

Surrey Heath Borough Council
Performance & Finance Scrutiny Committee
15 March 2023

Housing, Safeguarding & Support Portfolio Update

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Sarah-Jane Croke, Housing, Safeguarding & Support
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Summary and purpose

To review the Housing, Safeguarding & Support Portfolio services progress over the past 12 months which covers the following areas:

- Community Safety
- Corporate Safeguarding
- Disabled Facility Grants
- Emergency Accommodation
- Equalities & Diversity
- Family Support, including resettlement Grants
- Housing & Homelessness
- Registered Social Landlords
- Voluntary Sector & Community Partnerships

1. Community Safety

- 1.1 The Crime and Disorder Act was enacted in 1998 and places a statutory duty on all local authorities together with their partnership agencies to develop and deliver a Community Safety Strategy. This is managed by the Surrey Heath Partnership which combines the Community Safety Partnership and the Local Strategic Partnership and is chaired by the Leader of the Council with a membership from both statutory and voluntary partners who meet up to 4 times a year receive partner updates.
- 1.2 The CHaRMM (Community Harm and Risk Management Meeting) and the JAG (Joint Action Group) has the operational responsibility in managing the day-to-day incidents and risks of both people and places. In October 2022, the Council introduced a Driving Improvement campaign which focuses on improving key aspects of life in Surrey Heath.
- 1.3 The Council is engaging with local people and from feedback has worked hard to ensure that our communications strategy clearly records complaints, and we have sort to whenever possible work with our partners, such as Surrey Police and Accent to tackle anti-social behaviour and fly-tipping across the Borough, to ensure we use a collaborative approach to protect and enhance the environment, making Surrey Heath an even better place to live. Recent examples of this include:

- Improved information and how to report mechanisms on the Council website for Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) , and fly-tipping.
- Joint day of action with Accent, in February 2023 where the Councils Corporate Enforcement team visit known hotspots to provide information to Accent residents.
- Joint day of action with Surrey Police, where the Councils Corporate Enforcement team were patrolling looking for unauthorised waste carriers and scrap metal dealers.
- At the Councils External Partnership Select Group meeting on the 28th February 2023, the focus of the meeting concentrated upon anti-social behaviour.

2. Corporate Safeguarding

- 2.1 The Council updated its Safeguarding Policy and Practice in February 2022, and agreed to review annually to ensure that all compliance reviews. All areas within the Council now have safeguarding champions available to support when needed. A new training course aimed at staff who deal face to face with clients has been designed which focussed upon safeguarding and domestic abuse was commissioned with the first rounds of training delivered.
- 2.2 We continue to represent the Council at the officer and elected member Children's' and Adult Safeguarding Surrey meeting which ensures we are aware of any changing responsibilities or procedures, and we are fully compliant with our Section 11 audit.

3. Disabled Facilities Grants

- 3.1 The Home Solutions Team also provides the Council's Home Improvement Agency and delivers the Council's mandatory and discretionary grants programme, including Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG), used to adapt and improve the homes of disabled and vulnerable residents. These works support independence, keep people in their homes in the community and delay moves to care. By adapting and improving the home environment the work seeks to reduce hospital admissions and, when residents have been ill, support re-enablement. This work is currently fully funded by government grant (£888,000 in 2020/21) that comes via the Better Care Fund.
- 3.2 The DFG is mandatory which means that where the adaptations sought are essential and the proposed works are necessary and appropriate to meet the persons needs and reasonable and practicable given the age and condition of the property then the grant must be paid. The maximum amount of grant that can normally be paid is £30,000 and can be means tested.
- 3.3 In 2022 the Home Improvement Agency oversaw completion of works on 113 homes. This represents a 38% increase from 2021 as the team caught up with a backlog from restricted delivery during the lockdowns and the ability to carry out works in the homes of vulnerable residents. Types of works delivered include stair lifts, shower rooms/bathroom adaptations, access issues (e.g. doors, ramps, etc.), scooter stores and vehicular access.
- 3.4 In 2022 the Council was subject to an Ombudsman complaint about the administration of a DFG to a resident. The Ombudsman finding was that the Council was not at fault in the way the service was delivered.

4. Housing Advice & Homelessness

- 4.1 The Housing Solutions Team deals with housing advice and homelessness in the Borough and seeks to deliver solutions for those who are risk of or are homeless. Between 1st January 2022 and 31st December 2022, the Housing Solutions Team received 832 approaches from households whose housing situation was likely to lead to homelessness without intervention or who were already homeless at the time they sought help. This is an increase of 37% from 2021, which also saw an increase of 25% from 2020.
- 4.2 From these approaches 178 households were either threatened with homelessness (i.e. would be homeless in the next 56 days) or actually homeless at the time they approached the Council therefore triggering a homelessness duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. This is an increase in 14% from 2021 in part due to the ban on evictions being lifted which is coupled with a constriction in the private rented sector. An increased number of evictions and a lack of affordable private rented housing is likely to see an increasing demand in residents seeking assistance from the Council.
- 4.3 When a household is *threatened* with homelessness the Council has a duty to assess their needs and produce a Personal Housing Plan, setting out the action the household and the Council will take to *prevent* them becoming homeless.
- 4.4 When a household is *actually homeless* the Council has a duty to assess their needs and produce a Personal Housing Plan, setting out the action the household and the Council will take to *relieve* their homelessness. If someone has a priority need, i.e. they have children or are vulnerable in some way, there is a duty to provide temporary accommodation during this relief period. There is not a duty to provide accommodation to households who do not have a priority need.
- 4.5 From those 178 homeless approaches, 44 ended up having a full duty accepted. 79 further cases had their homelessness prevented and were able to remain in their current homes or were secured alternative accommodation. The rest are currently open cases or closed due to lack of engagement.
- 4.6 In response to the rising number of approaches from residents with a housing problem the Council has taken on a Case Officer to work with residents whose housing situation may lead them to becoming homeless in the future to avoid this happening. Funded by Homelessness Prevention Grant from DLUHC this work will include cases such as tenants whose landlord has indicated the sale of a property but it has not yet reached the stage where notice has been served, or young people who have been advised they must leave the parental home soon but not given a date. Early intervention work will be key to reducing the number of households approaching at the stage when they have nowhere to go.

Rough Sleeping & Emergency Accommodation

- 4.7 The number of single homeless residents continues to be high with the most visible cases being those who are rough sleeping, which is a small but persistent number of this client group. The Council is required to do an annual count or estimate of the number of rough sleepers out on a given night in November.
- 4.8 The figure for 2022 was 9 rough sleepers. This is an increase from the 5 rough sleepers we recorded last year. The exact reason for this increase is unknown however we were aware of rough sleepers in the borough who did not originate in

Surrey Heath. Anecdotal information suggests these people remain in Camberley as they are able to access services from The Hope Hub. The 9 rough sleepers recorded were all known to services before the estimate and continue to be able to access advice and assistance.

4.9 In response to this demand from single homeless residents the Council has made three consecutive successful bids to the Government's Rough Sleeping Initiative to provide accommodation and support services to this client group. The funding of £200,000 has provided:

- A Single Homeless Support Worker based at the Council and supporting residents in Connaught Court (see below).
- Joint funding with Surrey Heath CCG for a mental health worker based at the Hope Hub.
- Revenue funding to support setting up the Emergency Accommodation Service with the Hope Hub for rough sleepers.
- Funding for joint work with Accent and Transform to set up a Housing Led scheme; and,
- Funding to employ a Single Homelessness Floating Support Worker within the Housing Support Team.

4.10 The Council has used developer contributions to buy Connaught Court from Accent, a 10-bed unit to provide accommodation and support for up to two years for single homeless individuals and purchasing a 6-bed property for the Emergency Accommodation Service.

4.11 Currently Homeless Link, a national homelessness charity, has been commissioned to review services for rough sleepers and single homeless residents in Surrey Heath to ensure that services are working effectively together and identify gaps in provision,. This work, funded by DSLUHC, will report in April 2023 and feed into the Council's refreshed Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy later in the year.

5. Equalities & Diversity

5.1 The Member Equality Working group met in February 2023 whereby it was agreed to review the Equality Strategy and link this closely to the People Strategy which is in development at present, this will be completed by Summer 2023. The EWG enables the members to agree annually the events (outside of Civil events) to be supported by the Council. In August 2022, Surrey Heath hosted the Surrey Pride event at Watchmoor Recreation Ground, which was a great way to celebrate equality and diversity with approximately 8,000 people attending.

6. Family Support

6.1 There is currently a Service Level Agreement in place between Surrey Heath Borough Council and Surrey County Council to deliver the Family Support Programme across Surrey heath and Runnymede until March 2023. SCC currently funds the full costs of delivery of the Family Support Programme.

6.2 The current SLA has been extended until March 2024, whilst SCC carry out an Early Help Improvement Programme. This programme is being delivered by an external research partner, to co-design Early Help services moving forward, gathering views from partner agencies current Early Help services, such as Family Support

Programme and Family Centres, and from families and children.

- 6.3 The Family Support Programme continue to deliver a high-quality service to the most vulnerable families in the borough. The Surrey Heath and Runnymede team consists of a Team Manager, 2 Team Leaders, 1 qualified social worker, 5 Family Support Coordinators and 1 administrator. Family Support Coordinators hold a maximum caseload of 12 families, with Team Leaders holding a half caseload of 6 families. Between April 2022-December 2022 we successfully supported 259 children and their parents/carers across Surrey Heath and Runnymede. Of these children, 135 were Surrey Heath residents. The service has consistently met all Key Performance Indicators within the SCC Service Level Agreement.

KPI	Q1 target	Q1 actual	Q2 target	Q2 actual	Q3 target	Q3 actual
Families to be contacted within 5 working days of allocation	70%	94%	70%	96%	70%	100%
Families to be seen withing 10 working days of allocation	70%	84%	70%	100%	70%	80%
Early Help assessments to be completed within 20 working days of allocation	70%	75%	70%	79%	70%	77%

United Kingdom Resettlement Scheme

- 6.4 In addition, the Family Support team runs the UKRS (UK Resettlement Scheme) previously known as the vulnerable persons resettlement scheme and most recently, the ACRS (Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme) on behalf of Surrey Heath and Runnymede.
- 6.5 The Family Support Team deliver the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS) on behalf of the boroughs of Surrey Heath and Runnymede. The UKRS was central government's initial response to vulnerable families fleeing Syria following the outbreak of the civil war in 2011. In 2019, the scheme merged with other UK refugee schemes and now reaffirms the UK's ongoing commitment to refugee resettlement, providing safe and legal routes to vulnerable refugees in need of protection. Government makes funding available to allow local authorities and healthcare providers to support refugees for the duration of the scheme (up to 5 years).
- 6.6 The UKRS began in Surrey Heath in 2017 as there was difficulty in identifying affordable properties in the private sector which impacted on the Councils commitment to house 10 families by 2020. There are currently 5 refugee families in Surrey Heath, with the most recent family having arrived 10th March 2020. The first Surrey Heath UKRS family will be leaving the programme in June 2023, having completed 5 years of support with the service. This service is fully funded by Central Government funding.

Afghan Relocation Assistance Policy

- 6.7 In August 2021, we received 5 families under the Afghan Relocation Assistance Policy (ARAP). The ARAP is for Afghan citizens who worked for or with the UK government in Afghanistan in exposed or meaningful roles, of whom are assessed to be at high or imminent risk of threat to life, following the Taliban uprising. Central Government funding is available to local authorities to support refugees for the duration of the

scheme (up to 3 years).

- 6.8 Due to the urgency in resettling these families, they were placed in temporary accommodation on arrival, while the team worked to secure long term accommodation for the families. All 5 of the families had moved into permanent accommodation by May 2022.
- 6.9 In April 2022, one of the ARAP families moved to West Sussex, having secured full time employment. They continue to be supported by their relevant LA. All 4 of the men in the families have secured local employment. All children are accessing Early Years education where eligible, and women are accessing regular English language support. This service is fully funded by Central Government funding.

Homes for Ukraine Scheme

- 6.10 The Homes for Ukraine Scheme was introduced in March 2022, following criticism that the original family scheme did not offer wide enough refuge for those fleeing the war in Ukraine. The Homes for Ukraine Scheme requires a Ukrainian resident to identify a UK resident with whom are able to provide them with accommodation for at least 6 months. Residents match themselves independently, through friends or work colleagues and increasing social media presence. Sponsors are provided with a monthly 'thank you' payment to cover any costs incurred with hosting guests.
- 6.11 Those entering the UK under the H4U Scheme automatically become eligible for Local authority support for a 12 month period. After this period, sponsors will continue to receive monthly 'thank you' payments for a further 12 months, administrated by SHBC.
- 6.12 In Surrey Heath, we have received a total of 96 households, 194 individuals to the borough. Of these, 81 have left the borough since originally arriving. This has been for a multitude of reasons, including return to Ukraine, sourcing private accommodation outside of the borough and relocating to other countries to be with family. Each individual comes with an attached funding stream of £10,500 per person, which reduced to £5,900 for anyone arriving in the UK after 1st January 2023. This funding is split between SCC and SHBC who are collaboratively delivering support to Ukrainian guests.
- 6.13 The H4U team currently consists of 1 Team Leader, 2 Family Support Coordinators, 1 Community Engagement and Liaison officer and 1 part time administrator. This service is fully funded by Central Government funding.

Asylum Seekers

- 6.14 On 28th March 2022, A hotel within the Borough was taken up as Dispersal accommodation for Asylum Seekers who are currentted waiting for decision on their asylum requests to be made. Whilst Asylum seekers do not have recourse to public funds and are not eligible for LA support at a borough level, the borough were provided with a small, one off funding stream to act as a gatekeeper between the LA, accommodation provider and the local community.
- 6.15 The Community Engagement and Liaison Officer, currently based in the H4U team, carries out monthly site visits to the hotel and liaises with the providers to ensure the hotel residents are having their basic needs met and identifying if there is any community support which would be of benefit to guests.

7. Housing & Homelessness

Home Solutions Team

- 7.1 The Home Solutions Team deal with disrepair in residents' homes and manage standards in the private rented sector, including the licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). The Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS) identifies 29 known potential housing hazards that can be assessed. Hazards include damp and mould, excess cold, excess heat, crowding and space and risk of falls.
- 7.2 When a resident makes a complaint about their rented accommodation an inspection is completed to identify and rate the category of risk that any hazard poses. Where a Category One Hazard, the most serious harm outcome, is identified the Council has a duty to ensure that it is eliminated or at least reduced to an acceptable level. For Category Two hazards, those less serious or urgent, the Council have a power to intervene with the degree of intervention being directly proportionate to the risk to health.
- 7.3 Where concerns about the quality of a property arise, the Council always seeks to find the quickest way to resolve issues for tenants and landlords. While every complaint could potentially lead to enforcement action, officers continue to have a strong track record of securing the best outcome without the ultimate sanction of carrying out works in default or prosecution but is a useful tool for managing landlords who are reluctant to fulfil their obligations. During 2022 the Team responded to 84 housing complaints relating to repairs and disrepair issues. As a result of complaints, the Team undertook 89 housing inspections, an increase of 30% on last year.
- 7.4 Following the recent coroner's report regarding the death of Awaab Ishak the Council has reviewed its response to damp and mould complaints and is taking a more proactive approach so landlords and tenants are fully aware of their rights and responsibilities. This includes advice visits to residents to support them manage any issues before they become a hazard and improved monitoring to understand the scale and nature of any damp and mould issues in the Borough.
- 7.5 The Home Solutions Team also works with landlords with homes that are in shared occupation and require a license from the Council. Since October 2018 these houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) that are let to five tenants or more with two or more households and share some facilities such as cooking and bathing are mandatory licensable.
- 7.6 In order to comply with licensing conditions landlords have to demonstrate that they have met the standards required for the operation of a HMO in terms of the facilities available, the condition of the property and management standards. Once they have provided a full application and paid their fee the property is inspected and, all being well, a licence granted. If further works are needed the landlord must comply with these before a licence is issued. It is an offence to operate a licensable HMO without a licence. The licence period last for five-years and is not transferrable.
- 7.7 Licensing ensures the health, safety and welfare of tenants in a rental sector that has historically had problems and helps to provide good quality housing for potentially some of the most vulnerable in the private rented sector. There are currently 75 licensed HMOs in the Borough and in 2022 the Council Granted 4 new licences and renewed 10 licenses after ensuring that they met the required standards.

Clearances/ Hoarders

- 7.8 Tackling hoarding requires a multi-agency approach. While the Council has enforcement powers under the provisions of the Public Health Act 1936 as amended by the Public Health Act 1961 to tackle properties that are in such a filthy or unwholesome condition as to be prejudicial to health, it is recognised that hoarding is often the result of a resident's poor mental health or other factors.
- 7.9 Work in this area is very time consuming, with a need to build trust and find solutions that work for the resident. It is a balancing act between the residents right to live the life they choose and the risk that their behaviour is posing both to themselves and sometimes to others around them.
- 7.10 The Council often provides the 'stick', giving notice to the owner or occupier requiring them to take such steps as may be specified to remedy the conditions or in the case of verminous premises to take such steps as may be necessary for destroying or removing the vermin. Ultimately the Council can take action to clear the property. Occasionally we will be contacted by the NHS for a hospital release where the home environment is not considered conducive to the patient's wellbeing and in such cases there is a grant available to assist with such clearances.
- 7.11 There have been no clearances of housing due to hoarding in 2022 however the Team dealt with 17 complaints where a property was reported to be 'filthy and verminous'.

Public Health Funerals

- 7.12 Under Section 46 of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 the Council has a duty to arrange the funeral of anyone dying within their jurisdiction intestate and without any next of kin. It involves:
- Registering the death
 - Searching for next of kin.
 - Searching premises for important documents and valuables.
 - Arranging the funeral
 - Attending the funeral where appropriate.
 - Arranging payment and recovering costs.
- 7.13 Any expenses incurred can be reclaimed from the deceased estate and will become the first charge. Once funds have been recovered if there is any residue over £500 the estate is referred to the Treasury Solicitor as Bona Vacantia (Vacant Goods). Anything unclaimed will then revert to the state. The Home Solutions Team provided 9 public health funerals in 2022, compared to 3 in both 2021 and 2020.

The Housing Register & Allocation of Social Housing

- 7.14 The Council is required to have a way of allocating social housing. This requirement is met through the Housing Allocation Policy which sets out who is eligible to be considered for social housing and then how eligible applicants will be prioritised. The Allocation Policy is a mixture of legislation, regulations and local policy. It seeks both to meet individuals households housing needs and also make the best use of existing stock.

7.15 Qualifying applicants are placed into one of four priority 'bands'. These are:

- Band 1 contains a small number of applicants with an exceptional or critical housing need;
- Band 2 has applicants with a substantial housing need;
- Band 3 has applicants with a high housing need; and,
- Band 4 has applicants who have a housing need but whose priority is currently reduced, usually because of their actions or circumstances.

7.16 At 23rd February 2023 there were 384 households on the Housing Register. 4 households were in Band 1, 149 households were in band 2, 128 households were in Band 3 and 103 households were in band 4. Households can only be considered for properties of a suitable size (e.g. a couple would not be considered for a three bedroom home). Of the 384 households, 224 were single people or couples requiring one bedroom, 80 were households requiring 2 bedrooms, 70 were households requiring 3 bedrooms and 10 were households requiring 4 bedrooms.

7.17 156 households were housed in 2022. The breakdown of these is: 62 households housed in 1 bedroom homes, 58 housed in 2 bedroom homes, 28 housed in three bedroom homes and 8 housed in four bedroom homes.

Floating Housing Support

7.18 The Council delivers a Surrey County Council contract with funding of £50,000 pa to deliver Floating Housing Support. In 2022 there were 64 referrals for families and individuals needing help to maintain their independence in the community with the help of floating support. This is a 52% increase in referrals for 2021.

7.19 Most referrals come from the Housing Solutions Team and is for families that are either being supported to try and prevent their homelessness or are moving from temporary accommodation into a settled home and need some support to set up their tenancy and make community links e.g. register with GP and access other health services.

8. Registered Social Landlords

8.1 There are 3605 social housing homes in the Borough. They are a mixture of flats, maisonettes, houses and bungalow and include 327 homes for independent living for older people (previously known as sheltered housing). The Table below sets out the stock by size and ownership.

	1 bedroom/ studios	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4 bedroom	5 bedroom	Independent living	Total
A2	24	22	9	0	1	0	56
Accent Group	731	835	1090	42	0	253	2951
Anchor Hanover	0	0	0	0	0	74	74
Aster	11	17	10	4	0	0	42
Clarion	8	15	9	0	0	0	32

Home Group	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
London & Quadrant	0	1	6	0	0	0	7
Metropolitan Thames Valley	23	68	137	11	0	0	239
Mount Green	0	21	0	0	0	0	21
Transform	8	0	0	0	0	0	8
Vivid	35	94	38	6	0	0	173
Total	842	1073	1299	63	1	327	3605

- 8.2 All private registered providers of social housing (housing associations) must have complaints and/or appeals procedures. These should be utilised as a way of compelling a landlord to meet their repairing obligations. If the failure by a social landlord to carry out a repair is due to poor administration or procedures, the tenant could complain to the Housing Ombudsman Service.
- 8.3 The Ombudsman might investigate the complaint and, if they find maladministration, will recommend how the landlord should resolve it. The Ombudsman may also inform the Regulator of Social Housing.
- 8.4 Before complaining to the Ombudsman, the tenant should exhaust any internal complaints procedure of the PRPSH. The Housing Ombudsman has published guidance for landlords on how to deal with disrepair claims. The guidance includes advice on the pre-action protocol for housing condition claims and the use of the alternative dispute resolution (ADR).
- 8.5 The Regulator of Social Housing is an independent body tasked by Parliament to focus on regulating the social housing sector at an organisational level, with two main objectives:
- Economic objective: to make sure that registered providers (landlords) are well-managed and financially stable
 - Consumer objective: to make sure that tenants get quality accommodation, have choice and protection, and can hold their landlords to account.
- 8.6 To achieve these objectives, there is a set of regulatory standards that contain specific expectations social housing landlords must comply with and the outcomes that they are expected to achieve. One of the standards landlords have to meet is the Home Standard. The Home Standard sets expectations for registered providers of social housing to provide tenants with quality accommodation and a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service. The Regulator of Social Housing's role is to set the consumer standards and to intervene where failure to meet the standards has caused, or could have caused, serious harm to tenants.

9 Voluntary Sector & Community Partnerships

- 9.1 This year has also seen an increase to provide support for all who have struggled with the increase in cost of living crisis, much of this financial support has been provided via the Household Support Fund which for this area is administered by Citizens Advice Surrey Heath for the financial year to date from 1st April 2022 it is confirmed that £292,200 grants have been awarded.

- 9.2 The Council has also been active in promoting signposting help, and the continuing support of funding via grants to all local food banks. The Council continue to provide support through fund streams available and the carry forward balance of £280,521 from the Containment Outbreak Management Fund was awarded by the Council Executive last night to ensure that we are able to retain help to those who are in the greatest need (do you want this as an annex A/B its attached)
- 9.3 The Council also recognises and values the work undertaken by our voluntary organisations enormously and it has worked hard over the past 20 years to ensure of its collaborative approach to partnership working and has retained the funding levels for the Councils revenue grants.

Grant Schemes

- 9.4 The Council has also retained its Emergency Food Poverty Grant Scheme, which was amended during the autumn 2022, to the Emergency Food, Fuel and Energy grant scheme, which provides a grant scheme to enable the concept of 'warm banks in Surrey Heath, this scheme is to be extended by a further year until 31st March 2024 or until the funds are exhausted. To date 7 grants have been provided to warm bank initiatives locally.

Revenue Grants

- 9.5 The Council Executive on the 17 January approved revenue grants for a year starting from 1st April 2023 to: Citizens Advice Surrey Heath, Surrey Heath Age Concern, Camberley Central Job Club, VSNS and Time To Talk, Basingstoke Canal Authority, Blackwater Valley Countryside and Partnership. The funds identified mostly from the Containment Outbreak Management Fund with support from the Hope Hub being provided by the Councils Housing Budget this totalled £186,000. It was also agreed to remove the ring fenced support from Blackwater Valley and the Basingstoke Canal authority from 31st March 2024, and to add the ring fenced status to The Hope Hub for a 3 year period from 1st April 2023.

Ward Councillor Grant

- 9.6 This scheme introduced in December 2020 enables all Ward Councillors to support local charities and not for profit groups. Each Ward Councillor has an annual budget of £1500, with individual grants values not to exceed £500. At the Council Executive meeting on the 25th January 2022 the Community Grants were reviewed, and agreement reached to amend the criteria to from the 31st March 2022 any annual unused balances will be withdrawn, and transferred in to the new financial year.
- 9.7 As of 24th February 2023, 45 applications have been processed benefitting 37 projects at cost of £16,299.33, plus a further 13 pending applications valued at £5,710. The Councils pre-election period starts from the 22nd March and applications received before this will be processed, between the 22-31st March applications will be determined post-election period.

Surrey Heath Lottery

- 9.8 This initiative exemplifies the good practice of community development, in supporting 'local for local' at its best. The scheme was launched on the 13th July 2019, and since that time has continued to evolve but over the past year growth has struggled with the impact of the cost of living crisis within our economy. However the fund has 67 local good causes who continue to promote who are able to benefit from a monthly income.

Since its launch it has generated £85,260.60 for local good causes.

- 9.9 We have been fortunate as we have had a winner of the top £25,000 prize and several who have won £2000. This type of positive publicity helps retain this local scheme. Each ticket is priced at £1 and from that 60% of the funds raised are allocated to local (not for profit) good causes, and if they select an organisation as a preferred option, they will receive 50%, and 10% allocated to a central allocation fund, 20% prize money, 17% to Gatherwell (who are an external lottery management organisation who operate this scheme on behalf of the Council), and 3% VAT (which is re-claimed). The odds are a 1 in 50 chance of winning a prize, and a 1 in a million chance of winning £25,000.
- 9.10 For the local organisation there is no cost to join, and they can benefit from receiving additional funding, another advantage to the lottery is that the organisations will also want to promote the lottery as a way of their supporters giving, but also having a chance to win.

The Surrey Heath Annual Community Lottery Award Scheme

- 9.11 This scheme awarded grants in December 2022, of just under £4,500 has been awarded to seven local organisations, which included £1,100 for both Old Dean Community Group and St Vincent de Paul to help with food parcels, Surrey Heath Age Concern, Camberley Judo Club, Windle Valley Fundraisers, and Sandhurst RMA Nursery.

Community Support Working Group

- 9.12 The Council has a tradition whereby it works hard to provide the support where needed within our Surrey Heath Community. Over the past year, the Community Support Working Group has collaboratively helped to recruit a dedicated local area co-ordinator for the Old Dean and St Michaels, and Charlotte Austin-Visser joined in December 2022, which is provided by Surrey County Council, plus the funding has been made available for a community larder to be introduced at St Martins, together with the outreach work being undertaken by Citizens Advice Surrey Heath.
- 9.13 The annual consultation event took place in early November 2022, which has formed the basis of the annual plan which is agreed for the year 2023/24, and is attached as annex .

Coronation Grants

- 9.14 At the Council Executive on the 14th February it was agreed to support a small grant scheme to enable communities within Surrey Heath to celebrate the Coronation on Sunday 7th May as part of the big lunch a maximum of £250 per award is available with £500 per ward. The scheme will be open to receive applications from the 1st March – 28th April and will be administered by the Rotary Club of Camberley, which enables the community to access funding during the pre-election period, please use this link for further information.

Annexes

None

Background Papers

None