

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 (e.g. donations and fund raising events).

Applications are submitted on a standard request form 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
Dormansland & Lingfield Community Centre	£8,000	The applicant was able to demonstrate hardship as a result of loss of income and ongoing costs/overheads. They are a key hub for the area and will continue to provide valuable services to the community. The application came in two weeks ago and was rejected in the outset and they presented further evidence, and Cllr Steeds also provided supporting information. They revised the timeframe and amount applied for, reducing the amount and aligning it to the actual hardship experienced and it is proposed the application is now supported.
Guildford Action	£15,000.00	The applicant applied for £30,000 and it is proposed to partially support them with £15,000. The application came in two weeks ago in which time officers have spoken with Guildford Borough Council and asked for more information from the applicant. The applicant is providing support to some of the most vulnerable (homeless) people primarily in Guildford but also supports some families in Woking and Runnymede. The applicant has supported 267 individuals during the pandemic and increased their operating times to 7 days a week rather than scaling back. The reason for the reduced amount is in line with the criteria covers the period to the end of June.

Decision

Decision made:

It was AGREED that:

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

Lingfield & Dormansland Community Centre	£8,000.00
Guildford Action	£15,000.00

A one-off payment of £23,000.00 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:	9 June 2020
To be implemented on:	Payment to be made following CLT and Cabinet confirmation of this decision. This is due to take place on 11 th June 2020.

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 £23,000.00
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 31st March 2020 setting out the council's response to Covid-19.