

**MASCOT – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

**Executive Summary**

The Maybury and Sheerwater Community Trust (Mascot) was established as a charitable trust in 2011 with Trustees from the local parish churches of St. Paul’s Maybury and St. Michael’s Sheerwater. The Trust aims to address the causes of deprivation and social exclusion in the areas of Sheerwater and Maybury, encouraging joint working between local organisations in the community.

The main activities are seated dance sessions, conversational English and tutoring, career support, clothing project, satellite foodbank, hearing aid maintenance, computer tutoring, art club, internet café, signposting service and general non-professional advice and support. Feedback from service users and partner agencies shows the necessity for community focused projects in the Maybury and Sheerwater areas. Many of the Trust’s clients require ongoing support and the funding requested facilitates the provision of assistance to local residents.

Mascot is applying for revenue support of £29,500 in the coming year. The funding would be used to cover the running costs of the Trust in order to continue providing the services offered, and to give partner agencies a base in Sheerwater from which they can run targeted projects.

During lockdown the Trust has had to close the facilities from where activities are run from and has therefore not been able to physically meet with clients to support them face to face. Staff have been working from home to keep in touch with more vulnerable members of the community with volunteers checking on their wellbeing. The number of people supported has been impacted due to the nature of the activities, most of which require face to face interaction. Until the latest lockdown, the hub in Sheerwater had been re-opened but with only one member of staff present serving one person at a time. The activities for Maybury are still running virtually.

The consequence for people supported is that many have not been able to access facilities or activities which has led to some struggling with isolation or communication due to not having their own internet, IT equipment or a smartphone. This has left them unsure of their position with issues such as Universal Credit or house bidding on hold. The Group will gradually look at increasing capacity if Government guidelines allow. All the partner organisations that use its facilities have had to work virtually so visitors have also not been able to access support from them as easily, although referrals are still being made.

As set out in the consultee comments, the service continues to explore opportunities to assist residents and undertakes excellent work in the community, working with a wide range of agencies to ensure a co-ordinated approach is taken. It is recommended that the application is supported and that a grant of £28,700 is awarded for the 2021/22 financial year towards the running costs of the Charity.

**Recommendations**

The Executive is requested to:	<b>RESOLVE That</b> , subject to the outcome of the Council’s budgetary process, funding of £28,700 be awarded from the Community Grants Budget towards operational costs.
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Reason for Decision	To enable the Group to build on its work taking place in Maybury and Sheerwater.
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Legal Authority	S142 Local Government Act 1972
Confirmation of funding	<p>This award is provisionally made on the expectation that the Council's budgets for revenue and capital projects remain at the same level allocated for the current financial year. The Council's overall budget, including the sums allocated for community grants, will be determined by Council at its meeting on 11 February 2021. In the event the grant budgets are set at the anticipated levels, confirmation of the Council's support will be sent to successful applicants. Groups should not plan for the 2021/22 funding until this confirmation has been received.</p> <p>Should the budgets be reduced as part of the Council's efforts to achieve savings to offset the impact of Covid on the Council's financial position, a special meeting of the Executive will be held to review the provisional awards and allocate the funds available on a priority basis.</p>
Conditions	<p><b>Accounts.</b> 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><b>Monitoring Information.</b> 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><b>Publicity.</b> Where possible, the Organisation is required to publicise the support received from Woking Borough Council, including on all literature and leaflets produced.</p> <p><b>Payments.</b> 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><b>Payment Period.</b> 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><b>Joint Working.</b> 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><b>Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.</b> Following 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><b>Venue Hire.</b> 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</p>

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	<p>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"><li>• Basic details should be recorded to include speakers address, mobile phone number &amp; organisation details.</li><li>• Has the identity of the speaker been confirmed &amp; is their organisation bona fide? Are they known to you?</li><li>• Is the speaker from the area? Are they UK citizens or from overseas &amp; will they travel specifically for this event?</li><li>• Consider checks on the internet to confirm the status of speaker to include website, YouTube or social media sites.</li><li>• How many people are likely to attend (check previous or similar events either locally or online).</li></ul>
Performance Indicators	<p><b>Users.</b> The Organisation to provide a breakdown of the users in the past quarter.</p> <p><b>Activities.</b> The Organisation to provide details of activities and events held during the last quarter.</p> <p><b>Enquiries.</b> The Organisation to provide a breakdown of the enquiries received during the last quarter.</p> <p><b>Publicity.</b> The Organisation to advise how the Council's support has been publicised over the last quarter.</p> <p><b>Statement of Use.</b> The Organisation to provide a statement stating the use to which the grant money has been put.</p>
Future Support	<p>Due to the impact of Covid-19, the financial pressure on the Council's budgets is higher than ever and is expected to continue in the coming years. 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 2021/22 does not imply that a similar application in 2022/23 would be supported. In particular, it is emphasised that the Council is extremely unlikely to be in a position to award any sums above the 2021/22 levels.</p> <p>In view of this, the applicant is to be advised to ensure that contingency plans for the Group's operations for 2022/23 have been drawn up in the event that the Council is unable to continue its support beyond April 2022. 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:

2021/22 Application Form.

### Reporting Person:

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### **Contact Person:**

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### **Date Published:**

2 December 2020

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<b>1.0 Summary of Application</b>	
1.1 Status and Aims	<p>The Trust was formed in July 2011. The main objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) To identify the underlying causes of deprivation and social exclusion in Maybury and Sheerwater;</li> <li>ii) To address the identified causes through targeted projects;</li> <li>iii) To act as a catalyst facilitating collaborative initiatives with partners;</li> <li>iv) To act as a catalyst stimulating resources already in the community, supporting self-help groups and offering 'bestpractice' models;</li> <li>v) To be a sustainable organisation and a channel for resources which responds to perceived needs;</li> <li>vi) To participate in this service as an expression of Christian faith, without any expectation or requirement that beneficiaries change their religious views.</li> </ul> <p>The main activities undertaken by the Trust are seated dance sessions, conversational English sessions, memory café, career support, clothing project, satellite foodbank, hearing aid maintenance, one to one computer tutoring and courses, internet café, signposting service, general non-professional advice and support, and offering volunteering opportunities.</p> <p>Mascot also works with local agencies to run joint projects and cross refer individuals to seek relevant support. The recent appointment of a Community Development Manager will also result in the formation of community led projects.</p>
1.2 Employees	<p>3. The Community Liaison and Hub Manager for the Sheerwater area works 24 hours per week over three days. The Community Liaison Manager responsible for the Maybury area works 16 hours per week over two days. The Community Development Manager responsible for activities mainly in Sheerwater works 21 hours per week. All three employees are accountable to the Mascot management committee.</p>
1.3 Volunteers	<p>30. Volunteers currently work out of the St. Paul's Community Halls, the Mascot Hub or St. Michael's Church and are mainly involved in welcoming and offering hospitality to visitors; carrying out administrative tasks; updating computers; providing computer and English support; updating the facebook page; and cleaning and maintenance.</p> <p>They are also are involved in running the activities set up by the Community Liaison and Development Managers; answering general enquiries from visitors; serving at the foodbank and clothes bank; offering a crèche service; and substituting the managers if they are out at meetings. Currently, they have been keeping in contact with more vulnerable clients, for example helping with prescription or shopping pick-ups and supporting the virtual English talk café.</p>
1.4 Clients/Users	<p>388, comprising: 148 male</p>

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	<p>240 female          10 disabled          134 ethnic minority          343 resident in Woking          19 aged 0-5          27 aged 6-10          4 aged 11-18          273 aged 19-65          65 aged 65+</p> <p>Users of the MASCOT Hub are charged 10p per sheet for photocopying and users of the seated dance sessions are charged £3 per session. Due consideration is given to people who cannot afford these charges.</p>
1.5 Members	N/A
1.6 Sum Requested	£29,350 (Revenue)
1.7 Project	The funding will be used to cover the running costs of the Trust i.e. utilities, insurance, salaries, etc., in order to keep on providing the services offered and to give partner agencies a base in Sheerwater and St. Paul's Community Halls for targeted projects and networking activities to be run.
1.8 Cost breakdown:	<p>Employment Costs - £26,000</p> <p>Running Costs - £4,350 (includes electricity, water, telephone, insurance, account fee, IT costs, photocopying repairs and maintenance, general purchases / supplies).</p> <p>Total - £30,350</p>
1.9 Community Benefit	<p>The main benefits for users of MASCOT are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access to IT equipment and the internet - the circumstances of some people still do not allow them to have their own computers or internet. This service is vital to access their Universal Credit accounts, to look for work, to make house bids on the choice based letting system, keep correspondence, etc.</li> <li>• opportunities to lower isolation - due to age, disability or personal circumstance some clients would find it hard to interact with others unless they were able to access the Group's activities. Some volunteers are in contact with clients who cannot meet virtually.</li> <li>• access to support with day to day needs - some members of the community struggle with the challenges of form filling, creating CV's, writing letters, communicating with their children's schools, etc.</li> <li>• a signposting and referral service to agencies that can support clients. Mascot does not offer professional help but is in a position to direct clients to organisations that can support people who require either specialist help or need basic items such as food or</li> </ul>

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	<p>household items.</p> <p>In the short term Mascot is hoping to meet every day needs by closely supporting visitors but the long term view will continue to be to help people reach the point where they are able to be self-sufficient and confident to face life situations and to interact with others in the community, get into employment and training opportunities and reaching their full potential.</p>
1.10 Covid-19 Impact	<p>During lockdown Mascot has had to close the facilities from where activities are run from and has therefore not been able to physically meet with clients to support them face to face. Staff have been working from home to keep in touch with more vulnerable members of the community with volunteers checking on their wellbeing. One staff member has had to be furloughed (People's Health Trust funded).</p> <p>The number of people supported has been impacted due to the nature of the activities, most of which require face to face interaction, therefore it has been very difficult to assist people who have not kept in contact. Until the latest lockdown, the hub in Sheerwater had been re-opened with only one member of staff present serving one person at a time. The activities for Maybury are still running virtually.</p> <p>The consequence for people supported is that a large number have not been able to access facilities or activities which has led to some struggling with isolation, leading to a deterioration in mental health. Others have simply lost a way of communicating due to not having their own internet, IT equipment or a smartphone. This has left them unsure of their position with Universal Credit related issues. Others have had to put house bidding on hold.</p> <p>The ceasing of activities has meant follow on courses have not been re-offered for those who had been attending course based activities. For example, the employability course, run by Surrey Adult Learning, had to be cancelled meaning attendees were less prepared for potential job opportunities. Most volunteers have not been able to carry on their work either because they are in the age range considered vulnerable or simply because their contribution to Mascot activities was face to face with visitors and this is currently not possible.</p> <p>As stated above, the Hub in Sheerwater is now open again but only one person at a time can access support. The Group will gradually look at increasing capacity if Government guidelines allow. All the partner organisations that use its facilities have had to work virtually so visitors have also not been able to access support from them as easily, although referrals are still being made.</p>

<b>2.0 Financial Background</b>	
2.1 Budget	<p>At the time of the application, the Group held £11,912 in the bank.</p> <p>The Group has submitted a breakeven budget for 2021/22 which shows an anticipated income and expenditure of £30,350.</p> <p>Anticipated income includes WBC Grant (£29,350) and donations (£1,000). Items of expenditure include salaries and related costs</p>

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	(£26,000) and running costs (£4,350).
2.2 Accounts	<p>The Group has submitted annual accounts to July 2020 which show an income of £30,158 (£8,630 in 2018/19) against expenditure of £44,300 (£32,529 in 2018/19), resulting in a deficit of £14,142 (a deficit of £23,899 in 2018/19). The sum of £11,912 was carried forward at the end of the 2019/20 year.</p> <p>The bulk of the deficit (£11,509) related to expenditure arising from grant funding received from the People’s Health Trust (PHT). As all the funds were received in advance from the PHT, the accounts only show the expenditure incurred during the year.</p> <p>In respect of the balance forecast to be carried forward in July 2021, a deficit of around £2,500 is forecast, meaning funds of around £9,300 are expected to be carried forward to the 2021/22 financial year.</p>
2.3 Support over the past five years	<p>2020/21 – £28,700 towards the core costs of the service.                  2019/20 – £28,700 towards the core costs of the service.                  2018/19 – no grant awarded.                  2017/18 – £24,000 towards the core costs of the service.                  2016/17 – £28,000 towards the core costs of the service.</p>

<b>3.0 Assessment of Application</b>		
3.1 Key Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Constitution</li> <li>○ Registered Charity</li> <li>○ VAT Registered</li> <li>○ Equal Opportunities Policy</li> <li>○ Safeguarding Policy</li> <li>○ Reserves Policy</li> <li>○ Quality Mark</li> <li>○ Other funding sources pursued</li> <li>○ Other support by the Council</li> <li>○ Fundraising</li> <li>○ Two quotes</li> <li>○ Regular monitoring provided previously</li> </ul> <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>No</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>Yes</p>
3.2 Consultee Comments	<p><u>Adam Thomas, Family and Community Services Manager</u></p> <p>The Maybury and Sheerwater Community Trust is a well-established charity and receives a regular grant from Woking Borough Council as well as seeking wider income sources. Continued revenue support will enable the service to continue to run in the community, in partnership with many other organisations as described in the document.</p> <p>I support this application and continue to be impressed with the</p>	



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	<p>service offered to local Sheerwater and Maybury residents. This hub is well placed in an area that according to recent health and wellbeing data has some of the greatest needs both in the local borough and in Surrey. During this period of community regeneration, this service also offers valuable support to residents experiencing a time of significant change and therefore should be supported to continue.</p> <p><u>Zafar Iqbal, Senior Policy Officer</u></p> <p>MASCOT is one of only a few community organisations in the Sheerwater area and fully co-operates with Woking Borough Council initiatives to promote a cohesive society. Their work in the community is of even more relevant in view of the on-going development and the pandemic.</p> <p>With Sheerwater being a multi-deprived area and their links within the community, I am therefore fully supportive of their funding application.</p>
3.3 Assessment	<p>MASCOT aims to address the causes of deprivation and social exclusion in the areas of Sheerwater and Maybury and seeks to encourage joint working between local organisations in the community. In its application, the Group refers to the consistent number of local residents visiting the Hub before Covid-19, alongside people visiting St. Paul's Community Halls to access activities run from either location. The grant would enable the Trust to continue to serve local people with the services provided and with volunteering opportunities.</p> <p>Through contact with the Trust, local people have benefitted from assistance offered by volunteers from five local churches with issues such as electricity bill and social security enquiries and finding school places for children. The funding will enable the Trust to give consistent ongoing support to partner agencies and local individuals.</p> <p>The organisations which MASCOT has worked with over the past funding year and is currently working with are:</p> <p><u>Guildford Diocese Community Engagement Team</u></p> <p>The team is involved in offering practical support to local communities, for example setting up and supporting hearing aid maintenance clinics where basic maintenance, troubleshooting and advice is offered along with hearing aid batteries. One such clinic has been set up at the Mascot Hub.</p> <p><u>Providers of English sessions</u></p> <p>Woking College ESOL team runs English courses for speakers of other languages and in the current funding year has worked with Woking College to improve the Group's ESOL provision at Let's Talk with training and resources. It has also worked with other voluntary providers; Talk Easy based at St Mary Bethany and the International Café at the Welcome Church. It meets on different days which enables service users to get more practice each week.</p> <p><u>Surrey Adult Learning</u></p> <p>Courses are run on a variety of subjects and outreach courses are offered in the community (as opposed to people going to one of the centres) to stimulate an appreciation for lifelong learning. Surrey Adult Learning have run a number of courses from the Mascot Hub on</p>

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employability skills, confidence building and numeracy skills.

### Maximus Guildford

Help is given to find employment, access support and remain healthy and successful in the workplace. Maximus have referred clients local to Mascot to access a space and IT equipment to do independent work search and job applications.

### The ROC project

ROC (Redeeming Our Communities) is a community engagement charity set up to create strategic partnerships between statutory agencies, voluntary groups and churches in order to form volunteer-led projects that address a variety of social needs. Mascot is now involved in some of the follow-up meetings with a view to being a partner in various projects that are being created.

### CAP job club

The club runs eight week employability sessions and ongoing support to attendees to assist them into work. Mascot and the local CAP job Club have been cross referring clients for a number of years and the CAP work coach has also run sessions at the Mascot hub.

### Woking Foodbank

MASCOT acts as a satellite foodbank once a week, manned by volunteers for people who have hit a financial crisis and require emergency food parcels. Alongside the foodbank it takes in harvest collections from local schools and churches which go towards making up Christmas parcels for families in need, served by the local Children's Centre. During lockdown it acted as a referrer and is still receiving requests for emergency food.

### Citizen's Advice Woking

Sessions ran on a weekly basis for Sheerwater Residents from the Mascot Hub on Thursdays. Volunteers from CAW also ran three hour drop-in sessions giving advice on debt, employment, benefits, housing, family law and consumer issues with assistance from the main office when needed. Currently signposting takes place to CAW for clients needing advice.

### Sheerwater Regeneration Housing Team

Work is continuing with clients that need support to bid for homes due to the regeneration scheme in Sheerwater and refer to the team issues which arise.

### Woking Job Centre Plus

Some visitors to the hub are signposted by Job Centre Plus in order to assist them with CV preparation, online job applications, cover letters, setting up 'Find A Job' accounts and email accounts. Mascot has also attended partnership meetings at Job Centre Plus in particular to understand how to assist people on Universal Credit.

### Catalyst

Catalyst offers drug and alcohol users access to support, and advice on reducing the harm to themselves, their families and the community. The Welcome Project has been run by Catalyst workers who have been meeting clients on an appointment basis at the Hub to offer

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support in the privacy of the office space.

### Sheerwater Together

Representatives from voluntary groups, local residents, local Council and others make up Sheerwater Together with the purpose of helping to deliver the asset based community development model through projects which involve local people and encourage them to take a lead. Mascot has been used as a base for activities and planning meetings and has also participated in various activities that have been organised through Sheerwater Together.

### Foodwise

Foodwise provides practical assistance to people living on a restricted budget by offering free cookery skills courses that are designed to build knowledge and confidence and encourage home cooking. Mascot worked with Foodwise to deliver a three session course over August from St. Michael's Church for local families. During lockdown the Group became a referrer for households in need of pre-prepared meals delivered to their homes.

### Children's Centre

The Children's Centre's goal is to provide a safe, caring and nurturing environment where children and adults alike can learn and grow in an atmosphere of creativity, acceptance and shared experience. Signposting happens mutually between Mascot and the Centre with our Community Development Manager in regular contact to find ways of offering assistance as the Centre goes through changes.

### St. Michael's and St. Paul's Churches

Apart from the fact that Mascot was formed by a management committee made up of members from both churches, the relationship continues with regular committee meetings to make sure it is on track with its goal of strengthening the local community. Members of both churches are actively involved in volunteering for the activities on offer.

### Besom Project

Besom provides good quality used furniture and general household items to families and individuals in need on a referral basis. Mascot has come across members of the local community in need of this service and has signposted them onto Besom. Also, it occasionally receives household items from visitors to the Mascot hub and is in a position to offer them to Besom who allocate the items as necessary.

### Woking Local Dementia Action Alliance

The Alliance works together with other agencies towards creating dementia friendly communities across the Borough and has also liaised with them regarding making the Friendship Café more accessible.

In addition to being a resource for agencies and the local community, Mascot also operates as a free internet café, with printing, photocopying and scanning facilities, a signposting service and a listening and general advice service.

Feedback from service users and partner agencies shows the necessity for community focused projects in the Maybury and

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Sheerwater areas. Many of the Trust's clients require ongoing support and the funding requested facilitates the provision of assistance to local residents.

Recognising the invaluable work and support the Group has provided in the local community and its work with a wide range of agencies to ensure a co-ordinated approach is taken, it is recommended that the Council should continue to support Mascot through grant funding of £28,700 for 2021/22, set at the same level as for 2020/21.

REPORT ENDS