

YORK ROAD PROJECT – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Executive Summary

The Council has supported the York Road Project for many years, providing annual revenue funding to cover the costs for the daytime drop-in centre and Café; the costs of the drop-in centre and Café operations; and the provision of workshops such as tenancy training, food hygiene and IT skills.

During 2021/22 the Project housed over 175 clients at HG Wells and the Travelodge. In the previous year's stats, 118 were housed in the Night Shelter for the entire year. The Group notes that there is a clear need for the services of the group, which could be heightened in the coming months when Property Owners can evict due to non-payment of rent during lockdown. An effect of lockdown was that clients stayed for much longer than the usual 21 days. As an example, a client who has a substance misuse support need would have three staff working with them from the Drug Worker, the Tenancy Worker, and the Mental Health worker.

The Organisation has applied to extend its annual revenue funding of £53,400 during the coming year. The purpose of the application is to continue the current service provision funded by the Council, with the aim of reaching more clients and engaging with them to support their individual needs on a 24/7 basis since the onset of the pandemic.

Regarding funding from Surrey County Council, a letter was received in February 2020 to inform the Charity that due to the pandemic it would be awarded a 2% increase across the Adult Social Care sector. It should be noted that in previous years the contract had not risen in line with running costs which put a strain on the Group's ability to deliver its services. However the Charity recognises the difficulties faced by statutory services and continues to source additional funding from other sources including voluntary donations.

The York Road Project was an essential part of the support that the Council was able to give with the Government's 'Every One In' policy during the pandemic. They work hard to provide a 'wrap around' service to their homeless clients and continue to support them once they are in move on accommodation. This is proving very necessary to help the clients maintain their tenancies and not become homeless again. They are exploring other areas for funding and income generation.

In light of the Council's financial situation, it is recommended that the application for funding be approved at the level of last year less 10%, equating to £48,100.

Recommendations

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| The Executive is requested to: | RESOLVE That , subject to the outcome of the Council's budgetary process, funding of £48,100 be awarded from the Community Grants Budget towards the cost of the service. |
| Reason for Decision | To enable the York Road Project to continue its existing valued service provision 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, |

York Road Project – Application For Financial Assistance

| | |
|------------|--|
| | <p>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>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. 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 |

York Road Project – Application For Financial Assistance

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| | <p>overseas & will they travel specifically for this event?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 | <p>Users. The Organisation to provide a breakdown of the users in the past quarter.</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.

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

York Road Project – Application For Financial Assistance

Shadow Portfolio Holder:

Cllr Will Forster

Email: cllrwill.forster@woking.gov.uk

Date Published:

30 November 2021

York Road Project – Application For Financial Assistance

1.0 Summary of Application

1.1 Status and Aims

The York Road Project began in 1995 and registered as a Charity in 2001. The Group shares the Christian gospel of God's love and compassion to those in need in the Borough of Woking and surrounding areas regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion, belief and sexual orientation. The York Road Project believes that everyone has a right to a home, regardless of the difficulties and issues they may face in their lives and provides essential support to the community in the form of:

- the provision of temporary Night Shelter accommodation;
- the provision of 'move on' accommodation; and
- the provision of a Day Centre to provide information, support and an opportunity to achieve by taking part in courses and activities.

The Project is the only organisation in Surrey which provides a full wrap-around service for people experiencing homelessness in one area. It understands that homelessness cannot be "fixed" by just providing a roof but providing a unique support plan for clients greatly improves the chances of sourcing sustainable accommodation. This requires input from various services and often takes several years to achieve. The Project is strategically placed within the community to provide a high level of care in a unique way as all the homelessness services are under one umbrella. This enables the Project to offer consistency to clients and partner agencies alike.

It works closely with Housing Services at Woking Borough Council often taking clients when other organisations are unable to support. Its principle of no permanent or indefinite bans means it can work with clients long term and help them to address their issues including offending, substance misuse, physical and mental health difficulties. It also takes clients upon discharge from hospitals, prisons and Social Services preventing them from rough sleeping in Woking.

The Project offers an 10 bed night shelter and 22 move on beds and a Day Centre where clients can stay longer and work towards employment, better physical and mental health, and learn to start to live independently with the support of their Tenancy Sustainment Officers. Whilst accommodation is the ultimate aim, stopping the cycle of homelessness requires an integrated, holistic, approach. The Day Centre offers activities aimed at building self-esteem and confidence. The Project liaises with external agencies some of which work in partnership to support clients with reducing alcohol, drug use and providing advice around managing and reducing debts.

The Outreach Team engages with rough sleepers across both Woking and Waverley Boroughs, and they actively find rough sleepers in the community, engaging with them to support them to come in off the streets and into accommodation, including the night shelter.

The Project also employs an Assertive Outreach and Criminal Justice Navigator and, in February 2021, added a Drug & Alcohol Navigator to the team. The latter's role is to work with clients who have a substance misuse support need and to support clients one-to-one, advising them and educating clients with harm minimisation and

York Road Project – Application For Financial Assistance

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| | <p>to work with statutory and non-statutory services to support them into treatment when they are ready.</p> <p>During the pandemic the organisation had to adapt significantly to the ever changing client group. It continues to diversify to ensure that no-one should rough sleep in Woking.</p> |
| <p>1.2 Employees</p> | <p>22, as set out below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chief Executive - Day Services Team Leader - Accommodation Team Leader - Community Fundraiser - Day Centre Co-ordinator x2 - Tenancy Sustainment Officer x2 - Assertive Outreach Worker - Outreach Worker - Restorative Justice Navigator - Drug and Alcohol Navigator - Bookkeeper - Administrator - Kitchen Supervisor - Cleaner - Night Project Workers x 4 - Bank Workers for Night Shelter x2 |
| <p>1.3 Volunteers</p> | <p>4.</p> <p>The Project has had several volunteers help at the start of the pandemic when moving from the Prop & Night Shelter to HG Wells, helping to transfer across food donations and office equipment, alongside assisting with cooking food for up to 58 people per night at both HG Wells and the Travel Lodge.</p> <p>In recent months there has been a decline in volunteers due to uncertainty over how long they would be based at the current facility and volunteers returning to their full time jobs. The Charity will look to gain more volunteers as it returns to the shelter at the end of September 2021.</p> <p>Volunteers offer a range of skills including from IT to gardening. As part of their Induction all volunteers are DBS checked and they are supported to read and sign all policies and procedures.</p> <p>The Project encourages its clients to get involved with supporting the services used at the Prop, the Night Shelter, or Move on Accommodation. Clients also help with maintenance, sorting through donations, painting at properties, gardening, artwork at properties and with the preparation of food for lunches and evening meals at the Night Shelter.</p> |
| <p>1.4 Clients/Users</p> | <p>175, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 148 male 27 female 0 disabled 35 ethnic minority |

York Road Project – Application For Financial Assistance

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| | <p>144 resident in Woking</p> <p>175 aged 19-65</p> <p>0 aged 65+</p> <p>During 2021/22 the Project housed over 175 clients at HG Wells and the Travelodge. In the previous year's stats, 118 were housed in the Night Shelter for the entire year.</p> <p>Clients are expected to pay towards their stay in the accommodation: £14 per week in the Night Shelter and £10 / £15 per week in move-on accommodation.</p> <p>Day Centre clients do not pay for the support or lunch they receive if they engage with the services. The kitchen serves approximately 10,000 meals each year to clients in the past year, alongside around 1,600 food parcels to clients who are struggling financially.</p> <p>Clients accessing the day centre do not pay for any activities they attend, training/qualifications, trips out or toiletries and clothing. These are funded via donations and the current grant from the Council.</p> |
| 1.5 Members | None. |
| 1.6 Sum Requested | £53,400 (Revenue) |
| 1.7 Project | <p>The grant would be used as a continuation for the services funded in previous years and is essential to allow the Group to continue to provide the services currently delivered. The Group will provide a wrap-around service with the aims of reaching more clients and engaging them to support their individual needs.</p> <p>When the Project returns to the Shelter, it will look to support clients with cooking the evening meals for them and others they live with, partly due to the size of the kitchen at the Shelter but also to increase the skills base of clients. Basic cooking workshops and support will be provided, with a rota system set up. During the pandemic the services had to open 7 days a week (previously 6). To operate on a 24/7 basis the weekend workers will be required, which has been included in the grant bid.</p> |
| 1.8 Cost breakdown: | <p>Day Centre Co-ordinator - £21,000</p> <p>Saturday and Sunday Co-ordinators - £21,000</p> <p>Cleaner - £5,400</p> <p>Employers NI - £1,700</p> <p>Pension - £1,100</p> <p>Client Rewards - £800</p> <p>External training - £1,200</p> <p>External facilitators - £1,200</p> <p>Total costs - £53,400</p> |
| 1.9 Community Benefit | <p>The Group states that it is very difficult to quantify how many people in the wider community are positively impacted through its work. However, it believes that it supports both those directly suffering from homelessness and the community as a whole. Prior to the pandemic the Project would take part in the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational talks to schools, churches and other organisations |

York Road Project – Application For Financial Assistance

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| | <p>with the aim of raising awareness around homelessness – the Group aims to go into 30 different schools and community groups to provide this service, with each talk being delivered to between 20-300 individuals;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Litter picking (including removal of cans and drug paraphernalia) – undertaken in Woking town centre and a benefit to all members of the community and businesses in the area; - World Homelessness Day – setting up an interactive stall in the Town Centre with the aim of giving the public a better understanding of homelessness and demonstrating that it can happen to anyone. |
| 1.10 Covid-19 Impact | <p>The Group states that the pandemic has shown that its services need to be operating 24 hours a day. Previously there were gaps with service delivery requiring clients to wait for accessing accommodation such as the Shelter. There was no opening on a Saturday due to funding constraints. During the pandemic, the service was adapted to offer a 24-hour service and help people avoid having to rough sleep.</p> <p>The wellbeing of the staff is very important particularly during the past 18 months; as a service the Project has gone over and above to make sure those supported have a roof over their heads. As part of its values, it has looked at how to support and offer a safe and supportive environment for clients and staff.</p> <p>The clients have become part of how the services evolve going forward and they have been included in interviews when recruiting fresh staff to services. They have also been involved in questionnaires on how they would like services to be delivered and it is imperative that their voices are heard as they have the lived experience.</p> <p>The Project also had the privilege of HRH The Countess of Wessex volunteer three times during the last year, with the most recent visit in March including HRH the Earl of Wessex. They met with staff and volunteers and heard about the work carried out locally in the Borough.</p> |

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 2.0 Financial Background | |
| 2.1 Budget | <p>At the time of the application, the Group held £602,036 in the bank, with 3-6 months' reserves set aside in case of a loss of funding. The Group has also received funding during 2020/21 from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Waverley Borough Council and Safe Haven.</p> <p>The Group has submitted a budget for 2022/23 which shows an anticipated income of £747,985 against an anticipated expenditure of £771,979, resulting in an anticipated deficit of £23,995.</p> |
| 2.2 Accounts | <p>The Group has submitted accounts for 2020/21 which show an income of £999,152 (£775,872 in 2019/20) against expenditure of £808,130 (£742,272 in 2019/20), resulting in a surplus of £191,022 (a surplus of £33,600 in 2019/20). The sum of £521,061 was carried forward at the end of the 2020/21 year.</p> |

York Road Project – Application For Financial Assistance

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 2.3 Support over the past five years | 2021/22 – £53,400 2020/21 – £53,400 2019/20 – £53,400 2018/19 – £53,400 2017/18 – £53,400 |
|--------------------------------------|---|

| 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 <p>* Discretionary Rate Relief</p> | Yes Yes No Yes Yes Yes No Yes Yes * Yes N/A Yes |
| 3.2 Assessment | <p>The York Road Project was an essential part of the support that WBC was able to give with the Government's 'Every One In' policy during the pandemic. They work hard to provide a 'wrap around' service to their homeless clients and continue to support them once they are in move on accommodation. This is proving very necessary to help the clients maintain their tenancies and not become homeless again. They are exploring other areas for funding and income generation.</p> <p>In light of the Council's financial position, it is recommended that a grant be awarded at a reduced level of 10% from last year, equating to £48,100 for 2022/23.</p> | |

REPORT ENDS