

**WOKING PEOPLE OF FAITH – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

<b>Executive Summary</b>	
<p>Woking People of Faith is a multi-faith organisation providing a platform for people to get together and gain an understanding of each other. Woking People of Faith has been supported by the Council, through the Community Support Scheme and previously through community cohesion funding received from the Department of Communities and Local Government.</p> <p>The Group has applied for funding at the level of £9,000 for 2022/23 towards the salary of its part-time consultant Co-ordinator and a contribution towards its running costs. The Co-ordinator post is necessary to maintain the programme of events and meetings held each year. The activities previously held include the annual football tournament, Refugee Week and an event to mark the International Day of Peace.</p> <p>Due to Covid-19, planned events had to be cancelled due to Covid-19 and the Group has been working remotely to provide regular online events. Over the past year, 402 people have benefitted from the work of the Charity, in comparison with 176 over the previous year.</p> <p>In light of the Council’s financial situation, it is recommended that a grant be awarded of £1,000 for 2022/23 and the Group is encouraged to link with the Family and Community Services Manager. This is to connect the group with the wider Council opportunities including the use of buildings and wider assets to support this work. Woking People of Faith is an important local Charity and this grant will support the excellent inter-faith and cultural work, bringing people together within the Borough for a shared vision. In future years the Group is encouraged to explore how to reduce administration and hiring costs, to enable it to be sustainable and to encourage collective financial input into the vision from the different parties involved, including revenue support and free use of assets across the borough, as owned by the members.</p>	

<b>Recommendations</b>	
The Executive is requested to:	<b>RESOLVE That</b> , subject to the outcome of the Council’s budgetary process, a grant of £1,000 be awarded from the Community Grants Budget towards the core costs of the Group.
Reason for Decision	To enable the Group to continue to build strong relationships between people of different faiths and culture in the Borough.
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	<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

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for other years may also be required.

**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.

**Publicity.** Where possible, the Organisation is required to publicise the support received from Woking Borough Council, including on all literature and leaflets produced.

**Payments.** Unless exceptional circumstances exist all invoices must be received quarterly with details of the costs incurred and monitoring information for the previous quarter.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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:

- 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 to include website, YouTube or social media sites.
- How many people are likely to attend (check previous or similar events either locally or online).

Performance Indicators

**Users.** The Organisation to provide a breakdown of the users in the past quarter.

**Activities.** The Organisation to provide details of activities and

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	<p>events held 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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### Contact Person:

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### Portfolio Holder:

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### Shadow Portfolio Holder:

Cllr Will Forster  
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### Date Published:

30 November 2021

## **Working People of Faith – Application For Financial Assistance**

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<b>1.0 Summary of Application</b>	
1.1 Status and Aims	<p>The organisation was formed in 2006 under the guidance of Woking Borough Council. The aim is to promote religious harmony for the benefit of the public in Woking and environs and the objectives are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote knowledge, mutual understanding and respect of the beliefs and practices of different faiths;</li> <li>• advance the education and understanding of different beliefs including an awareness of their distinctive features and their common ground;</li> <li>• promote good relations between people of different faiths;</li> <li>• seek to secure a more prominent role for faith organisations in their communities; and</li> <li>• celebrate the important contribution that religious faith makes to the lives of the local community.</li> </ul> <p>The main activities include delivering public meetings; and developing programmes such as educational visits, sport events and community service.</p>
1.2 Employees	<p>None. The Group hires a part-time Administrator on a consultancy basis for 15 hours a week.</p>
1.3 Volunteers	<p>16, whose activities include overseeing the business and activities of the Charity.</p> <p>All the Trustees are volunteers and form the Management Committee. Each Trustee is responsible for organising and running at least one event per year which follows the Group's aims of improving understanding between people of different faith and cultures, such as conversations from different faith perspectives to an audience of various faith and ethnic backgrounds, inter-faith sports events, cooking sessions from different cultural regions; religious education support in schools and coffee mornings with no fixed agendas.</p> <p>The Trustees are voted in each year at the AGM and abide by the Constitution. Trustees include Imams from both the Shia and Sunni communities, Christians, a Jew, a Baha'i and a Hindu.</p>
1.4 Clients/Users	<p>In the last year the events reached around 402 people (an increase on the previous year of 176) which included a variety of different ages and cultures. No charge is made to its users.</p> <p>The Group states that members of the public in Woking are invited to attend its community initiatives and highlights that its constitution encourages faith establishments to join as institutional members.</p> <p>Schools use the Forum's services to educate their pupils about multi-faith issues; work takes place with Woking Borough Council to co-host their Annual Refugee Week Event; Faith Institutions use the Forum to run events such as talks and pilgrimage walks; Brookwood Cemetery use its services to hold an annual multi-faith service; and work takes place with Horsell Common Preservation Society each year to an environmental clean-up event.</p>

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1.5 Members	14, all based in Woking. Members per £15 per year and are faith institutions such as Churches, Mosques and Temples which nominate representatives from their organisations onto the Management Committee.
1.6 Sum Requested	£9,000 (Revenue)
1.7 Project	The funding would be used to continue the employment of an Administrator on a part-time basis (15 hours per week), along with making a contribution towards the costs of holding events such as hall hire, A/V equipment and prizes for children and inter-faith sports competitions.
1.8 Cost breakdown:	A budget for the Group is set out in section 2.1 below.
1.9 Community Benefit	<p>The activities of the Forum are completely voluntarily attended, which it states shows that people enjoy attending them and that there is a need for different cultures to interact together in positive situations and learning environments.</p> <p>In a usual year events will be held such as the International Day of Peace Competition; sports events; environmental events in collaboration with the Horsell Common Protection Society; ladies' Zoom Coffee Mornings; virtual cooking sessions; tours of Shah Jahan Mosque; and conversation events such as 'Faith in Action: In Conversation With...'. The Forum has adapted during the pandemic to hold events virtually by Zoom.</p> <p>The Forum was also invited to submit an article on its work for the Woking magazine in 2021 to create awareness and encourage further participation from the community.</p>
1.10 Covid-19 Impact	<p>Woking People of Faith had to cancel some of its planned events due to the pandemic, requiring it to adapt and restructure its events to be held online via Zoom, for example Trustee, Events, and Officers meetings as well as Events Committee Meetings to cater for the change and keeping up with the latest developments around Covid-19. Online meetings are something that the Group will keep going forward to cut out unnecessary travel and the impact on the environment. It will also consider keeping a link once events go back to being live for people who aren't able to always attend, due to health or mobility issues, as they have felt more included via Zoom.</p> <p>The Trustees have written a 'Thought for the Week' and posted it on its website and Facebook page. This varies from each faith denomination with the aim of keeping members positive. It has advertised how to access different faith institutions' online services whilst their buildings were closed or social distancing measures were in place.</p>

<b>2.0 Financial Background</b>
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2.1 Budget	<p>At the time of the application, the Group held £26,193 in the bank.</p> <p>The Group has submitted its planned expenditure budget for 2022/23, totalling £14,350, with no income identified.</p> <p>Items of expenditure include Co-ordinator (£9,700), Events (£3,000), Telephone / Stationery (£830), Insurance (£500) and Website (£320).</p>
2.2 Accounts	<p>The Group has submitted accounts for 2020/21 which show an income of £15,260 (£15,495 in 2019/20) against expenditure of £10,250 (£11,267 in 2019/20), resulting in a surplus of £5,009 (a surplus of £4,228 in 2019/20). The sum of £25,782 was carried forward at the end of the 2020/21 year.</p>
2.3 Support over the past five years	<p>2021/22 – £5,000</p> <p>2020/21 – £15,000</p> <p>2019/20 – £15,000</p> <p>2018/19 – £15,000</p> <p>2017/18 – £15,000</p>

<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>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>No</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>No</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>No</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>Yes</p>
3.2 Assessment	<p><u>Officer Comments</u></p> <p>In light of the Council's financial situation, it is recommended that a grant be awarded of £1,000 for 2022/23 and the Group is encouraged to link with the Family and Community Services Manager. This is to link the group with the wider Council opportunities including use of buildings and wider assets to support this work. Woking People of Faith is an important local charity and this grant will support the excellent inter-faith and cultural work, bringing people together within the borough for a shared vision. In future years the group are encouraged to explore how to reduce administration and hiring costs, to enable the group to be sustainable and to encourage collective financial input into the vision from the different parties involved, including revenue support and free use of assets across the borough,</p>	

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as owned by the members.

### Comments from Councillor Appointed to Group (Councillor Louise Morales)

I support the application from Woking People of Faith which provides a unique service to the people of Woking in promoting a greater understanding and recognition between the many different faith groups within Woking, striving to increase community cohesion with this greater understanding of each other. Woking People of Faith has held both online and covid safe in person events this year to allow people of different faiths to engage with each other including the following:

- Interfaith cricket and football tournaments;
- Interfaith community work party on Horsell common clearing invasive species;
- regular thought for the week from different faiths on their website;
- Interfaith “buddy” system to link women of different faiths which has evolved from the online women’s coffee mornings;
- online “doing God together”;
- updating website links for schools offering online materials and in person talks from the many different faith groups who are members of Woking People of Faith.

REPORT ENDS