

## **VOLUNTARY SECTOR FUNDING 2021-22**

<b>Head of Service:</b>	Rod Brown, Head of Housing & Community
<b>Wards affected:</b>	(All Wards);
<b>Urgent Decision?(yes/no)</b>	No
<b>If yes, reason urgent decision required:</b>	
<b>Appendices (attached):</b>	Appendix 1 – Support for Voluntary Organisations 2020/21 Appendix 2 – Voluntary Sector Organisations overview from the pandemic Appendix 3 – Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell update

### **Summary**

This report considers the continued future support of voluntary organisations in 2021/22.

### **Recommendation (s)**

#### **The Committee is asked to:**

- (1) Approve the proposed support for voluntary organisations in 2021/22, as detailed in Appendix 1 to this report.**

## **1 Reason for Recommendation**

- 1.1 To enable the continued financial support to voluntary organisations as set out in Appendix 1

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 The Council provides support to a range of voluntary organisation in Epsom and Ewell in order to maintain and improve the quality of life for residents and in particular the more vulnerable sectors in our community – which has been highlighted throughout the CoVid19 pandemic crisis.

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- 2.2 The voluntary and community sector is at the heart of our local community, providing a lifeline and essential services to some of our most vulnerable residents in the borough. The voluntary sector often are also a catalyst for mobilising community action and attracting, training and deploying volunteers.
- 2.3 The Council recognises and fully supports the excellent contribution the Voluntary Organisations give to Borough residents. The Council wants to ensure that opportunities to encourage proactive networking are explored which will lead to co-ordinated approach in the future with regards joint applications for funding.
- 2.4 The Council supports the following organisations:
  - 2.3.1 Age Concern Epsom & Ewell (ACEE)
  - 2.3.2 Citizens Advice Bureau Epsom and Ewell (CAB)
  - 2.3.3 Central Surrey Voluntary Action (CSVA)
  - 2.3.4 RELATE Mid Surrey
  - 2.3.5 The Sunnybank Trust

Please see Appendix 2 and 3 for an update from each of these organisations on the work they have done during the pandemic.

## **3 Support during COVID Pandemic**

- 3.1 The unprecedented impact of COVID on our communities has been significant and widespread. The positive response to the threat of COVID built upon the existing good working relationships the Council has with local voluntary organisations.
- 3.2 In response to COVID the Council established a Community Hub to support the most vulnerable residents with food, medication collections as well as welfare and mental health concerns throughout lockdown periods.
- 3.3 Central to the success of the Community Hub was the support provided by the local voluntary sector either directly engaging and providing services to the community or via requests for assistance from the Council's Community Hub.
- 3.4 Our voluntary services also worked successfully with finding volunteers to support the Council's work and managed, on our behalf the welcomed and over-whelming response from the public to volunteer their services to their community.
- 3.5 During the most intense periods of COVID lockdown, the voluntary organisations worked closely with the Council in providing the essential support and assistance needed by many of our residents.

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- 3.6 Building on this successful partnership working, as we move into the future recovery post-COVID stages, the Council will continue to work closely with our voluntary organisations, both those already existing and those that are new.
- 3.7 The post-COVID era will continue to pose many challenges to our residents and communities. The role played by our voluntary organisations in the borough's post-COVID future will be significant, supporting our residents with accessing help and advice including mental health support, managing financial problems and assisting with shopping and medical needs. These organisations are a mainstay in the ability of the community to successfully recover.

## 4 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

### 4.1 Impact Assessment

- 4.1.1 Should the current and future recommended support to voluntary organisations be reduced, there could be a significant impact on the level of support provided by these organisations to our residents.

### 4.2 Crime & Disorder

- 4.2.1 The Voluntary Organisations play an important role within the Borough, assisting the statutory services in supporting residents requiring professional interventions and supporting Community Harm and Risk Management Meetings (CHaRMM).

### 4.3 Safeguarding

- 4.3.1 The Voluntary Organisations work with the statutory services through CHaRM Meetings in their role in Safeguarding Vulnerable Children and Adults.

### 4.4 Dependencies

- 4.4.1 The vulnerable residents of Epsom and Ewell are especially dependant on our Voluntary Organisations during the pandemic for organising those who volunteered, assistance with shopping, medical supplies and providing advice and support to those in most need. The pandemic has had a significant negative impact on the ability of these organisations to raise their usual funds, preventing many fund raising activities, which in turn will impact their financial sustainability over the next few years.

## 5 Financial Implications

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- 5.1 Much of the work carried out by CSVA and CAB involves substantially the same client groups who interact with Housing and Council Tax. Both these organisations are able to offer support and advice which exceed that able to be provided by the Council.
- 5.2 If CAB do not have adequate capacity to support its clients, there is a risk that there could be a considerable increase in service demand to the Council's own staff and operations (e.g. Housing and Council tax). In a normal year over 3000 people visit CAB to help solve their problems. They are an important part of the community, with a credible understanding of local needs. Their support can help prevent housing evictions and statutory homelessness, and advice on Council Tax arrears to facilitate payment. They have supported clients to repay nearly £45,000 Council Tax in previous years. Volunteers in CAB equate to 12 full time staff.
- 5.3 CSVA support 180 Registered Charities, 380 not for profit organisations – which includes Companies Limited by Guarantee to small community groups. They promote volunteering and social action. Since 1 April to 31 Dec 2020 they have registered 1204 volunteers and referred on 1033. They match volunteers to opportunities, develop best practise in the sector, deliver DBS checks, and help voluntary organisations search for possible funding streams through “Grant Finder” – a subscription on-line service.
- 5.4 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** The total budgeted net support to voluntary organisations in 2021/22 is £211,061. The breakdown by organisation and budget is set out at Appendix 1 to this report.

## 6 Legal Implications

- 6.1 None arising from the contents of this report.
- 6.2 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** none arising from the contents of this report.

## 7 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 7.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged: Safe & Well: A place where people feel safe, secure and lead healthy, fulfilling lives and Smart and Connected: building stronger communities.
- 7.2 **Service Plans:** Providing support to the vulnerable residents and those shielding during COVID, as well as supporting the local voluntary sector are both included in this years' Service Plan. Support for voluntary organisations is expected to also feature in service plans for 2021/22..
- 7.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** None

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- 7.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** The Voluntary Organisations play an important role within the Borough assisting statutory services in supporting residents requiring professional interventions and supporting the Community Harm and Risk Management Meetings (CHaRMM).
- 7.5 **Partnerships:** Voluntary organisations comprise members of the “third sector” that support the local community through the delivery of services.
- 7.6 It is increasingly recognised – especially during the COVID 19 pandemic – that partnership working between statutory bodies and the voluntary sector is essential for the future of effective operation of modern local government.

## 8 Background papers

- 8.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

### **Previous reports:**

- Report entitled Voluntary Sector Grants and Funding 2020/21 reported to Community and Wellbeing Committee 19 March 2020

### **Other papers:**

- None