

YORK ROAD PROJECT – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Executive Summary

The Council has supported the York Road Project for a number of years, providing annual revenue funding to cover the costs for the daytime drop-in centre and Café; to maintain the drop-in centre and Café operations on Saturdays, including the salary of the Day Centre Project Worker; the provision of workshops such as tenancy training, food hygiene and IT skills; and to defray the costs of keeping the Project open all day on Sundays.

In October 2015, the Project moved into the Prop Day Centre with the support of Woking Borough Council and local businesses. The new venue has contributed towards enabling the Centre to secure appropriate move-on accommodation for over 40% of clients, and also to seek out vulnerable individuals and work at preventing homelessness. As a larger venue it has enabled training and workshops to be available to a greater number of clients.

The Organisation has applied to extend its annual revenue funding of £53,400 during the coming year. The purpose of the application is to continue the current service provision funded by the Council, with the aim of reaching more clients and engaging with them to support their individual needs.

During the first lockdown period the Group had to relocate to HG Wells Conference and Events Centre and the Travel Lodge due to national social distancing guidelines. In the first month of Covid-19 the number of clients living with the Project trebled, and with this increase staff took on more clients ensuring that no-one rough slept during lockdown.

Hot meals were taken to those clients who had been put up in the Travel Lodge so they would not go without food. Food parcels and phone support were provided to clients in move-on properties and assistance to client self-isolating was given through tasks such as collecting prescriptions. A cooked evening meal was provided seven days a week, opening during Saturdays, which had previously been closed, to meet the needs of clients. Since March 2020 over 90 individual clients have been worked with, which does not include those living in move-on accommodation. The Group reports that it turned overnight into a 24 hours a day service.

With ongoing uncertainty around Covid-19 it is not yet clear when the Project will be able to operate the Day Centre as it would like, due to the national guidelines a Day Service cannot be operated. Without the grant from the Council the level of support under the banner 'Everyone In' could not have been provided.

There remains uncertainty about ongoing funding from Surrey County Council which is hoped will be resolved within the next 12 months. The contract has not risen in line with running costs and as a result has put a strain on the Group's ability to deliver its services. However it recognises the difficulties faced by statutory services and continues to source additional funding from other sources including voluntary donations. Historically, the grant from Woking Borough Council has been awarded subject to funding being received from the Surrey County Council housing related support now funded through Adult Social Care and it is recommended that this continues. In the event that the funding stream ceases a review would be required.

It is recommended that the application for funding of £53,400 towards the costs of the current service provision undertaken by the York Road Project be approved.

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Recommendations	
The Executive is requested to:	RESOLVE That , subject to the outcome of the Council's budgetary process, funding of £53,400 be awarded from the Community Grants Budget towards the cost of the service, conditional on the funding from Surrey County Council not ceasing otherwise a review of the funding provided would be required.
Reason for Decision	To enable the York Road Project to continue its existing valued service provision in the Borough.
Legal Authority	S142 Local Government Act 1972 S111 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>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>Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. With the introduction of new legislation from April 2018, the council will expect the support of</p>

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	<p>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>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>

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The Executive has authority to determine the above recommendations.

Background Papers:

2021/22 Application Form.

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2 December 2020

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1.0 Summary of Application	
1.1 Status and Aims	<p>The York Road Project began in 1995 and registered as a Charity in 2001. The Group shares the Christian gospel of God's love and compassion to those in need in the Borough of Woking and surrounding areas regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion, belief and sexual orientation. It believes everyone has a right to a home, regardless of the difficulties and issues they may face, and in showing those who need support that the wider community is there to help and offer hope for a better future.</p> <p>The Project offers an 11 bed night shelter, 18 move on beds and a Day Centre where clients access support. Whilst accommodation is the ultimate aim, it recognises that in order to stop the cycle of homelessness, a holistic approach is required. The Prop provides advice and support alongside activities and training to build self-esteem and confidence. Liaison takes place with external agencies to support clients with reducing their alcohol and drug usage whilst also providing advice on managing and reducing debts.</p> <p>The Outreach Team engages with rough sleepers in Woking and Waverley to support them off the streets and into accommodation, including the night shelter to begin the journey back to a more dignified life.</p> <p>From August 2020, the Group employed an Assertive Outreach and Criminal Justice Navigator who work alongside clients with complex needs that are harder to engage with services and accommodate, and those within the criminal justice system.</p>
1.2 Employees	<p>24, as set out below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chief Executive (37.5 hours per week) - Chief Operating officer (37.5 hours per week) - Day Services Team Leader (37.5 hours per week - vacant) - Accommodation Team Leader (37.5 hours per week) - Community Fundraiser (37.5 hours per week) - Day Centre Co-ordinator (37.5 hours per week) - Day Centre Project Worker (37.5 hours per week) - Move-On Project Worker (37.5 hours per week) - Outreach Worker (37.5 hours per week) - Wellbeing Worker (22.5 hours per week) - Restorative Justice Navigator (37.5 hours per week) - Tenancy Sustainment Officer (37.5 hours per week) - Bookkeeper (24 hours per week) - Administrator (30 hours per week) - Kitchen Supervisor (25 hours per week) - Cleaner (20 hours per week) - Sunday Day Project Workers x 2 (totalling 17 hours per week) - Night Project Workers x 4 (15 hours, 2 x staff on each night, 365 nights) - Bank Workers for Night Shelter x2
1.3 Volunteers	<p>10.</p> <p>At the start of the lockdown period, a drive for new volunteers was undertaken as the Group was required to move from Goldsworth Road to HG Wells, and a number of existing volunteers were unable to help</p>

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	<p>as they had to follow shielding guidelines.</p> <p>Volunteers work in a variety of roles within the organisation including the Day Centre advice sessions where they support clients with completing forms, searching for jobs and supporting staff to deliver workshops or attend trips. The volunteers at the Night Shelter help with cooking and serving the evening meal.</p> <p>The Group tries to utilise existing skills in volunteers in order to better support the clients and also to meet the needs of the volunteers themselves, quite often this involves providing IT expertise or helping clients practice their interview techniques in a safe environment.</p> <p>All volunteers are interviewed, provide a DBS check and are inducted fully utilising a volunteer handbook. They are all required to read, sign and adhere to operational policies and procedures.</p> <p>Volunteers are also encouraged to attend any in house training. Clients are also encouraged and supported to volunteer within the project as further preparation for returning to work in the future. Client roles have included: helping with maintenance, sorting donations, gardening and helping in the kitchen supported by the kitchen supervisor.</p> <p>Clients are also encouraged to support each other, e.g. during the IT workshops, the more proficient clients mentor those who are less experienced.</p>
<p>1.4 Clients/Users</p>	<p>261, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 220 male 41 female 0 disabled 42 ethnic minority 200 resident in Woking 258 aged 19-65 3 aged 65+ <p>Clients are expected to pay towards their stay in the accommodation: £14 per week in the Night Shelter and £10 / £15 per week in move-on accommodation.</p> <p>Day Centre clients do not pay for the support or lunch they receive if they engage with the services. The kitchen serves approximately 10,000 meals each year to clients within both the Day Centre and the Night Shelter, alongside food parcels to clients who are struggling financially.</p> <p>Clients accessing the day centre do not pay for any activities they attend, training/qualifications, trips out or toiletries and clothing. These are funded via donations and the current Woking Community Grant. Whilst the Group has worked with 261 clients over the past year, some will be referred to supported accommodation.</p>
<p>1.5 Members</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>1.6 Sum Requested</p>	<p>£53,400 (Revenue)</p>

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1.7 Project	<p>The grant would be used as a continuation for the services funded in previous years and is essential to allow the Group to continue to provide the services currently delivered. The Group will provide a wrap-around service with the aims of reaching more clients and engaging them in structured learning.</p>
1.8 Cost breakdown:	<p>Project Worker - £20,000 Kitchen Supervisor - £11,715 Cleaner - £5,400 Saturday / Sunday Workers - £10,400 Employers NI - £1,800 Pension - £585 Client Rewards - £800 External training - £1,500 External facilitators - £1,200</p> <p>Total costs - £53,400</p>
1.9 Community Benefit	<p>The Group states that it is very difficult to quantify how many people in the wider community are positively impacted through its work. However, it believes that it supports both those directly suffering from homelessness and the community as a whole, including through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational talks to schools, churches and other organisations with the aim of raising awareness around homelessness – the Group aims to go into 30 different schools and community groups to provide this service, with each talk being delivered to between 20-300 individuals; - Litter picking (including removal of cans and drug paraphernalia) – undertaken in Woking town centre and a benefit to all members of the community and businesses in the area; - The Group took part in World Homelessness Day – setting up an interactive stall in the Town Centre with the aim of giving the public a better understanding of homelessness and demonstrating that it can happen to anyone.
1.10 Covid-19 Impact	<p>When the first lockdown occurred, the Group had to move from the Prop and the Night Shelter as they did not meet the safe distancing guidelines under Covid-19. With the support of the Council, the Group made use of the Woking Hotel and HG Wells Conference and Events Centre. At first, small workshops were able to be run, but guidance came out which meant that any activities being carried out had to cease.</p> <p>During the first month of lockdown the number of clients living with the Project trebled, and with this increase staff took on more clients ensuring that no-one rough slept during lockdown.</p> <p>Hot meals were taken to those clients who had been put up in the Travel Lodge so they would not go without food (those with no recourse had no way of buying food and many of the shops had closed so buying food items became more difficult). Food parcels and phone support were provided to clients in move-on properties and assistance to client self-isolating was given through tasks such as collecting prescriptions.</p> <p>A cooked evening meal was provided seven days a week, opening</p>

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during Saturdays, which had previously been closed, to meet the needs of clients. Since March 2020 over 90 individual clients have been worked with, which does not include those living in move-on accommodation. The Group reports that it turned overnight into a 24 hours a day service.

With ongoing uncertainty around Covid-19 it is not yet clear when the Project will be able to operate the Day Centre as it would like, due to the national guidelines a Day Service cannot be operated. Without the grant from the Council the level of support under the banner 'Everyone In' could not have been provided.

2.0 Financial Background

2.1 Budget

At the time of the application, the Group held £528,974 in the bank. The sum of £250,000 is held as reserves, in line with the Charity Commission's guidance for reserves of three to six months being held. There have been a few vacant posts during Covid-19 which had meant some of the contracts had been delayed from the expected start date of 1 April. In addition to the Council, funding is received from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Safe Haven and Waverley Borough Council.

The Group has submitted a budget for 2021/22 which shows an anticipated income of £827,763 against an anticipated expenditure of £796,126, resulting in an anticipated surplus of £31,637.

Anticipated income includes housing benefit received (£288,040), Supporting People funds (£114,298), lease cost (80,000), Unrestricted donations (£80,000), WBC grant (£53,400), DCLG rough sleeper navigator grant (£46,132) and client contributions (£27,330). Items of expenditure include salaries (£457,207), employer's NI (£43,275) and repairs & maintenance (£80,462).

2.2 Accounts

The Group has submitted accounts for 2019/20 which show an income of £782,707 (£685,793 in 2018/19) against expenditure of £737,754 (£622,912 in 2018/19), resulting in a surplus of £44,953 (£62,881 in 2018/19).

2.3 Support over the past five years

2020/21 – £53,400
 2019/20 – £53,400
 2018/19 – £53,400
 2017/18 – £53,400
 2016/17 – £52,600

3.0 Assessment of Application

3.1 Key Information

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| ○ Constitution | Yes |
| ○ Registered Charity | Yes |
| ○ VAT Registered | No |
| ○ Equal Opportunities Policy | Yes |

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Safeguarding Policy ○ Reserves Policy ○ Quality Mark ○ Other funding sources pursued ○ Other support by the Council ○ Fundraising ○ Two quotes ○ Regular monitoring provided previously <p>* discretionary rate relief</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>No</p> <p>No</p> <p>Yes *</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>3.2 Consultee Comments</p>	<p><u>Louise Strongitharm, Director of Housing</u></p> <p>I strongly support York Road Project’s community grant application for 2021/22. The Council has a long-standing, well-developed and strong partnership with the charity, which has been highlighted in our joint response to Covid-19. Working together, all York Road Project support services and night shelter operations were relocated to the Woking Hotel and HG Wells Centre within a matter of days. York Road Project have had to deal with a tripling in client numbers during the pandemic and have maintained frontline, critical services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. At no point, have they questioned the extra work – they have simply remained focused on helping Woking’s rough sleepers through these unprecedented times.</p> <p>As we move into 2021/22, the Council needs York Road Project’s continued support in assisting us find long-term accommodation for those accommodated under the Government’s “Everyone In” initiative and, vitally, to help them sustain their tenancies and access wider support services. They will also continue to support those individuals who have gone back out onto the streets through their outreach services.</p> <p><u>Camilla Edmiston, Community Safety Manager</u></p> <p>York Road Project provides emergency and longer term accommodation for those experiencing homelessness. Pre Covid-19, they also offered The Prop Day Centre with workshops, advice and activities aimed at building self-esteem and confidence providing a holistic approach to helping individuals, as well as practical support with showers, food and clothes. The Prop offers a place for clients to visit during the day with tailored activities, as well as welcoming external agencies such as local GPs, support workers, I-Access and local housing services, so reducing pressure for services elsewhere. York Road Project is the only organisation in Surrey that provides a wrap-around service for people experiencing homelessness. The Project knows that homelessness is not just about providing a roof for a client – it offers a support and goal plan for the clients which greatly improves the chances of them sourcing and sustaining suitable accommodation. This type of plan requires input from various services and can often take several years to achieve.</p> <p>During the pandemic, York Road Project has had to adapt its services to support many more clients and to working with them in HG Wells and the Travel Lodge, rather than the night shelter and The Prop. So this year they have been a major support to Woking Borough Council</p>	

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	<p>in terms of the Government's requirement for 'Everyone in' on homelessness. York Road Project helps support vulnerable homeless people back into accommodation and, in addition, helps to reduce anti-social behaviour in the town. As the revenue funding of £53,400 has remained at the same level for the last 3 years, and York Road Project acknowledges the constraint on public funding, I would recommend that this level of funding be awarded.</p>
3.3 Assessment	<p>The York Road Project believes that everyone has a right to a home, regardless of the difficulties and issues they may face in their lives and provides essential support to the community in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the provision of temporary Night Shelter accommodation;• the provision of 'move on' accommodation; and• the provision of a Day Centre to provide information, support and an opportunity to achieve by taking part in courses and activities. <p>The York Road Project is the only organisation in Surrey which provides a full wrap-around service for people experiencing homelessness in one area. It understands that homelessness cannot be "fixed" by just providing a roof but providing a unique support plan for clients greatly improves the chances of sourcing sustainable accommodation. This requires input from various services and often takes several years to achieve. The Project is strategically placed within the community to provide a high level of care in a unique way as all the homelessness services are under one umbrella. This enables the Project to offer consistency to clients and partner agencies alike.</p> <p>It works closely with Housing Services at Woking Borough Council often taking clients when other organisations are unable to support. Its principle of no permanent or indefinite bans means it can work with clients long term and help them to address their issues including offending, substance misuse, physical and mental health difficulties. It also takes clients upon discharge from hospitals, prisons and Social Services preventing them from rough sleeping in Woking.</p> <p>The Project moved into the Prop Day Centre in October 2015 with the support of Woking Borough Council and local businesses, opening between 7.30am – 4.00pm for four days per week, between 7.30am – 9.00am on Friday mornings, and from 7.30am on Sundays for breakfast and lunch. The first hour of the morning is for rough sleepers only.</p> <p>Its innovative programme of activities supports clients' re-integration into housing, work and healthy relationships through educational workshops offering qualifications, life skills such as cooking and employment skills and emotional wellbeing to improve confidence and prevent social isolation. Clients participate in a monthly meeting and give their views about the Group whilst helping to design the Prop workshop programme.</p> <p>There have been nationwide cuts in statutory services in recent years and an increase in clients with complex needs. Since lockdown commenced, almost 100 individual clients have been worked with. Some clients have no local connection, which means sourcing accommodation can be difficult. During the Covid-19 period some clients had travelled from other areas in the hope of being housed,</p>

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with some reconnected back to family or to their Local Authority where they would have more options for longer term accommodation.

The Charity has applied for grants during Covid-19 to support the service which has been operating at three times its usual capacity. Extra funding has been received for PPE, Saturday openings and extra staff to cover night shifts. Several online Quiz Nights have been held raising over £1,000. In November it is hoping to raise funds through the 'Big Sleep In' where people stay in their own home but sleep somewhere other than their bed.

Until recently the Project had been opening from 7.30am – 4.00pm for four days a week and 7.30am – 9.00am on a Friday; with the Shelter open on Sundays from 7.30am until 8.00pm for rough sleepers to access for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Clothes can be washed; clients can shower and feel safe in a warm and friendly environment. A total of 118 clients have been housed over the past year in the Night Shelter.

During Covid-19 the day services had to be closed though advice and support was provided to clients, who can access the team at HG Wells in a one to one setting following the social distancing guidance. Computer usage is still available to clients so that they can access the internet to make online claims for benefits or conduct job searches.

Clients continue to be supported through advice sessions with Housing Register Applications, Universal Credit Claims, GP appointments and many more. A wide range of workshops and activities are usually offered that can be adapted to meet the needs of the client's accessing out service, including life skills, cooking, emotional wellbeing, first aid, health and hygiene certificates, online computer courses. Not only do they improve clients' skills but they also help mitigate isolation.

The Project is the only direct access Night Shelter in Surrey and continues to see similar numbers of clients presenting year on year for its services. Clients have been supported with 'Winter Weather', which ran last year for 26 nights offering 185 bed spaces over the period.

The York Road Project is applying to continue its revenue funding of £53,400 during 2021/22. The purpose of the application is to continue the current service provision. It is recommended that the application for funding to maintain the current service provision should be supported and that a grant of £53,400 should be approved.

REPORT ENDS