

## 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 (£1,250) and the Hearing Loss Advisor Project (£1,250).

The Eye Clinic Liaison Officer facilitates 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.

There are currently two Liaison Officers delivering this service across six NHS hospitals across Surrey, supporting medical and nursing staff in the eye clinics and subsequently providing the practical support needed for people to carry on with day to day tasks by learning how to do things differently. The service has continued remotely throughout the pandemic. In addition to the eye clinics at St Peter's and Ashford Hospitals, there is an eye imaging facility at Woking Community Hospital where eye scans can take place. Around 100 Woking residents are supported through this service a year.

With part funding from NHS Charities Together the Hearing Loss Advisor role will provide rehabilitation services to people with a hearing loss and a combined sight and hearing loss. The role will be front-line, providing an accessible Hearing Loss Advisory service for the hard of hearing, deafened people and Deaf BSL users and their families and carers to promote their choice, independence and control. The postholder would work alongside the audiology clinics, and other hearing aid providers, medical centres and GP surgeries.

Their main responsibility will be to deliver needs-led and responsive information and a person centred support service from the point of diagnosis, and to ensure the seamless transition from healthcare provision to all aspects of social care and community services for people who are experiencing difficulties as a result of hearing loss. Building on existing links with the clinics and establishing links with High Street hearing loss services the role will be important to facilitate an enabling and joined up approach to service provision to meet individual need. As this is a new post, the Charity estimates that around 75-100 Woking residents would be supported in the first year.

In light of the Council's financial situation, it is recommended that a grant of £1,575 be awarded towards the cost of the Eye Clinic Liaison Officer and Hearing Loss Advisor supporting residents of the Borough, to be allocated at the discretion of Sight for Surrey.

### Recommendations

The Executive is

**RESOLVE That**, subject to the outcome of the Council's budgetary process, a grant of £1,575 be awarded from the Community Grants

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requested to:	Budget towards the cost of the Eye Clinic Liaison Officer and Hearing Loss Advisor supporting residents of the Borough, to be allocated at the discretion of Sight for Surrey.
Reason for Decision	To enable residents in Woking who have a visual impairment to benefit from the work of the Charity.
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.
Conditions	<p><b>Accounts.</b> 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><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 websites and literature / leaflets produced.</p> <p><b>Payments.</b> Unless exceptional circumstances exist all invoices must be received quarterly with monitoring information for the previous quarter.</p> <p><b>Payment Period.</b> 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><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 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><b>Users.</b> The Organisation to provide a breakdown of the users.</p> <p><b>Activities.</b> The Organisation to provide details of activities and events held.</p> <p><b>Publicity.</b> The Organisation to advise how the Council's support has</p>

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	<p>been publicised.</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:

Julie Fisher, Chief Executive  
Extn: 3301, Email: julie.fisher@woking.gov.uk

### Contact Person:

Frank Jeffrey, Head of Democratic Services  
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:

30 November 2021

## **Sight for Surrey – Application For Financial Assistance**

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<b>1.0 Summary of Application</b>	
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 day to day services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Managing Surrey's vision impairment register</li><li>- Providing vision impairment (VI) and hearing loss (HL) specialist assessment, re-ablement and rehabilitation services.</li><li>- Delivering mobility training, independent living skills and inclusion activities for children and young people.</li><li>- Providing a presence at hospital eye clinics to help newly-diagnosed patients.</li><li>- Providing an expert low vision and hearing centre with qualified staff to help.</li><li>- Providing volunteers to support our clients such as drivers, IT helpers, befrienders.</li><li>- Providing access technology advice and support.</li><li>- Provide an outreach programme, information and signposting service through its helpdesk. In the community it strives to improve and create opportunities, improve awareness, uncover un-met need, make access to services as easy as possible and offer early assistance.</li></ul>
1.2 Employees	109, divided into the following departments: Adult Services, Children's Service, Fundraising, Finance and Administration.
1.3 Volunteers	<p>142.</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</p>

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	befriending service as a result of the pandemic.
1.4 Clients/Users	<p>7,153, comprising:</p> <p>2,699 male</p> <p>4,370 female</p> <p>7,153 disabled</p> <p>369 ethnic minority</p> <p>583 resident in Woking</p> <p>2 aged 0-5</p> <p>12 aged 6-10</p> <p>12 aged 11-18</p> <p>145 aged 19-65</p> <p>412 aged 65+</p> <p>Users have access to the following services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchasing of sight and hearing equipment aids from the Resource Centre</li> <li>• Paying for Communicator Guide Services (for those with a combined sight / hearing loss)</li> <li>• Paying for an Interpreter (mainly hearing impairment) to help out at meetings, appointments and social activities.</li> </ul> <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 for funding for two strands of its work, and if successful with funding, to allocate £1,250 to each area.</p> <p><u>Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO)</u></p> <p>ECLOs provide the bridge from Health Service diagnosis and treatment to Social Care and support in the community and at home, along with 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>There are currently two ECLOs delivering this service across six NHS hospitals across Surrey, supporting medical and nursing staff in the eye clinics and subsequently providing the practical support needed for people to carry on with day to day tasks by learning how to do things differently.</p> <p>The ECLO service has continued remotely throughout the pandemic. In addition to the eye clinics at St Peter's and Ashford Hospitals, there</p>

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is an eye imaging facility at Woking Community Hospital where eye scans can take place.

The ELCO 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.

Where appropriate, the ECLO can make referrals to Sight for Surrey's Specialist Sensory Workers / Rehabilitation Workers / 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 to undertake 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. Around 100 Woking residents are supported through this service a year.

### Hearing Loss Advisor (HLA)

With part funding from NHS Charities Together, the Charity is in the process of recruiting a new member of staff to undertake this role. It is contracted to provide rehabilitation services to people with a hearing loss and combined sight and hearing loss. One of the most important elements is to eliminate the gap between medical diagnosis and the provision of social care.

The role will be front-line, providing an accessible Hearing Loss Advisory service for the hard of hearing, deafened people and Deaf BSL users and their families/carers to promote their choice, independence and control. The Charity has a number of HLAs in post and will be as a key point of contact for hearing impaired people in the 16 hospital audiology clinics in Surrey, and services provided by Specsavers. The postholders work alongside these audiology clinics, and other hearing aid providers, medical centres and GP surgeries.

Their main responsibility will be to deliver needs-led and responsive information and a person centred support service from the point of diagnosis, and to ensure the seamless transition from healthcare provision to all aspects of social care and community services for people who are experiencing difficulties as a result of hearing loss. Building on existing links with the clinics and establishing links with High Street hearing loss services the role will be important to facilitate an enabling and joined up approach to service provision to meet individual need. As this is a new post, the Charity estimates that around 75-100 Woking residents would be supported in the first year.

### 1.8 Cost breakdown:

The ECLO service budget for 2022/23 is broken down as follows:

Salaries - £58,561

Staff Travel - £4,400

Volunteer Expenses - £500

Mobile Phones - £264

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	<p>Marketing and Sundries - £1,000</p> <p><b>Total project cost is £64,725</b></p> <p>The Hearing Loss Advisor – audiology clinics – budget for 2022/23 is broken down as follows:</p> <p>Salaries - £25,000</p> <p>Staff Travel - £2,000</p> <p>Volunteer Expenses - £500</p> <p>Mobile Phones - £160</p> <p>Marketing and Sundries - £1,000</p> <p><b>Total project cost is £28,660</b></p> <p>The Charity is seeking a donation of £2,500 from Woking Borough Council Annual Grant Fund to help support both services for the coming year.</p>
<p>1.9 Community Benefit</p>	<p>Sight for Surrey anticipates that between 150 and 200 people will benefit from the ECLO and HLA services as it is not only supporting those who are diagnosed with a sight/hearing loss, but also indirectly their friends and family and carers. With early intervention and support it aims to ensure they carry on living independently with appropriate equipment and aids in the home, and ultimately give them confidence to carry on to the best of their ability as before, which may include activities in the community. This includes communication, particularly for the hearing impaired clients, which will be so important, not just for them but with their friends and family.</p> <p>The benefits to users are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to increase education and skills</li> <li>- to improve health (physical/mental/emotional/wellbeing)</li> <li>- to help tackle disadvantage and exclusion and reduce isolation</li> <li>- to offer support networks and access to relevant services</li> <li>- to offer advice and/or signposting at each stage</li> </ul>
<p>1.10 Covid-19 Impact</p>	<p>Covid-19 has been a challenge for Sight for Surrey to continue to deliver its services to the sensory impaired community. As an organisation, staff have been able to work remotely, which has enabled clients' services to be adapted and grant and appeal fundraising to continue. It has been able to continue with a remote helpdesk to carry on providing invaluable advice to clients. Staff are now seeing more clients face to face and are following guidelines to ensure both parties are safe. Staff in general are working a mixture of home and office throughout the week. The Group is looking forward to its new outreach work and getting back to being a lot more visible in the community at meetings and events.</p> <p>The people supported have been more isolated and more worried about their condition as a result of the pandemic. They have relied upon support networks, many of which were unable to continue. It is fortunate that it has been able to continue helping them or directing them to others that can help. Feedback has been received that the</p>



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	<p>services provided with the challenges faced have made such a huge difference to their lives. Many users are keen to come into our Resource Centre for equipment and getting on with rehabilitation with specialist staff. The virtual befriender scheme has also been very popular and is continuing.</p>
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<b>2.0 Financial Background</b>	
2.1 Budget	<p>At the time of the application, the Group held £990,300 in the bank. The charity has a policy of holding a calculated operational contingency, which is £585,000 for this financial year, in cash. The vast majority is classed as restricted as per its Reserves Policy leaving £25,943 as unrestricted reserves.</p> <p>The Group has submitted a budget for 2022/23 which shows an anticipated income of £2,677,500 against an anticipated expenditure of £2,662,200, resulting in an anticipated surplus of £15,300.</p>
2.2 Accounts	<p>Sight for Surrey has submitted draft accounts for 2020/21 which show an income of £2,664,924 (£2,453,360 in 2019/20) against expenditure of £2,342,018 (£2,472,592 in 2019/20), resulting in a surplus of £322,906 (a deficit of £19,232 in 2019/20). The sum of £25,943 was carried forward at the end of the 2020/21 year.</p>
2.3 Support over the past five years	<p>2021/22 – £2,500 (WBC £1,750, SCC Members Allocations £750)                  2020/21 – £3,300                  2019/20 – £2,460</p>

<b>3.0 Assessment of Application</b>																																					
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>Yes</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>No</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	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	Equal Opportunities Policy	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	Safeguarding Policy	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	Reserves Policy	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	Quality Mark	No	<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 Assessment	<p>In view of the Council's financial situation, it is recommended that a grant be awarded at a level of 10% less than that awarded last year, equating to £1,575 for 2022/23 towards the cost of the Eye Clinic Liaison Officer and Hearing Loss Advisor supporting residents of the</p>																																				

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Borough, to be allocated at the discretion of Sight for Surrey.

REPORT ENDS