

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 to extend its grant of £2,500 for the Eye Clinic Liaison Officer project, which provides the bridge from Health Service diagnosis and treatment to Social Care, support in the community and at home. The Liaison Officer provides the emotional and practical support for those who are diagnosed with a sight impairment or combined sight/hearing impairment. The service ensures people receive early intervention and access to emotional support as they go through the shock and grief process of coming to terms with the fact that they now have significant sight loss that is going to impact on their daily lives.

During the pandemic, the Eye Clinic Liaison Officer service has continued remotely and moving forward a mixture of eye clinic support and remote working is anticipated. The service provides liaison throughout all clinics at St. Peters and Ashford Hospitals, along with the new clinic being developed at Woking Community Hospital. New ways of working are being planned going forward to accommodate the current backlog in the eye clinics.

As part of the grants process, Woking Borough Council liaises with Surrey County Council to establish whether the County Councillors for Woking would like to support an application which would meet the criteria for the SCC Members Allocations Scheme on a one-off basis, thereby reducing the pressure on the Community Grants Scheme for the year ahead. This year, Sight for Surrey has been awarded a grant of £750 from the Members Allocations Scheme towards the Eye Clinic Liaison Officer. It is therefore recommended that Woking Borough Council awards a grant of £1,750 for the 2021/22 financial year, with the combined support from both schemes equating to circa £2,500.

Recommendations

<p>The Executive is requested to:</p>	<p>RESOLVE That, subject to the outcome of the Council’s budgetary process, funding of £1,750 be awarded from the Community Grants Budget towards the cost of the Eye Clinic Liaison Officer.</p>
<p>Reason for Decision</p>	<p>To enable residents in Woking who have a visual impairment to benefit from the work of the Charity.</p>
<p>Legal Authority</p>	<p>S142 Local Government Act 1972 S111 Local Government Act 1972</p>
<p>Confirmation of funding</p>	<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</p>

Sight for Surrey – Application For Financial Assistance

	<p>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>
<p>Conditions</p>	<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 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>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>Performance Indicators</p>	<p>Users. The Organisation to provide a breakdown of the users.</p> <p>Activities. The Organisation to provide details of activities and events held.</p> <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>
<p>Future Support</p>	<p>Due to the impact of Covid-19, the financial pressure on the Council's</p>

Sight for Surrey – Application For Financial Assistance

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.

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.

The Executive has authority to determine the above recommendations.

Background Papers:

2021/22 Application Form.

Reporting Person:

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 Simon Ashall
Email: cllrsimon.ashall@woking.gov.uk

Shadow Portfolio Holder:

Cllr Will Forster
Email: cllrwill.forster@woking.gov.uk

Date Published:

2 December 2020

Sight for Surrey – Application For Financial Assistance

Sight for Surrey – Application For Financial Assistance

1.0 Summary of Application	
1.1 Status and Aims	<p>Sight for Surrey was formed in 1922 and offers a lifetime of support to people who are blind or partially sighted, deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing. Its mission is to support people to overcome their day to day challenges, achieve their potential and lead an independent life.</p> <p>It is the largest charitable organisation in Surrey working with adults, young people and children who have such a disability. Every year it is contracted to help more than 7,500 registered adults and children, providing them with assessment, rehabilitation and life skills to enable them to live full and independent lives. 80% of the service users are over 65 years old.</p> <p>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. 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	118, divided into the following departments: Adult Services, Children's Service, Fundraising, Finance and Administration.
1.3 Volunteers	<p>118.</p> <p>Sight for Surrey's volunteers help to increase the awareness and understanding of the organisation, and add value to the services provided. There are 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.</p> <p>Many of the volunteers have a vision impairment themselves and nearly half have been with the Group for over 10 years. All volunteers are DBS checked, receive training and visit the Group's 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> <p>Most recently there has been a significant increase in need of its befriending service as a result of the pandemic.</p>
1.4 Clients/Users	<p>7,021, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2,672 male 4,341 female 7,021 disabled 577 ethnic minority 587 resident in Woking 4 aged 0-5 11 aged 6-10 13 aged 11-18

Sight for Surrey – Application For Financial Assistance

	<p>150 aged 19-65 396 aged 65+</p> <p>Users have access to the following services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchasing of sight and hearing equipment aids from the Resource Centre • Paying for Communicator Guide Services (for those with a combined sight / hearing loss) • Paying for an Interpreter (mainly hearing impairment) to help out at meetings, appointments and social activities. <p>Users receive a bi-annual Charity newsletter containing sight and hearing impaired news. They are mailed at other times in the year with information on events, fundraising news and volunteering opportunities.</p>
1.5 Members	N/A
1.6 Sum Requested	£2,500 (Revenue)
1.7 Project	<p>Sight for Surrey has applied to extend its grant for the Eye Clinic Liaison Officer project, which provides the bridge from Health Service diagnosis and treatment to Social Care, support in the community and at home. The Liaison Officer provides the emotional and practical support for those who are diagnosed with a sight impairment or combined sight/hearing impairment. The service ensures people receive early intervention and access to emotional support as they go through the shock and grief process of coming to terms with the fact that they now have significant sight loss that is going to impact on their daily lives.</p> <p>The Group employs one Liaison Officer and is about to appoint a second member of staff, delivering this service across the six NHS hospitals across Surrey. The post supports medical and nursing staff in the eye clinics and subsequently provides the practical support needed for people to carry on with day to day tasks by learning how to do things differently.</p> <p>During the pandemic, the Eye Clinic Liaison Officer service has continued remotely and moving forward a mixture of eye clinic support and remote working is anticipated. The service provides liaison throughout all clinics at St. Peters and Ashford Hospitals, along with the new clinic being developed at Woking Community Hospital. New ways of working are being planned going forward to accommodate the current backlog in the eye clinics. Consultants are reviewing cases in virtual clinics and will call those who need to be seen into clinics. This will reduce unnecessary travel and cut down the footfall of those who don't need to be seen urgently.</p> <p>The Liaison Officer is an important link to ensuring that the Consultant Ophthalmologist completes a Certificate of Vision Impairment (CVI). This is an important legal document that entitles the person to then be registered by the Local Authority as Sight Impaired (SI) or Severely Sight Impaired (SSI) with access to the appropriate benefits etc.</p> <p>Where appropriate, the Liaison Officer can make referrals to Sight for Surrey's Specialist Sensory Workers / Rehabilitation Workers /</p>

Sight for Surrey – Application For Financial Assistance

	<p>Habilitation Specialists (for children and young people). These professionals are trained to assess needs, prescribe equipment and train people who have significant vision impairment to learn different strategies for undertaking daily tasks without vision. For those people whose vision has reduced but not completely gone, these professionals will assess where the person's best area of vision is located and teach that person how to maximise any remaining functional vision with the use of light, colour, tone and contrast, eccentric viewing techniques and magnification. It supports in the region of 100 Woking residents through the service a year.</p>
<p>1.8 Cost breakdown:</p>	<p>The Eye Clinic Liaison Officer service budget for 2021/22 is broken down as follows:</p> <p>Salaries - £58,561</p> <p>Staff Travel - £4,400</p> <p>Volunteer Expenses - £500</p> <p>Mobile Phones - £264</p> <p>Marketing and Sundries - £1,000</p> <p>Total project cost - £64,725</p> <p>The Group is seeking a donation of £2,500 from Woking Borough Council to help support the service for residents of Woking.</p>
<p>1.9 Community Benefit</p>	<p>The Charity anticipates that between 75 and 100 people will benefit from the ECLO service as it is not only supporting those who are diagnosed with a sight/hearing loss, but also indirectly their friends, family and carers. With early intervention and support, users can carry on living independently with appropriate equipment in their homes and ultimately have enough confidence to carry on to the best of their ability as before, which may include activities in the community. Communication with friends and family is particularly vital.</p> <p>The benefits available for users are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increase education and skills - improve health (physical/mental/emotional/wellbeing) - help tackle disadvantage and exclusion and reduce isolation - offer support networks and access to relevant services - offer advice and/or signposting at each stage.
<p>1.10 Covid-19 Impact</p>	<p>Covid-19 has impacted on the Charity's services, expenditure and fundraising. For the most part it has continued operating remotely and found new ways to support vulnerable clients as follows:</p> <p>Helpdesk – purchased new equipment for staff working at home and receiving approximately 80 calls a day.</p> <p>Shopping – ensuring people had enough to eat and the medication required.</p> <p>Deaf Services – posting three British Sign Language (BSL) videos a week and updating the Deaf Services Facebook and main Facebook page. One video was viewed by more than 17,000 people.</p>

Sight for Surrey – Application For Financial Assistance

	<p>Safeguarding – Calls were made to more than 2,000 clients by the rehabilitation and hearing loss advisers daily to all vulnerable people identified. This work led to a demand for befriending – currently still in regular contact with 85 clients, helping to reduce social isolation.</p> <p>Children and Young People – The Group made contact with all of its families and implemented a traffic light system, for example Red - serious concerns about family resilience and ability to manage child's needs when normal support network are not available. Films were also made for the families to access via YouTube to ensure they had the necessary resources in these challenging times.</p> <p>Benefits – the team has remotely been supporting people to complete Personal Independence Payment and Attendance Allowance forms over the telephone and sending them either to the DWP or to clients where there they can arrange to sign them.</p> <p>Sight for Surrey has monitored expenditure during this time, being prudent where necessary and allocating funds where there was a service need. Community fundraising has been affected with planned income not materialising as events and corporate activities were cancelled. To compensate for this, Sight for Surrey has had some success applying for Covid-19 funds at a local and national level.</p>
--	---

2.0 Financial Background	
2.1 Budget	<p>At the time of the application, the Group held £930,000 in the bank. The Charity aims to hold no less than £490,000 to cover its calculated contingency requirements. The balance is significantly higher than usual due to funds for large contract services being received in advance.</p> <p>The Group has submitted a high level budget for 2021/22 which shows an anticipated income of £2,361,349 against an anticipated expenditure of £2,618,618, resulting in an anticipated deficit of £257,179.</p>
2.2 Accounts	<p>The Group has submitted accounts for 2019/20 which show an income of £2,453,360 (£2,374,464 in 2018/19) against expenditure of £2,472,592 (£2,501,055 in 2018/19), resulting in a deficit of £19,232 (a deficit of £126,591 in 2018/19). The sum of £1,145,754 was carried forward at the end of the 2019/20 year.</p>
2.3 Support over the past five years	<p>2020/21 – £3,300 2019/20 – £2,460 2016/17 – £7,700</p>

3.0 Assessment of Application							
3.1 Key Information	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border-right: 1px dashed black;">○ Constitution</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: right;">Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-right: 1px dashed black;">○ Registered Charity</td> <td style="text-align: right;">Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-right: 1px dashed black;">○ VAT Registered</td> <td style="text-align: right;">Yes</td> </tr> </table>	○ Constitution	Yes	○ Registered Charity	Yes	○ VAT Registered	Yes
○ Constitution	Yes						
○ Registered Charity	Yes						
○ VAT Registered	Yes						

Sight for Surrey – Application For Financial Assistance

	<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 No Yes No Yes N/A Yes
<p>3.2 Consultee Comments</p>	<p><u>Diana Chan, Health and Wellbeing Manager</u></p> <p>Sight for Surrey is the largest charitable organisation in Surrey working with adults, young people and children who have such a disability. Every year it is contracted to help more than 7,000 registered adults and children, providing them with assessment, rehabilitation and life skills to enable them to live full and independent lives. 80% of our service users are over 65.</p> <p>I am supportive of the recommendation of £2,500 revenue funding to support an Eye Clinic Liaison Officer. This post will offer practical and emotional support for those diagnosed with a sight or a sight/hearing impairment.</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>The Organisation has applied to extend its revenue funding towards Eye Clinic Liaison Officer, requesting the sum of £2,500. The Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO) facilitates emotional and practical support from diagnosis and treatment of a sight or a combined sight and hearing impairment.</p> <p>Around 590 active service users in Woking are supported through a range of services, with circa 400 over the age of 65. 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 well within Surrey’s Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy relating to physical activity, mental health, social isolation, ongoing independence and more transparent and joined up care.</p> <p>The Group’s outreach team has attended a range of local meetings held in Woking at the beginning of the year. However due to the pandemic, it has not been able to have a physical presence in the community, with remote working taking place where possible. With a new eye imaging facility being introduced at Woking Community Hospital, more people will be taking advantage of the facility which is more accessible than St. Peters.</p> <p>Last year, Sight for Surrey received grants from Elmbridge Borough</p>	

Sight for Surrey – Application For Financial Assistance

Council, Elmbridge Borough Partnership Fund and Woking Borough Council for outreach work, Eye Clinic Liaison Officer and mobile hearing bus service, and from Mole Valley District Council for its Benefits work. Most recently, Covid-19 related funding has been received from the Mole Valley District Council Emergency Coronavirus Fund and the Surrey Heath Borough Council Covid-19 Fund.

In October 2018 Sight for Surrey was awarded a three year grant from The National Lottery Fund to support its work with children and young people. In addition, it has received £96,000 from the Reaching Communities England Covid-19 fund to provide support through the pandemic. Other supporters include BBC Children in Need, Tesco Bags of Help, the Community Foundation for Surrey, Heathrow Community Trust, M&G plc and Toyota Fund for a Better Tomorrow.

As part of the grants process, Woking Borough Council liaises with Surrey County Council to establish whether the County Councillors for Woking would like to support an application which would meet the criteria for the SCC Members Allocations Scheme on a one-off basis, thereby reducing the pressure on the Community Grants Scheme for the year ahead. This year, Sight for Surrey has been awarded a grant of £750 from the Members Allocations Scheme towards the Eye Clinic Liaison Officer.

It is therefore recommended that Woking Borough Council awards a grant of £1,750 for the 2021/22 financial year, with the combined support for both schemes equating to circa £2,500.

REPORT ENDS