

HOME-START RUNNYMEDE AND WOKING – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Executive Summary

Home-Start Runnymede and Woking offers support, friendship and practical help to families in their own homes who are under stress, with at least one child under the age of 5, helping to prevent family crisis and breakdown in the Borough. The Group's main aim is to prevent existing difficulties from developing into more serious situations which may require the intervention of statutory services, and to give young children the best possible start in life.

An application has been received for revenue funding of £10,000 over the coming year to pay for ten additional Co-ordinator hours each week, enabling the service to meet the needs of families in the Borough and continue to support parents and children in difficult circumstances. With the Council's funding during 2019/20, a total of 58 families in Woking were supported.

The Charity notes that record numbers of referrals have been received over the past year from agencies such as Health, Children's Centres, Children's Services, Family Support Programme and occasionally direct from families. The most common reason for referral is parental mental health.

Home-Start Runnymede and Woking are well established and provide services for local families from a number of contracts. The Woking grant is budgeted for specific outreach and is matched by Runnymede Borough Council.

In view of the Council's financial situation, it is recommended that a grant be awarded at a level of 10% less than the previous year, equating to £9,000 for 2022/23. Home-Start Runnymede and Woking provide essential support to vulnerable families and this grant covers the costs for a family worker to support up to 10 Woking families at any one time. It is considered value for money and supports the wider family services network across the borough in family homes and the Family Centres and Centres for the Community.

Recommendations

The Executive is requested to:	RESOLVE That , subject to the outcome of the Council's budgetary process, a grant of £9,000 be awarded from the Community Grants Budget to provide additional support to families in Woking.
Reason for Decision	To support the service of Home-Start Runnymede and Woking for families in most need of assistance residing with the Borough of Woking.
Confirmation of funding	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 10 February 2022. 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 2022/23 funding until this confirmation has been received.

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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. 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>
Performance Indicators	<p>Users. The Organisation to provide a breakdown of the users in the past quarter.</p> <p>Enquiries. The Organisation to provide a breakdown of the enquiries received during the last quarter.</p> <p>Publicity. The Organisation to advise how the Council's support has been publicised over the last quarter.</p> <p>Statement of Use. The Organisation to provide a statement stating the use to which the grant money has been put.</p>
Future Support	<p>The financial pressure on the Council's budgets is expected to continue in the coming years and accordingly the overall level of support available in future years may be reduced. The applicant is therefore to be advised that the award of funding for 2022/23 does not imply that a similar application in 2023/24 would be supported. In particular, it is emphasised that the Council is unlikely to be in a position to award any sums above the 2022/23 levels.</p> <p>In view of this, the applicant is to be advised to ensure that contingency plans for the Group's operations for 2023/24 have been</p>

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drawn up in the event that the Council is unable to continue its support beyond April 2023. 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:

2022/23 Application Form.

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1.0 Summary of Application	
1.1 Status and Aims	<p>Home-Start Woking was founded in 1994. On 1st January 2015 the Group merged with Home-Start Runnymede to form Home-Start Runnymede and Woking.</p> <p>The Charity's aim is to offer free confidential support, friendship and practical help to families with at least one child under five who are experiencing difficulties and struggling to cope with the challenges of parenting. The staff assess each family's individual needs and assign an appropriately skilled and experienced volunteer.</p> <p>All volunteers are parents and undergo a high-quality training course and receive continuing support from staff. A volunteer will visit the family once a week in their own home for up to a year and will work co-operatively to enable their family to cope with the demands of being a parent, to develop resilience and independence in the family and prevent the need for intervention by statutory services.</p> <p>Since 2019 the Group has also provided families with home support from a Family Support Worker who works with families for a short period of time. In addition, support is provided to families through specialist groups (new parents and parents of children with additional needs) and parenting courses.</p>
1.2 Employees	7 comprising the Manager, Perinatal Project Lead, two Co-ordinators, a Senior Family Support Worker, a Family Support Worker and an Administrator.
1.3 Volunteers	<p>51. Nine volunteers are trustees responsible for the governance of Home-Start Runnymede & Woking. The Chair is also a member of the Board of Trustees of Home-Start Surrey, the consortium contracted to Surrey County Council Children's Services for the provision of the Early Help contract.</p> <p>The majority of volunteers are trained to provide home-visiting support to parents with a least one child under five. All volunteers have parenting experience, are DBS and reference checked and complete a six week training course.</p>
1.4 Clients/Users	<p>339, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 154 male 207 female 28 disabled 105 ethnic minority 161 resident in Woking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 134 aged 0-5 63 aged 6-10 9 aged 11-18 133 aged 19-65 <p>During 2020-21 the Group supported a total of 58 families with young children living in Woking. Referrals were received for families living in Woking from Health, Children's Centres, Children's Services, Family</p>

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	<p>Support Programme and occasionally direct from families.</p> <p>Home-Start has continued to receive high numbers of referrals from families with Domestic Abuse issues and those receiving multi-agency support, including those supported by the Family Support Programme with Early Help Assessment and Team Around the Family support plans.</p> <p>In the past year the most common reason for a referral was maternal mental health. 43% of the referrals received were for lone parent families and 57% of referrals were for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic families. In the first quarter of 2021/22, more referrals were received than any other quarter on record.</p>
1.5 Members	8.
1.6 Sum Requested	£10,000 (Revenue)
1.7 Project	<p>The grant applied for would be used to continue to fund the Coordinator hours thereby ensuring that the needs of families in Woking are met and support provided to parents and children in difficult circumstances. The Coordinator visits families referred to Home-Start to assess need and plan a package of support, then matches a suitable volunteer to visit the family once a week in their home for a number of months. Support is reviewed regularly with both the family and the volunteer. If the family needs more intensive support the Coordinator will suggest that the family is supported by one of our Family Support Workers. In addition, the Coordinator may recommend that that family attends one of our group support sessions or parenting courses.</p> <p>The Coordinator also provides initial and ongoing training to our team of volunteers as well as liaising with referrers and other professionals as part of a multi-agency approach to family support.</p> <p>As one of the most cost-effective schemes in Surrey, the Group prides itself in offering early help and prevention support to families, reducing the risk of escalation and referral to statutory services which can be costly.</p>
1.8 Cost breakdown:	<p>The Group will use the grant of £10,000 to fund ten Co-ordinator hours per week which will enable it to provide a home-visiting service to ten Woking families at any one time.</p> <p>Salary (inc employer's NI and pension contribution) pro-rata for 10 hours per week = £7,616</p> <p>Management (including caseload supervision) and Administrator (processing new referrals) time = £1,790</p> <p>The remainder of the request would reflect the Co-ordinator's travel expense cost, phone and IT costs.</p>
1.9 Community Benefit	<p>The funding for 10 hours of Co-ordinator time would enable ten Woking families and approximately 20 to 25 children to be supported at any one time. Over the course of the year this number could increase to 20 families and 40 to 50 children, depending on the length of support. The beneficiaries of this support would be the parents, their children and the local community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents would benefit from support which is bespoke and designed

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	<p>to fit their needs. This support would help improve their parenting, well-being and ability to manage the home. In addition, volunteers help parents access local services so that, once Home-Start support is finished, they can access the help they need themselves. Home-Start aims to help parents develop greater resilience for the challenges of life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children would benefit from more consistent parenting, routines and boundaries and a more stable home life, thus giving them the best possible start in life. The Ofsted Early Years Report (March 2014) highlights that a poor start in life has a negative impact on a child's emotional and educational development in later life.• The local community benefits from the increased confidence and resilience of the family – families are better able to access community services and are more connected with their local community which leads to a reduction in dependence on statutory services. <p>The Group monitors and evaluates outcomes for parents and children on a quarterly basis using the online database 'Charity Log', tracking the family journey from the point of referral to the end of support.</p> <p>In addition, the volunteers are all local parents and benefit from the training and opportunities on offer. Many use their time volunteering as a springboard into the work. Following their training with Home-Start, previous volunteers have gone on to work with the Family Support Programme, as Outreach workers for local Family Centres and as Special Needs assistants in local primary schools. In the last year 13 new volunteers have been trained.</p>
1.10 Covid-19 Impact	<p>In March 2020 the Charity's staff began working from home and the majority of support to families (from both staff and volunteers) was remote. In summer 2020 staff began to work in the office again on a rotation basis and face-to-face resumed for some families. During autumn 2020 and spring 2021 the Group worked according to Government guidelines by supporting the majority of families remotely or with outdoor visits. Families were visited in their homes where remote or outdoor support was not suitable.</p> <p>Two new groups were launched – one for parents of children with additional needs and one for new mums – on Zoom and these proved very popular. Since May 2021 the 'normal' service has resumed with the group support continuing with planned additional groups for September 2021 onwards. Covid-19 has led to improved partnership working, for example a co-led parenting course for parents at St. Johns Primary School.</p> <p>In recent months there have been a record numbers of referrals. The number of volunteers available has reduced as many have been unable to support families due to the risk. Since the start of the pandemic there has been a rise in referrals for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Parental Mental Health – over 80% of our referrals have this listed as an issue in the 'reasons for referral'- Challenging behaviour/additional needs- Domestic abuse- Isolation – particularly in new parents

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2.0 Financial Background	
2.1 Budget	<p>At the time of the application, the Group held £167,620 in the bank. The sum of £14,570 is reserved for a Pensions Liability in the event of closure and restricted reserves of £75,000 are held for groups that are currently not able to run but for which funding has been received. In addition, the Reserves Policy requires six months' expenditure to be held.</p> <p>In addition, the trustees have committed to using £45,000 over 2 years to fund an additional member of staff to provide 1:1 support for families for whom volunteer support isn't appropriate and to lead groups to help reduce isolation in parents and children.</p> <p>The Group has submitted a budget for 2022/23 which shows an anticipated income of £116,000 against an anticipated expenditure of £160,395, resulting in an anticipated deficit of £44,395.</p>
2.2 Accounts	<p>The Group has submitted accounts for 2020/21 which show an income of £156,021 (£90,624 in 2019/20) against expenditure of £99,356 (£96,034 in 2019/20), resulting in a surplus of £56,635 (a deficit of £5,410 in 2019/20). The sum of £166,434 was carried forward at the end of the 2020/21 year.</p>
2.3 Support over the past five years	<p>2021/22 – £10,000 2020/21 – £10,000 2019/20 – £7,500 2018/19 – £7,500 2017/18 – £7,500</p>

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REPORT ENDS