

THE COUNSELLING PARTNERSHIP – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Executive Summary	
<p>The Counselling Partnership is a mental health charity which provides face to face therapy to anyone who needs it, offering a subsidised service for those who are on low incomes. The Charity supplies up to one year of talking therapy to assist with matters such as relationship issues, bereavement, depression, domestic abuse and carers' issues.</p> <p>The Partnership relies on donations, one off grants, fundraising and client contributions in order to continue to provide subsidised therapy to those on low incomes. In the financial year 2019-2020 a total of 184 clients received 1,490 counselling sessions. For those living in Woking, the number of clients referred to the Charity equated to 27, with 7 receiving counselling courses totalling 143 sessions and the full allocation of the grant being used.</p> <p>The Counselling Partnership has requested funding of £5,000 in 2021/22 to contribute towards the salary of the Charity's Administrator and Clinical Services Manager. The amount requested represents an increase of £2,000 on the current year's level of support – the Council has to-date provided annual funding of £3,000.</p> <p>It is proposed that the Council continues its support of the Partnership. However, it is recommended that the level of funding is kept at the 2020/21 level of £3,000.</p>	

Recommendations	
The Executive is requested to:	RESOLVE That , subject to the outcome of the Council's budgetary process, a grant of £3,000 be awarded from the Community Grants Budget towards the salary costs of the part-time Administrator and Clinical Services Manager.
Reason for Decision	To enable the Counselling Partnership to continue their work within the Borough of Woking.
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	Accounts. The Organisation must submit accounts for the year in which the grant is awarded, including an income and expenditure

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	<p>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>
Performance Indicators	<p>Users. The Organisation to provide a breakdown of the users.</p> <p>Enquiries. The Organisation to provide a breakdown of the enquiries received.</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>
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</p>

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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:

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2 December 2020

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1.0 Summary of Application	
1.1 Status and Aims	<p>The Counselling Partnership is a mental health charity which has been operating for over twenty years and prides itself on providing high quality face to face therapy, regardless of financial circumstances with the aim to help improve mental wellbeing with the North Surrey community. Many vulnerable clients who come to the charity include people in abusive relationships, have limited financial means and cannot afford one to one therapy in the private sector.</p> <p>The key objectives are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Promote the Charity’s work across North Surrey where there are known pockets of deprivation or adults over the age of 17 who are on low incomes. ○ Provide one to one talking therapy to those who otherwise could not afford it. ○ Provide good quality supervision/mentoring to train and support volunteer counsellors who in turn serve the clients. <p>Develop partnerships with local voluntary services, including Carer support groups and Victim Support Surrey, to maximise their reach within the community.</p>
1.2 Employees	<p>2, comprising the Office Administrator (25 hours per week) and the Clinical Service Manager (21 hours per week).</p> <p>The Administrator is the first point of contact for people in distress who would benefit from counselling. Tasks also include day to day office management such as dealing with client bookings, arranging training and recruitment events and venues, management of non-clinical volunteers and production of analytical and financial information. The role of the Clinical Service Manager includes recruitment of volunteer counsellors, counsellor supervision and initial client assessments.</p>
1.3 Volunteers	<p>36.</p> <p>Two volunteers assist with non-clinical office work supporting the Administrator and eight volunteers are Trustees. The remaining 23 volunteers are counsellors who have completed post graduate training course to provide one to one counselling for clients for up to three sessions per week. The counsellors are supervised in accordance with the requirements of the British Association of Counselling to which the Group is accredited.</p>
1.4 Clients/Users	<p>184, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 54 male 130 female 15 disabled 18 ethnic minority 27 resident in Woking 175 aged 19-65 9 aged 65+

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	<p>No charge is levied to the users although donations are requested from those who would be able to make a contribution. A counselling centre is held in Maybury for three hours, three times per week.</p>
1.5 Members	None.
1.6 Sum Requested	£5,000 (Revenue)
1.7 Project	<p>The Counselling Partnership has requested revenue funding of £5,000 to part fund the salary of the Charity's Administrator and Clinical Services Manager. The combined annual cost is £37,855. It would also cover the costs of the Maybury Centre for counselling Woking Residents which is estimated at £2,760 (this figure will be less due to the Maybury Centre remaining closed due to Covid).</p>
1.8 Cost breakdown:	<p>Administration Officer salary (25 hours per week) Gross Salary – Administrator: £17,699 Gross Salary – Clinical Services Manager: £18,956 Pension: £1,200</p> <p>The Charity's latest estimate is that the cost of one counselling session is £49, therefore £3,000 would provide 61 fully funded sessions to Woking residents.</p>
1.9 Community Benefit	<p>The Charity will use the grant to benefit vulnerable people in Woking to address stressful personal issues. This would include the following community benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - positive changes to people's mental health and well-being; - positive impact on families, friends and children through the work of the charity with young people from the age of 17 years as well as older clients and carers; - improved outlook and attitudes through long term counselling to 'move on with their lives' and understand how to cope with future events; and - improved social interaction through the counselling sessions by building confidence and developing a greater sense of autonomy and self esteem. <p>During 2019/20 the Group delivered 1,490 counselling sessions to 184 people in need of help. The aim of the Charity is to improve this number year on year, with a capacity currently of 2,000 sessions.</p>
1.10 Covid-19 Impact	<p>Some of the challenges faced by the group include being unable to provide face to face counselling and adapting to using zoom/skype etc, resulting in a 20-30% reduction in sessions and fewer new enquiries. It is anticipated that lockdown has affected many people's mental health and therefore the group expect increased demand post lockdown and hopefully resume face-to-face counselling. Many of their existing clients have been unable or unwilling to accept digital media counselling. Due to Covid, all fundraising events have been postponed until 2021.</p> <p>The organisation have secured £12,000 in one-off Covid specific funding, including £7,000 from the Department of Justice for restricted activities in domestic violence counselling.</p>

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2.0 Financial Background	
2.1 Budget	<p>At the time of the application, the Group held £45,000 in the bank. The sum of £1,000 is reserved for restricted income specified by donor and £40,000 reserved for the running of the Charity for six months in the event that funding difficulties were incurred.</p> <p>The Group has submitted a budget for 2021/22 which shows an anticipated income of £58,864 against an anticipated expenditure of £61,681, resulting in an anticipated surplus of £2,817.</p> <p>Anticipated income includes client contributions (£54,750), counsellor fees (£4,800), fundraising (£3,600), donations (£780), grants (£17,000) interest (£460) and Gift Aid (£5,000). Items of expenditure include office & admin (£39,199), training (£10,900), advertising (£1,800), legal and professional costs (£930).</p>
2.2 Accounts	<p>The Group has submitted accounts for 2019/20 which show an income of £132,297 (£157,798 in 2018/19) against expenditure of £135,724 (£160,265 in 2018/19), resulting in a deficit of £3,427 (a deficit of £2,467 in 2018/19). The sum of £48,947 was carried forward at the end of the 2019/20 year.</p>
2.3 Support over the past five years	<p>2020/21 – £3,000 towards the cost of services within Woking 2019/20 – £3,000 towards the cost of services within Woking 2018/19 – £3,000 towards the cost of services within Woking 2017/18 – £3,000 towards the cost of services within Woking 2016/17 – £3,000 towards the cost of services within Woking</p>

3.0 Assessment of Application																																					
3.1 Key Information	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 5%;"><input type="radio"/></td> <td style="width: 70%;">Constitution</td> <td style="width: 25%;">Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td>Registered Charity</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td>VAT Registered</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td>Equal Opportunities Policy</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td>Safeguarding Policy</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td>Reserves Policy</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td>Quality Mark</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td>Other funding sources pursued</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td>Other support by the Council</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td>Fundraising</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td>Two quotes</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td>Regular monitoring provided previously</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> </table>	<input type="radio"/>	Constitution	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	Registered Charity	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	VAT Registered	No	<input type="radio"/>	Equal Opportunities Policy	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	Safeguarding Policy	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	Reserves Policy	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	Quality Mark	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	Other funding sources pursued	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	Other support by the Council	No	<input type="radio"/>	Fundraising	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	Two quotes	N/A	<input type="radio"/>	Regular monitoring provided previously	Yes
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3.2 Consultee Comments	<p><u>Diana Chan, Health and Wellbeing Manager</u></p> <p>The Counselling Partnership provide high quality face to face therapy for those with mental health difficulties regardless of their financial</p>																																				

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	<p>situation. They particularly promote their work in areas of high deprivation.</p> <p>I am supportive of the recommendation to provide £3,000 of the £5,000 funding requested and this would provide circa 60 counselling sessions for local residents. Mental wellbeing is an important priority in our Health and Wellbeing strategy, and an area that we anticipate an excessive demand for services such as this.</p>
3.3 Assessment	<p>The Counselling Partnership is a mental health charity which provides face to face therapy to anyone who needs it, offering a subsidised service for those who are on low incomes. The Charity supplies up to one year of talking therapy to assist with issues such as relationship issues, bereavement, depression, domestic abuse and carers' issues.</p> <p>The Partnership relies on donations and one off grants, fundraising, donations and client contributions in order to continue to provide subsidised therapy to those on low incomes.</p> <p>In the financial year 2019-2020 a total of 1,490 counselling sessions were held. The Counselling Partnership has requested funding of £5,000 in 2021-2022 to part fund salary costs. The salary of the part-time administrator for 25 hours per week is estimated to be £17,666 per annum. Woking's part funding of the post has previously been based on a budget of 20% of all enquiries received per annum from residents living in Woking.</p> <p>For those living in Woking, the number of clients referred to the Charity equated to 27, with 7 receiving counselling courses totalling 143 sessions and the full allocation of the grant being used.</p> <p>It is proposed that funding be awarded at the same level as 2020/21 to contribute towards the salary costs, equating to the sum of £3,000 for 2021/22.</p>

REPORT ENDS