastly, the group have run popular fundraising activities, which, while a bi-product of the service being provided, have the capacity to improve community cohesion. 												

2.0 Financial Background	
2.1 Budget	<p>At the time of the application, the Group held £17,236 in the bank. It is not reserved for a specific purpose, though the Group’s reserves policy states that existing funds should be directed towards operational costs rather than the replacement of equipment.</p> <p>The Group has submitted a budget for 2018/19 which shows an anticipated income of £47,900 against an anticipated expenditure of £49,800, resulting in an anticipated deficit of £1,900.</p> <p>Anticipated income includes WBC grant (£12,500), Woking Shopping (£10,000) and members’ visits (£8,500). Items of expenditure include salaries (£34,500), equipment running costs (£5,000) and office running costs (£3,500).</p>
2.2 Accounts	<p>The Group has submitted accounts for 2016/17 which show an income of £46,910 (£46,963 in 2015/16) against expenditure of £45,585 (£47,769 in 2015/16), resulting in a surplus of £1,325 (a deficit of £806 in 2015/16). The sum of £45,661 was carried forward at the end of the 2016/17 year.</p>
2.3 Support over the past five years	<p>2017/18 – £12,500 2016/17 – £12,500</p>

Woking Shopmobility – Application For Financial Assistance

	<p>2015/16 – £12,500 2014/15 – £12,500 2013/14 – £12,494</p> <p>Following a change in the funding arrangements, the Group has received a grant of £10,000 from Woking Shopping since 2012/13, resulting in a lesser grant being awarded by Woking Borough Council. As a part of the arrangement, the Council increased its support of the Woking Community Transport Town Centre Buggy by the same amount since that time.</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 <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>N/A</p> <p>Yes</p>
3.2 Consultee Comments	<p><u>Councillor H Addison</u> (Council nominee)</p> <p>I am writing to assure you I completely support the Woking Shopmobility community grant application. The organisation is efficiently run and has a great reputation with its clients and the community at large. Shopmobility is a key player in achieving Woking Borough Council’s “accessibility for all” policy. This service to a vulnerable section of our community is an important part of the provision of a great shopping experience, which is essential as part of our development plans.</p> <p>There are four Trustee Meetings each year plus an Annual General Meeting. In addition Shopmobility run a very successful Pancake Race each year. I have for the last few years made up 2 teams of Borough Councillors for the Pancake Race. A carol singing event also took place in the Peacocks and fantastic hampers were raffled just before Christmas. A bucket collection also took place at the football ground.</p> <p>Shopmobility celebrated its 25th anniversary in April with a party to which the Mayor and Member of Parliament were invited. Another very successful raffle was held with hampers.</p>	

Woking Shopmobility – Application For Financial Assistance

	<p>A personal experience as related by a user:</p> <p>“I have really valued the wonderful help received from Shopmobility. As soon as I arrived, a member of staff would come out with an appropriate scooter (they knew which one suited me!). When I arrived back to the car the shopping would be put in my boot and I was soon safely back in the car. I thoroughly enjoyed getting around Woking independently.</p> <p>I have not been able to use the facilities recently due to bad health, but I hope to improve and look forward to the wonderful welcome back which I know I will receive”.</p> <p><u>Officer Comment</u></p> <p>It is encouraging to note that users of the service continue to grow which is likely to be a reflection of the Council's commitment to raising the retail offer in the town, and is something that will only continue to increase (with consequential increase in Shopmobility customers) with the Council's continued commitment to economic development within the Town Centre and the Victoria Square development in particular. It is also welcoming to note that the Applicant has been proactive in undertaking fundraising activity to support their service.</p> <p>I would therefore wish to see continued support of this Group (at existing current levels of funding) which supports the Council's ambitions in relation to both economic development and health and wellbeing, as well as continued joint promotion of the service via Woking Shopping so that Woking Town Centre is proactively marketed as an accessible venue.</p>
<p>3.3 Assessment</p>	<p>Woking Shopmobility's aim is to provide barrier free access to shopping and business facilities in Woking by provision of self-drive motorized equipment or manual wheelchairs. The project is opened to all but traditionally the clients have been the elderly and registered disabled, with the addition of accident sufferers, or people recovering from operations or sufferers of other medical conditions.</p> <p>The Group is applying to extend its existing revenue funding of £12,500 in 2017/18. During 2016/17, there were 781 users of the service, with 3,669 visits being made. The total number of visits since the project started (1992) is over 74,000. Demand has risen such that the Group is now considering opening on a Sunday, should the resources be found (as it stands, services are offered six days a week). The Group also notes that demand has not dropped while development work has taken place in Woking Town Centre.</p> <p>The Group prides themselves in making retail facilities in Woking town centre accessible for all and works with Woking Community Transport to ensure “a seamless Home to Shop experience for people with limited mobility”, contributing to the economic viability of the town.</p> <p>Fundraising activities undertaken include the Annual Pancake race, Christmas and Easter Tombola, Quiz night, Christmas party, and bucket collections at Ambassadors and Woking Football club. The monthly tombola also raises £500 per annum.</p> <p>The grant of £12,500 has been provided since 2012/13, and now constitutes around 26 per cent of their income. 21 percent is provided by Woking Shopping and 35 per cent from membership and user fees, with the remainder accrued through donations and fundraising. The</p>

Woking Shopmobility – Application For Financial Assistance

	<p>Group argues that a reduction in grant funding would lead to a rise in charges per visit for users.</p> <p>Accordingly it is recommended that the Council's support is continued and that a grant of £12,500 is awarded for 2018/19.</p>
--	---

REPORT ENDS