

LEASE ARRANGEMENTS - RELATE 2025/6

Head of Service:	Rod Brown, Head of Housing & Community
Report Author	Rod Brown
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	N/A
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 - RELATE service data Exempt Appendix 2 - Funding options

Summary

This report considers options for future funding arrangements for RELATE Mid and East Surrey for 2025-2027.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Agree to Option 3 as recommended by the Community and Wellbeing Committee, as detailed in Exempt Appendix 2,**

Or, should recommendation 1 not be carried, to:
- (2) Agree the funding arrangements for RELATE Mid & East Surrey for 2025-2027 as detailed in:**
 - a) Alternative Option 1 as detailed in Exempt Appendix 2,**

Or
 - b) Alternative Option 2 as detailed in Exempt Appendix 2**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The Council faces significant financial pressures, and the on-going financial support provided to charities and voluntary organisations needs to be reviewed periodically.

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2 Background

- 2.1 The Council provides support to a range of voluntary organisations in the borough. These organisations provide valuable support directly to our residents, helping to maintain and improve the quality of life.
- 2.2 RELATE Mid & East Surrey (RELATE) occupy a building owned by the Council at 92B High St, Epsom and benefit from a full (100%) discount on the commercial cost of the lease.
- 2.3 RELATE benefit from a notional grant of £19,710 per annum.
- 2.4 The Council receives an income of £1,294 per annum from RELATE which is the cost reimbursement of Relate using the Council's cleaning contractor at the premises.
- 2.5 RELATE provide relationship counselling and mediation services to residents of Mid and East Surrey. They have services located in Reigate and Epsom.
- 2.6 In their 16th January 2025 decision, the Community and Wellbeing Committee considered the future funding arrangements for five voluntary organisations active within the borough, including RELATE
- 2.7 Before the January 2025 Community and Wellbeing committee, each voluntary organisation had been approached and asked for information relating to their activity and impact on borough residents over the last year. Four of the organisations provided the requested information apart from RELATE.
- 2.8 At the January 2025 Community and Wellbeing Committee meeting, the committee decided to withdraw financial support from RELATE with a charge for full commercial rent to commence from 1st April 2025.

3 Post January 2025 Community and Wellbeing Committee

- 3.1 Shortly after the Committee meeting in January 2025, the previously requested details outlining the support provided by RELATE for borough residents was received. An updated version of these details has been submitted by RELATE as part of this report and is attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.2 In light of this new information, Delegated Authority utilising the Urgent Decision (UD) procedure, in consultation with the Committee Chair, was obtained to postpone the implementation of the January 2025 decision relating to RELATE. This was to enable a review of that part of the decision, in light of the new information received, so as to minimise any hardship and uncertainty for RELATE during the period of this review. The UD was uploaded to Member News as usual, where it can still be viewed by Members

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- 3.3 UD154 included Delegated Authority to the Head of Housing and Community to make a fresh decision, in consultation with the Chair of Community and Wellbeing. During consultation, it was decided that the UD would be used to postpone the implementation of the previous decision giving time for the matter to be reconsidered by the originating Committee.
- 3.4 The information provided by RELATE is set out in Appendix 1. This outlines the impact the service has on borough residents, including the provision of free and discounted services provided by the organisation. There is also information on the calculation of social impact RELATE has within the borough and a description of the impact that any increased costs might have on the service.

4 June 2025 Community and Wellbeing Committee

- 4.1 At the June 2025 Community and Wellbeing Committee meeting, the committee considered the information supplied by RELATE, attached as Appendix 1, but were uncertain as to the impact the funding decision might have on the services provided to the borough's residents.
- 4.2 It was acknowledged that RELATE had provided supporting information for the committee about their impact and some general comments about the possible impact to changes in funding. These details from RELATE are in Appendix 1.

5 Proposal

- 5.1 This report includes a recommendation reflecting the June 2025 Community and Wellbeing Committee recommendation to this Committee along with two alternative options regarding the future funding arrangements for RELATE for the period 2025- 2027. The detail of the recommendation from Community and Wellbeing Committee is listed as Option 3, contained in Exempt Appendix 2.
- 5.2 The details for alternative Option1 and alternative option 2 are also contained in Exempt Appendix 2.
- 5.3 The Committee is therefore asked to accept and approve the recommendation regarding the proposed future funding arrangements for RELATE in line with the recommendation from Community and Wellbeing Committee, as set out in Option 3 in Exempt Appendix 2.

5.4 Alternative Options

Alternatively, should the Committee not agree to Option 3 as recommended by Community and Wellbeing Committee, the S&R Committee is asked to approve the proposed support for RELATE as set out in either alternative Option 1 or 2 in Exempt Appendix 2

- 5.5 Exempt Appendix 2 is a restricted item.

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6 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

6.1 Equality Impact Assessment

6.1.1 Whilst acknowledged that withdrawing the financial support offered to RELATE could have an impact on the borough's residents in respect of the support they can access, this report is concerned with the provision of financial support to RELATE and not the provision of the service. As such, there are no EIA considerations directly as a result of this report.

6.2 Crime & Disorder

6.2.1 RELATE provides services which interface with a range of statutory services and domestic abuse services and Community Harm and Risk Management meetings (CHaRMM).

6.3 Safeguarding

6.3.1 RELATE offers front line services which includes identification and management of safeguarding concerns.

6.4 Dependencies

6.4.1 None

7 Financial Implications

7.1 Like many voluntary organisations, RELATE often work with residents who interact with the Council on a regular basis. The support offered by RELATE to our residents has both direct and indirect financial benefits on the Council and the residents themselves.

7.2 Such benefits would include prevention of homelessness through support, referral and relationship counselling. Also RELATE will provide health and wellbeing support, including managing emotional and relationship issues.

7.3 For this financial year, the financial implications of any of the options can be contained within existing Council budgets.

7.4 Currently the full cost of the rental of the High Street premises used by RELATE is met through the agreed budget for Community and Wellbeing Committee.

7.5 Given that any decision about future funding of RELATE may have implications for sustaining this income in the future, it is considered appropriate that this matter is addressed by Strategy and Resources Committee.

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7.6 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** The financial implications are detailed within the body of the report. However worth noting that the financial support proposed as part of this paper, to RELATE, will not have an adverse budget variance for the council.

8 Legal Implications

8.1 The Council has the power to provide grants to voluntary and community sector organisations under the general power of competence set out in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. All grants are in accordance with subsidy control legislation where applicable.

8.2 The Council must enter licenses, funding agreements and other agreements in respect of any notional and direct awards.

8.3 Any decision to continue to grant financial support to RELATE would not be subject to the Council's Contract Standing Orders (section 4 and 10 EEBC CSO).

8.4 The application of the Subsidy Control Act (SCA) has been considered in respect to the options presented in this report. The financial assistance set out in the options contained within the report and the Appendix 2 are not considered to be subsidy, under the terms of the SCA.

8.5 **Legal Officer's comments:** Legal implications are set out within the report.

9 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

9.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:

- Effective Council
- Safe and Well
- Smart and Connected

9.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is not included within the current Service Delivery Plan.

9.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** none

9.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** None

9.5 **Partnerships:** RELATE are part of the "Third Sector" that support the local community through delivery of services.

9.6 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications:** None

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10 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- [Community & Wellbeing Committee, 16 January 2025 – Voluntary Sector Funding 2025-2026](#)
- Community and Wellbeing Committee 17th June 2025 – RELATE funding 2025/26

Other papers:

- None