

Record of decision taken under delegated powers by a council officer



Title:	Surrey County Council Response to Covid: Hardship payment to VCF sector organisations
Divisions Affected:	All divisions
Key Decision:	Yes
Reason Key:	Affects two or more Divisions
Decision taken under delegation by virtue of:	Cabinet decision 31 March 2020 Min ref: 41/20

Summary

Applications for financial support for Voluntary, Community & Faith sector organisations are being received by the Council. These requests for support are a direct result of financial hardship felt as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, due to either additional costs being incurred by these organisations to meet increased demand for their services or enable remote working, or as a result of reductions in their usual funding sources (eg donations and fund raising events).

Applications are submitted on a standard request from and are being considered initially by a panel made up of Strategy and Finance colleagues. The panel is assessing requests against the following criteria:

- Small and medium sized organisation with an annual income of less than £1million during the financial year 2018/19
- Are not in receipt of any outstanding, adverse judgements from relevant regulatory bodies e.g. Charities Commission, CQC
- Operate within and provide services to meet needs in the county of Surrey
- Provision of services to support vulnerable residents during the COVID-19 pandemic, and/or later in the recovery phase
- Have provided SCC commissioned and/or funded services between 2015-2020, including organisations funded via grant, contracts and/or one-off commissioning
- Provision of broader, strategic services to Surrey residents that SCC considers vital to maintain
- Have evidenced and substantiated the additional financial pressures caused to the organisation as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Will remain viable and able to assist Surrey during the post COVID-19 recovery phase, taking account of financial pressures already incurred and those that are forecast
- Where funding will support the long term, future sustainability of the organisation.

In addition, applications must also demonstrate that:

- Funding is actively being sought from alternative, relevant sources e.g. central government and Community Foundation for Surrey. SCC hardship funding will particularly favour residual pressures that cannot be met from other available means.
- Organisations can remain viable between the receipt of staged payments from the SCC COVID-19 Hardship Fund which may be paid in several tranches

The following applications were recommended by the Panel and approved by the Executive Director for Transformation, Partnership & Prosperity & the Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Fire & Resilience.

Name	Amount awarded	Reason
The Maybury Centre	£5,000	<p>The applicant asked for a grant of £10,000 to help the centre to exist through the pandemic. The Centre has been closed which has resulted in a significant loss of income. The grant would ensure the Centre is able to remain viable. It is an important asset to the community in a deprived area of Woking where a broad range of health, social, educational and recreational activities take place. The Centre on average has 20,000 users per quarter. The Panel asked for more information from Woking BC about the impact of closure and the borough council confirmed this would be significantly detrimental to the area. The Panel also asked the borough council to match fund the amount which they have agreed to and we recommend this grant is supported.</p>
The Queen Elizabeth Foundation	£66,700	<p>The QEF offers specialist neurological rehabilitative support and Independent Living Service to some of the most vulnerable people in Surrey. Due to pandemic their fundraising initiatives were significantly impacted causing a deficit of £1.2m and potential closure. Through innovative fundraising approaches they closed the gap to £400,000 and were seeking grants from partners. They approached the Leader and it was proposed we give a one-off grant of £66,700 through the Hardship Fund. This was proportionate to the number of beds Surrey CC was using and subject to other partners (including CCGs and other Local Authorities) committing to giving grants proportionate to their usage. QEF has had commitment from a number of partners that they will be giving grants. For eg, Surrey Heartlands have agreed to give £66,700 too. They have secured £179,000 and are waiting to hear from other LAs and CCGs and the Panel proposes we release the funding as significant progress and commitment has been made by other partners, taking the applicant to a sustainable position.</p>

Decision made

Decision made:

It was AGREED that:

The following applications met the agreed criteria for financial support during the COVID-19 pandemic:

The Maybury Centre	£5,000.00
Queen Elizabeth Foundation	£66,700.00

A one-off payment of £71,700.00 will be made to support the above organisations.

Reasons for Decision:

To ensure the sustainability of the organisations and the continued provision of their services to the residents of Surrey during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

Decision taken by:	Michael Coughlin – Executive Director for TPP Denise Turner Stewart – Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Fire and Resilience
Decision taken on:	24 August 2020
To be implemented on:	Payment to be made following CLT and Cabinet confirmation of this decision.

Alternative options considered

The alternative is to not provide financial support and leave the organisations to try to find alternative means of financing additional costs incurred and loss of income due to COVID-19. This could put the continued delivery of the services they provide to residents of Surrey at risk.

Summary of any financial implications

The cost to SCC will be £71,700.00
It is anticipated that this will be funded out of the COVID-19 funding SCC is receiving from central government.

Declarations of conflicts of interest

None

Consultation/Process Followed

Decision taken in consultation with the Head of Strategy, the Strategic Lead for Partnerships, Policy & Commissioning, the Strategic Finance Business Partner for TPP & Resources, the Executive Director for Transformation, Partnerships & Prosperity and the Cabinet Members for Member for Community Safety, Fire and Resilience.

Background Documents

Exempt:

Cabinet report 31 st March 2020 setting out the council's response to Covid-19.
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