

**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 £29,800 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.

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. All the partner organisations that use its facilities were working virtually during the pandemic and so visitors have also not been able to access support from them as easily, although referrals are still being made.

It is recommended that a grant of £28,700 be awarded for 2022/23, the same level as the previous year due to the work taking place in one of the Council’s priority areas. The Charity is key to supporting residents and works effectively in partnership with local services, supporting the wider determinants of health. The MASCOT Hub is situated in the heart of Sheerwater, within Canalside Ward and supports some of the borough’s most vulnerable residents. It also provides advice and guidance throughout the regeneration project. In future years, the Charity is encouraged to seek further funding support from the Council’s Funding Officer in order to increase funding opportunities from external sources, as this full grant may not be sustainable.

**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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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 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.</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 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></ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><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>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 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.</p>

**The Executive has authority to determine the above recommendations.**

### Background Papers:

2022/23 Application Form.

### Reporting Person:

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**Portfolio Holder:**

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30 November 2021

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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>Due to Covid, activities have been restricted with some held remotely and some held in person following current guidelines. The main activities have been conversational English sessions, a friendship group, career support, IT literacy support, support with Universal credit, satellite foodbank and referrals to the main Woking Foodbank and Foodwise, hearing aid maintenance sessions, internet and laptop access, signposting service, general non-professional advice, the start of online Citizens Advice sessions and starting to re-offer volunteering opportunities.</p>
1.2 Employees	2. The Community Liaison and Hub Manager for the Sheerwater area and the Community Liaison Manager.
1.3 Volunteers	18. Volunteers are currently serving clients who come for the foodbank sessions that have just restarted, assisting with the virtual English conversational sessions, and keeping contact with members of the Friendship Club. During lockdown they have also picked up shopping and prescriptions for the more vulnerable clients. Over the lockdown periods volunteers have also started and now manage a neighbourhood watch Facebook page for the Maybury and Sheerwater areas.
1.4 Clients/Users	<p>150, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>76 male</li> <li>74 female</li> <li>4 disabled</li> <li>68 ethnic minority</li> <li>137 resident in Woking</li> <li>2 aged 0-5</li> <li>0 aged 6-10</li> <li>7 aged 11-18</li> <li>128 aged 19-65</li> </ul>

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	<p>13 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	£29,800 (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 - £24,700</p> <p>Running Costs - £5,100 (includes electricity, water, telephone, insurance, account fee, IT costs, photocopying repairs and maintenance, general purchases / supplies).</p> <p>Total - £29,800</p>
1.9 Community Benefit	<p>Over the past year MASCOT has connected with 150 separate individuals and due to the change in Covid-19 guidelines it is hoping to increase that to 200 individuals. The Group will continue to support the local community with the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lets Talk conversational English sessions - to practice the English language, ask questions, make friends and find out about life in Woking.</li> <li>• The Friendship Café - running remotely with participants regularly receiving a newsletter but moving to in-person as guidelines permit and dependant on participant preference.</li> <li>• Foodwise referrals - for those struggling with shopping essentials or who are in need of readymade meals. It is also currently stocking frozen meals to give away at its discretion to needy families and individuals.</li> <li>• Foodbank - this is now open at the Mascot hub every Wednesday from 2.00pm to 4.00pm.</li> <li>• Career support - help with creating and editing CV's, online job applications, scanning and sending documents to potential employers and helping prepare for interview. It is currently advertising for a volunteer career coach to run weekly sessions.</li> <li>• Use of laptop and IT equipment - laptops and the internet will be available on a drop-in basis to get online to check emails, type up documents, internet searches and looking for necessary information.</li> <li>• Signposting to partner agencies - for those struggling with mental health, money worries, or who just don't know where to find the support they need.</li> <li>• Free WiFi - for people who have their own device but no internet.</li> </ul>

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	<p>There is a free Wifi hotspot created outside the Mascot Hub for emergencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Photocopier/printer/scanner use - for printing documents, photocopying and scanning documents that cannot be taken by hand.</li><li>• Universal Credit - support to set up and manage Universal Credit accounts.</li><li>• House bidding - for those in the Sheerwater Regeneration area needing to find alternative accommodation and bid for Council properties.</li><li>• Citizens Advice Woking - every Thursday from 10.00am to Midday local residents are able to speak to an advisor online from the privacy of the office on a drop-in basis</li><li>• One to One English Language Sessions - this will be starting in September, every Wednesday from 11.00am to 1.00pm to practice English with a tutor.</li><li>• Surrey Adult Learning Courses - from late September and running through to late November, confidence building courses will be run from the hub during weekly sessions.</li><li>• Virtual Neighbourhood Watch Scheme - engage with the local community to provide up to date information related to the improvement of safety and to share information regarding relevant crime and police issues.</li></ul>
1.10 Covid-19 Impact	<p>As an organisation it have been impacted in various ways. The Sunday art club had to stop running and the after school club has been serving local people virtually. The number of people the Group has been able to contact has decreased over the past year due to the pandemic. Until May of this year only one person could be in at the Hub at any one time; this increased to two people up until the end of July. Although there are no restrictions in place now, it is still monitoring how many people come in and placing restrictions when necessary. All activities in Maybury have also been running virtually throughout the period of restrictions. The Group has moved from serving around 380 separate individuals in previous years to 150 over this past year.</p> <p>The people supported have been affected by their concerns of leaving home and were only going out for essential matters, meaning they could not access support other than by telephone which was very limiting. This also led to isolation and in some cases a deterioration in mental health. Others have not had a way of communicating due to not having their own internet, IT equipment or smartphone. This had left them unsure of their position with Universal Credit, housing and other issues. This has now improved with the relaxation of the guidelines. Courses could not be held which would have improved confidence in topics such as IT literacy, numeracy and being job ready. 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 activities was through face to face contact. Some have been able to help virtually with the conversational English sessions for example, but the majority of volunteers have had to temporarily stop assisting. The Group also hopes to start opening</p>

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up more volunteer opportunities.

<b>2.0 Financial Background</b>	
2.1 Budget	At the time of the application, the Group held £13,832 in the bank. Its budget for 2022/23 is set out in paragraph 1.8.
2.2 Accounts	The Group has submitted accounts for 2020/21 which show an income of £33,074 (£30,158 in 2019/20) against expenditure of £31,154 (£44,300 in 2019/20), resulting in a surplus of £1,920 (a deficit of £14,142 in 2019/20). The sum of £13,832 was carried forward at the end of the 2020/21 year.
2.3 Support over the past five years	2021/22 – £28,700 towards the core costs of the service. 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.

<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 Assessment	<p>The Charity is centrally placed in Sheerwater supporting local residents with a range of support. The Charity is well known and well used by local people and considered to be a vital source of support in within the area. It is financially dependent on annual revenue funding from the Council to cover staff and service delivery costs.</p> <p>It is recommended that a grant of £28,700 be awarded for 2022/23, the same level as the previous year due to the work taking place in one of the Council's priority areas. The Charity is key to supporting residents and works effectively in partnership with local services,</p>	

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supporting the wider determinants of health. The MASCOT Hub is situated in the heart of Sheerwater, within Canalside Ward and supports some of the borough's most vulnerable residents. It also provides advice and guidance throughout the regeneration project. In future years, the Charity is encouraged to seek further funding support from the Council's Funding Officer in order to increase funding opportunities from external sources, as this full grant may not be sustainable.

REPORT ENDS