

**SURREY MINORITY ETHNIC FORUM – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

**Executive Summary**

The Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum (SMEF) aims to unify multi ethnic communities from across Surrey by amplifying their collective voices and aspirations and sharing with key stakeholders. Activities are run for older people and women with four annual events hosted which the Group's diverse membership together to seek solutions to social and economic challenges. The objective is to create a more cohesive county, ensuring that there is equality of opportunity for all.

SMEF has applied for funding towards utilising a space at Export House to develop a SMEF Hub in Woking. The funding would go towards the salary of a part-time Hub Manager and towards the purchase of capital equipment including five laptops. SMEF would then be able to offer its members space to hold their community groups, create a safe space from where subjects like domestic abuse and substance misuse can be discussed, and hold a community drop-in resource for vulnerable adults, older people, women and children. Currently SMEF has 23 members groups based in Woking representing diverse communities.

It is clear that the SMEF works hard to provide opportunities to its members, for example its work with the Maybury Centre and local schools. Taking into account the consultee comments which, whilst noting the good work of the organisation, state that the proposal is not deliverable at Export House, which is not a community facility, and that the Council is already well linked with the community groups supported by SMEF, it is recommended that no grant be awarded.

**Recommendations**

The Executive is requested to:

**RESOLVE That** no grant be awarded.

Reason for Decision

The Council is already well linked with the community groups supported by the Forum.

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

**Background Papers:**

2019/20 Application Form.

**Reporting Person:**

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**Portfolio Holder:**

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## Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum – Application For Financial Assistance

<b>1.0 Summary of Application</b>	
1.1 Status and Aims	<p>Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum (SMEF) was set up in 2009 as a 5 year project managed by Surrey Community Action, funded by the Big Lottery with the aim of addressing the need for a representative body to voice the needs and aspirations of a growing BAME population in Surrey. In 2013, SMEF acquired independent company and charitable status.</p> <p>SMEF aims to unify multi ethnic communities from across Surrey by amplifying their collective voices and aspirations and sharing with key stakeholders. Activities are run for older people and women with four annual events hosted which the Group's diverse membership together to seek solutions to social and economic challenges. The objective is to create a more cohesive county, ensuring that there is equality of opportunity for all.</p> <p>SMEF's mission is to engage and empower BAME communities to work together to actively find solutions to the social and economic challenges they face living in today's Britain. In the past three years SMEF has consolidated work in three areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• issues that hold stigma for BAME communities;</li> <li>• reducing isolation of older people and women; and</li> <li>• providing a platform for people to come to together to voice their opinions and advocate for their needs and aspirations.</li> </ul> <p>At present SMEF is delivering five projects across the County:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 'Active Communities' funded by the Office of the Police &amp; Crime Commissioner with a focus on integration and community safety. Funded up to March 2020</li> <li>2. 'Milan' focusing on developing resilience in neighbourhoods funded by the People's Health Trust funded up to August 2019.</li> <li>3. A Women's Empowerment Project funded by Community Foundation for Surrey funded up to May 2019.</li> <li>4. 'Core Strength' funded by Comic Relief to develop work with our member groups funded up to March 2019</li> <li>5. A Nepali Elder's project funded by the Pargiter Trust and Surrey Heath Fund up to October 2018.</li> </ol> <p>A weekly drop in session is held for elderly Nepali people at the Maybury Centre. Work is undertaken with local schools: the New Monument Academy, Broadmere Academy and Maybury Primary School where sessions are run for parents on Domestic Abuse, Harmful Traditional Practices (Forced Marriage, Honour based Violence), Online Safety and Child Sexual exploitation. Events have also been hosted on Hate Crime, Women's Employment and Youth Mental Health.</p>
1.2 Employees	<p>5, comprising Executive Director (35 hours), Project Co-ordinator (21 hours), Community Facilitator (17.5 hours), 2 x Community Facilitator (totalling 14 hours per week).</p> <p>The Executive Director has over 25 years' experience of working in the charity sector, mainly gathered working with generic and specialist</p>

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	<p>infrastructure organisations, supporting and developing grassroots community groups. She is also a qualified Equality and Diversity Trainer and a qualified trainer on Domestic Abuse.</p> <p>The remainder of the team are all experienced Community Development Workers they speak seven languages: Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi, Swahili, Nepali, Hungarian and French enabling the Group to deliver bespoke events to the diverse communities resident in Surrey.</p>
1.3 Volunteers	25, whose activities including administrative tasks, assisting with events, fundraising and helping with IT and marketing.
1.4 Clients/Users	See below.
1.5 Members	<p>Since 2013. SMEF has grown its membership to 48 community organisations, each with membership of 30 to 100 people. The total direct membership reach is approximately 4,800 families. 23 member groups are based in Woking and represent African, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Gypsy &amp; Traveller, Hungarian, Indian, Nepali, Pakistani and Sri Lankan families.</p> <p>A majority of members have only volunteers and operate from their own homes. SMEF provides these groups with capacity building support; helping with governance; fundraising and project development. SMEF endeavours to work in partnership with its members, sharing its resources and learning. The impact of the work is that communities are in a position to engage with democratic processes and local initiatives, contribute and have their say.</p> <p>Users come from a wide range of specifically BAME communities within which the challenges of engagement and access to services are severe. These include already marginalised families living with multiple deprivation (poor housing, high unemployment, low education skills) where for the majority English is a second language. Added to this are usually marked cultural differences, a lack of understanding of UK public services, and amongst refugees a high degree of fear and lack of confidence.</p>
1.6 Sum Requested	£2,800 (Capital) and £9,998 (Revenue)
1.7 Project	<p>The Group states that a Charity called ASTOP* has approached the Group with a proposal to rent a space in Export House to run its activities for a nominal amount for approximately eighteen months.</p> <p>SMEF is seeking funding to develop a 'SMEF Hub' in Woking and would like to run a range of activities from Export House. The funding would enable the Group to employ a Hub Centre Manager who would manage the space at Export House which it is stated would enable SMEF to double its services to the most vulnerable. The funding would also go towards capital costs of resourcing the Hub with office equipment.</p> <p>*ASTOP is an advice group which supports and advises the charity sector, commercial landlords and CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) budget holders with property, financial and other matters.</p>
1.8 Cost breakdown:	Hub Manager salary cost (2 days per week) - £9,998

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	<p>5 x Laptops - £2,500</p> <p>Printer and Shredder - £300</p> <p>Total Cost - £12,788</p>
1.9 Community Benefit	<p>Currently SMEF operates from a small office in Guildford, however it would like access to a larger area for its community groups to run their activities, to enable resources to be shared and new skills learnt. Its project delivery experience suggests that groups meeting regularly build social capital and make for stronger communities, which in turn support each other thus lessening the burden on already stretched statutory services. A total of 23 member groups would be offered facilities, with a target of eight per year.</p> <p>In addition, SMEF intends to create a safe community space where subjects like Domestic Abuse, Drug Abuse and Harmful Traditional Practices are discussed, so that deep rooted cultural beliefs can be challenged.</p> <p>A community drop resource would also be set up for vulnerable adults, older people, women and children.</p>

<b>2.0 Financial Background</b>	
2.1 Budget	<p>At the time of the application, the Group held £84,923 in the bank, of which the sum of £60,926 is stated to be restricted.</p> <p>The Group has submitted a budget for 2019/20 which shows an anticipated income of £50,930 against an anticipated expenditure of £75,271, resulting in an anticipated deficit of £24,341.</p> <p>No breakdown of income has been included. Items of expenditure include staff costs (£56,302), activities (£13,135) and office costs (£5,834).</p>
2.2 Accounts	<p>The Group has submitted accounts for 2016/17 instead of 2017/18, which show an income of £43,748 (£65,500 in 2016/17) against expenditure of £74,260 (£34,210 in 2016/17), resulting in a deficit of £30,513 (a surplus of £30,513 in 2016/17). The sum of £15,971 was carried forward at the end of the 2017/18 year.</p>
2.3 Support over the past five years	<p>New application.</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> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yes</li> <li>Yes</li> <li>No</li> <li>Yes</li> <li>Yes</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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>Yes</p> <p>No</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>3.2 Consultee Comments</p>	<p><u>Zafar Iqbal, Senior Community Development Officer</u></p> <p>A good ethnic minority advocacy organisation, however it is Surrey wide and the application to operate a Woking based hub is good in principal it is not deliverable as outlined in the application to be based at Export House (without any allocation of resources in the bid) and the stats given for beneficiaries in the Borough is questionable. The majority of Woking organisations SMEF purports to support, WBC is already well linked with and supportive of their work.</p> <p>Therefore I am inclined not to recommend funding the application in its current form.</p> <p><u>Sylvie Marshall, Community Development Manager</u></p> <p>Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum is a collective of community and voluntary groups from a variety of ethnic backgrounds that aim to voice the needs and aspirations of people in Surrey.</p> <p>The Group has requested Capital funding to the amount of £2,800 and Revenue funding of £9,998 in order to create a ‘SMEF Hub’ at Export House in Woking, and also cover the cost of a Hub Centre Manager post.</p> <p>Whilst I commend the work that Surrey Ethnic Minority Forum are undertaking and the benefit of having a central community space in Woking can be seen, in this instance I do not believe that the grants requested should be approved on the basis that this would be duplication of work already being undertaken within the Borough.</p> <p><u>Refeia Zaman, Senior Policy Officer</u></p> <p>It should be noted that Export House is not a community facility. Community Centres exist throughout the Borough for community groups to hold events, such as Parkview and the Maybury Centre, which are extremely well utilised by local ethnic minority communities. They represent safe community space to discuss sensitive issues such as domestic abuse and mental health, and groups such as Liaise Women’s Centre and Shifa already work in this area. Groups should be working together, rather than setting up rival or duplicate services. Drop-in sessions are also provided by School House, Shifa, Liaise Women’s Centre.</p>	
<p>3.3 Assessment</p>	<p>The Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum (SMEF) has applied for funding towards utilising a space at Export House to develop a SMEF Hub in Woking. The funding would go towards the salary of a part-time Hub Manager and towards the purchase of capital equipment including five laptops. SMEF would then be able to offer its members space to hold their community groups, create a safe space from where subjects like domestic abuse and substance misuse can be discussed, and hold a</p>	

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community drop-in resource for vulnerable adults, older people, women and children. Currently SMEF has 23 members groups based in Woking representing diverse communities.

The overarching aim of the Hub would be for people to take responsibility and seek solutions for themselves, building community resilience and wellbeing which will potentially reduce the pressure on already stretched statutory services.

The applicant reports that the activities planned would create opportunities for people to interact, reflect on common social ills, gain strength from each other, learn new skills and create opportunities for joint working. Examples are exercise sessions, homework clubs, career development for women, support groups for vulnerable people, information on environmental and community safety issues. Opportunities would be provided for statutory service providers to engage with community groups, and open new conversations about protecting the environment, waste and recycling.

It is clear that the SMEF works hard to provide opportunities to its members, for example its work with the Maybury Centre and local schools. Taking into account the consultee comments which whilst noting the good work of the organisation, state that the proposal is not deliverable at Export House, which is not a community facility, and that the Council is already well linked with the community groups supported by SMEF, it is recommended that no grant be awarded.

REPORT ENDS