

SURREY CARE TRUST – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Executive Summary

Established in 1982, Surrey Care Trust provides learning, training and mentoring to support young people and adults in improving their chances in life. The Group offers a one to one mentoring service for young people linking with local secondary schools; a free counselling service for young adults; STEPS to 16 – an Alternative Education Provision specialising in supporting and re-engaging those unable to access mainstream education; and parenting support with adult Learning opportunities.

All service users live with at least one disadvantage such as a child with additional needs, behaviour management and relationship issues, or poor mental health and emotional wellbeing. During the course of counselling, young people become able to identify the causes of their situation whilst developing coping strategies to help resolve and improve their circumstances. As they grow older they would be able to apply the learning received to other areas of their lives.

The Organisation has applied to extend its funding awarded to support its STEPS Alternative Learning Provision for 14 to 16 year olds by way of a grant of £5,000. The students are vulnerable teenagers who have been rejected from mainstream education and struggle with mental illness, bereavement family troubles and extreme poverty. Held at the dedicated Learning Centre in Goldsworth Park, up to 24 students are supported each year by attending for up to 18 hours each week. The latest figures show that 100% of STEPS leavers were in further education or employment within a period of three months. The grant of £5,000 would fully fund a full academic term of Life Skills training for 8 students based in Woking.

In light of the Council's financial position, it is recommended that the Council makes a contribution of £4,500 towards the STEPS Alternative Learning Provision for 14 to 16 year olds, set at the same level as the current year's support less a reduction of 10%. The STEPS programme provides excellent support to Woking young people and Surrey Care Trust are a respected and valued partner, supporting vulnerable residents across a range of ages. This grant is a contribution towards the excellent work the Charity delivers locally.

Recommendations

The Executive is requested to:

RESOLVE That, subject to the outcome of the Council's budgetary process, a grant of £4,500 be awarded from the Community Grants Budget towards the free STEPS Alternative Learning Provision in Woking.

Reason for Decision

To enable Surrey Care Trust to continue to run the STEPS Youth Counselling service for 16 to 25 year olds in 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

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<p>Conditions</p>	<p>for the 2022/23 funding until this confirmation has been received.</p> <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. Payments will be based on the cost assumptions of the Charity and the number of tea visits organised for Woking residents.</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 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
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	<p>to include website, YouTube or social media sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 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 including the number of Woking residents to benefit.</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>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.

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1.0 Summary of Application	
1.1 Status and Aims	<p>Surrey Care Trust was founded in 1982 to tackle disadvantage, social exclusion and hardship in local communities. Today, it continues this work through its unique skills training and mentoring approach, working to make Surrey a place where vulnerable and excluded families are given the opportunity, skills and support to achieve their potential, make a positive contribution and create positive outcomes.</p> <p>The Group reaches out to vulnerable young people and families, supporting and equipping them with the skills they need to build their resilience and self-reliance, improve their economic situation, reduce their social isolation and build a more positive future.</p> <p>A number of services for vulnerable young people and adults living in Woking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:1 mentoring support for young people (11-25 years) linking with local secondary schools and SCC's Early Help Hub • A free counselling service for 16-25s: long term support for young people unable to access support • STEPS to 16: an Alternative Education Provision specialising in supporting and re-engaging 14 to 16 year olds unable to access mainstream education due to challenges such as social disadvantage, mental and emotional ill health • Steps2Work, working in collaboration with the DWP and Woking Borough Council, supporting young people who are out of work to find employment via personal support, skills training and guidance. <p>As such all of our services users will be living with at least one, but usually more, disadvantage such as children with additional needs; behaviour management and relationship issues; poor mental health and emotional wellbeing; low self-esteem and / or substance misuse; speech & language; housing support needs; poor parenting skills & strategies; relationships and home life; financial needs; domestic abuse; and social isolation.</p>
1.2 Employees	48, including the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, HR Co-ordinator, Finance Manager, Fundraising and Marketing Manager, all of whom manage small teams. One programme, Swingbridge boats, is managed by a volunteer steering group.
1.3 Volunteers	512, whose activities include Mentoring, Counselling STEPS learning centre, admin, fundraising events, activities on the Swingbridge boats.
1.4 Clients/Users	<p>Approximately 3,330, of which circa 220 are resident in Woking:</p> <p>Only the Swingbridge boats make a small charge for some of the activities delivered. In most cases the charges are subsidised by the Trust, for example when activities are undertaken by other community groups or charities.</p>
1.5 Members	N/A
1.6 Sum Requested	£5,000 (Revenue)

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1.7 Project

The Group is seeking funding to support its STEPS: Alternative Learning Provision for 14-16 year olds in Woking.

STEPS provides education, support and opportunities to some of the most vulnerable 14-16 year olds: those who, without STEPS, would not be getting an education at all. At STEPS, disadvantaged teenagers are taught a tailored combination of:

- life skills, which set them up to live independently as adults;
- functional skills, which give them meaningful qualifications to help enter employment or further education; and
- enrichment activities, including visual arts, music, performing arts, sports and craft.

The students are vulnerable teenagers, rejected from mainstream education due to issues beyond their control. Their struggles include mental illness, bereavement, family troubles, learning disabilities and extreme poverty. These disadvantages exhibit as a range of problems that mainstream schools are ill-equipped to handle: truancy, anxiety, lack of concentration, academic immaturity, anger management, self-harm and more.

Unlike mainstream schools' focus on solely academic achievement, which is not optimal for students in deprivation, the approach is intensive and personalised. The Trust recognises that every young person is capable of leading a fulfilling life, but those facing disadvantage need more support. STEPS goes above and beyond the norm, ensuring each young student is equipped, not only with academic qualifications, but with the experience, skills and support to build a flourishing independent adult life.

STEPS is based in the dedicated Learning Centre in Goldsworth Park, which is equipped with two classrooms, a kitchen (for teaching our students cookery skills), a small allotment and an outdoor area for recreation and sport. Up to 24 students each year are supported, each attending STEPS for up to 18 hours per week. The participants leave equipped with C&G accredited Functional Skills qualifications, OCN-accredited Life Skills qualifications, and major improvements to their mental health, social skills, confidence and aspirations. The most recent figures from the Group show that 100% of STEPS leavers were in further education or employment within three months: compared to less than 70% from equivalent provisions.

1.8 Cost breakdown:

The following cost breakdown for Surrey Care Trust's STEPS service for 14-16 year olds has been submitted:

Staff costs - £123,732

Central Project support - £23,284

Facility costs - £5,650

Equipment and IT costs - £3,497

Course Fees (non-staff) - £1,800

Minibus Costs - £2,950

Student Meals and Expenses - £4,000

Phone and Internet Costs - £3,322

Training Materials - £1,500

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	<p>Trips, visits and entry fees - £2,400</p> <p>Administration Costs - £3,116</p> <p>Total - £175,251</p> <p>Referring schools pay a per-student fee, which usually corresponds with around 60% of STEPS' costs. The remainder of the costs are supported with voluntary funding. This aligns with the principle that schools are funding students' Functional Skills teaching, but charitable funding is supporting their Life Skills training and personal, emotional wellbeing support: the essential, additional element of STEPS which changes vulnerable young lives and is what makes STEPS different to other provisions.</p> <p>A grant of £5,000 would fully fund a full academic term of Life Skills training for eight students.</p>
1.9 Community Benefit	<p>The Group can support up to 24 students at STEPS, and anticipates supporting at least 20 across the next year. Many more, such as the students' parents, siblings and friends, indirectly benefit as the students' behaviour, mental health and future prospects improve. The connections with secondary schools also lead to benefits in their wider school community, as it supports their School Inclusion work with vulnerable students and operates alongside their pastoral teams.</p>
1.10 Covid-19 Impact	<p>The Trust states that it is proud of the way its services have kept operating during the lockdown periods, as research shows that the crisis has negatively impacted the most disadvantaged families and individuals. Poorer households have been hit the hardest economically; the education gap is widening, with a corresponding impact on employment chances (teachers in disadvantaged schools have twice as frequently seen 'much lower quality' school work during lockdown); and socially isolated people and those with mental health issues have seen relationships break down under the increased pressure (affecting 12% of people overall).</p> <p>Surrey Care Trust has been conducting its own research, identifying the impact on Surrey residents who struggle with poverty, mental health, family breakdowns and low skills. Mental health was the collective biggest issue for beneficiaries: 85% felt more anxious than pre-pandemic, 89% felt more isolated and 80% felt less confident. This reduction in self-confidence was particularly striking, as its research shows that it nearly doubled as the pandemic dragged on for longer than most people had anticipated.</p>

2.0 Financial Background	
2.1 Budget	<p>At the time of the application, the Group held £666,000 in the bank. The sum of £299,000 is reserved as deferred income specifically committed to ongoing work which the Trust is obliged to carry out.</p> <p>The Group has submitted a budget for 2022/23 which shows an anticipated income of £1,501,899 against an anticipated expenditure of £1,804,918, resulting in an anticipated deficit of £303,020.</p> <p>Surrey Care Trust currently holds the Early Help contract from Surrey County Council in ten Surrey boroughs (including Woking), delivering</p>

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	Early Help interventions in partnership with Home-Start Surrey.
2.2 Accounts	The Group has submitted accounts for July 2020 which show an income of £1,318,921 (£1,201,672 in 2019/20) against expenditure of £1,243,751 (£1,130,965 in 2019/20), resulting in a surplus of £75,170 (a deficit of £70,707 in 2019/20). The sum of £331,098 was carried forward at the end of the 2020/21 year.
2.3 Support over the past five years	2021/22 – £5,000 2020/21 – £5,000 2019/20 – £1,600 2018/19 – no grant awarded. 2017/18 – no grant awarded.

3.0 Assessment of Application		
3.1 Key Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Constitution ○ Registered Charity ○ VAT Registered ○ Equal Opportunities Policy ○ Safeguarding Policy ○ Reserves Policy ○ Quality Mark ○ Other funding sources pursued ○ Other support by the Council ○ Fundraising ○ Two quotes ○ Regular monitoring provided previously 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes Yes No Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes * No N/A Yes
3.2 Assessment	<p>This application is for a contribution towards the cost of alternative education provision for Woking young people aged 14-16. The Charity has again applied for the lower grant as was awarded last year.</p> <p>It is recommended that a grant of £4,500 should be awarded for 2022/23. The STEPS programme provides excellent support to Woking young people and Surrey Care Trust are a respected and valued partner, supporting vulnerable residents across a range of ages. This grant is a contribution towards the excellent work the charity delivers locally.</p>	

REPORT ENDS