

Surrey Heath Borough Council
Executive
16 January 2024

Revenue Grants 2024-2025

Portfolio Holder:	Inclusion & Housing - Cllr Lisa Finan-Cooke
Head of Service	Sally Kipping – Head of HR, Performance & Communications
Report Author:	Renée France – Community Development Manager
PH Sign off:	Yes
Key Decision:	No
Wards Affected:	All

Summary and purpose

The Executive is asked to consider the revenue grants payments to voluntary organisations for the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.

Recommendation

The Executive is advised to RESOLVE that

- (i) The following revenue grants be awarded for 2024/25 to:
 - a. Surrey Heath Citizens Advice - £95,000*;
 - b. The Hope Hub - £40,000**;
 - c. Voluntary Support North Surrey - £20,000*;
 - d. Voluntary Support North Surrey – Time to Talk project - £7,000;
 - e. Camberley & Districts Job Club - £8,000;
 - f. Surrey Heath Age Concern - £10,000*;
- (ii) The funding for Surrey Heath Citizens Advice be ringfenced for 3 years;
- (iii) The following organisations be advised that revenue grant funding will not be awarded beyond the 2024/25 financial year and that funding provided this year is to form a transitional payment to support the end of the revenue grant:
 - a. Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership £5,000
 - b. Basingstoke Canal Authority £5,000; and
- (iv) All grants be subject to service level agreements.

* Other in-kind benefits provided to these organisations to be noted in Annex A
**The Hope Hub revenue grant funding is ringfenced for three years from 1st April 2023

1. Background

- 1.1. The Councils non-ringfenced revenue grant recipient organisations were advised in February 2023 that as a result of budget restrictions, the Council was not able to provide financial support in the form of a revenue grant beyond 31st March 2024. Throughout the year, the Council has worked to assist the organisations to identify other funding sources and the recommendations within this paper are based on the identified funding sources.
- 1.2. The Council's External Partnerships Select Committee (EPSC) has considered and scrutinised the revenue grant holder organisations and their applications for funding for 2024/25. Recommendations for revenue grant funding based on this process were made by the EPSC in November 2023. More detail about this process is provided in Annex B.
- 1.3. The recommendations outlined within this report take into account the recommendations and work of the External Partnerships Select Committee and the views of the portfolio holder with the aim of mitigating the impact of removal of revenue grants and to provide some transitional support to those organisations who will not be in receipt of a revenue grant in 2025/26.

2. Funding

- 2.1. Funding for revenue grants is recommended at £180,000 in total, the funding will form part of the Council's base budget and is subject to recommendation and approval at the Full Council meeting in February.
- 2.2. As part of the base budget review, it is recommended that revenue grants be partially funded through a reduction in the Ward Councillor Grant funding which currently stands at £52,500 with funds made available through the Councils base budget. The Ward Councillor grant fund and the revenue grant funding are closely aligned in that the funding is designated for local community-based projects delivered primarily through third sector organisations working within the borough supporting and providing community benefits and meeting the Council's core objectives around health and quality of life.
- 2.3. The transitional funding recommended for Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership and Basingstoke Canal Authority at £5,000 each will be provided from the Council's Community Fund Grant and both organisations will be

advised that further funding will not be available in the form of a Revenue Grant beyond 2024/25.

- 2.4. The funding recommendations in paragraph 2.2 will be reliant on changes to the Ward Councillor Grant criteria and the funding recommendations in paragraph 2.3 will be reliant on changes to the Community Fund Grant criteria and this will be addressed in a report provided to the February Executive meeting, alongside other recommendations following a review of the Council's grant funding streams.
- 2.5. It is proposed that the in-kind benefits provided to some organisations, which includes office space, and car parking be retained in line with the financial support offered. This is further outlined in Annex A.
- 2.6. Funding is subject to agreement by full Council in February 2024 for the 2024/2025 Budget.

3. Supporting Information

- 2.1 Service Level Agreements were introduced in 2013 to enable the Council to better assess the outputs and outcomes being delivered by voluntary sector organisations and to agree their key targets. The Council uses the agreements to monitor the performance of organisations throughout the year. Grant payments are authorised following receipt of a satisfactory monitoring report. More information is detailed in Annex C.
- 2.2 The Council follows the principles of the [Surrey Compact](#), an agreement that supports how partners behave, engage, and work together in the statutory, community, voluntary and faith sectors.
- 2.3 The Council's grant support to voluntary organisations is a discretionary function of the Council and the Executive therefore has the option to vary the level of support to organisations, or to withdraw funding for some or all the grants.
- 2.4 The proposed allocation for 2024/25 prioritises voluntary sector organisations that directly support the Council's statutory duties relating to its welfare benefits and distribution of grants to local residents and in support of housing and homelessness. The proposed allocation prioritises the Council's strategic aims around Health and Quality of Life and support for those who are most vulnerable.

2. Proposal and Alternative Options

- 3.1 The Executive has the option to:

- i) Agree the proposed revenue grant funding awards for each organisation at the level recommended and the ending of grant funding for two organisations for the following year 2025/26, subject to agreement by Full Council in February 2024
- ii) Agree the proposals set out above but agree alternative funding options
- iii) To vary or reallocate funding to any of the organisations and to consider any funding options
- iv) To not fund any revenue grants for 2024/25

3. Contribution to the Council's Five-Year Strategy

4.1 Health and Quality of Life:

4.1.1 Nurturing a strong sense of community across the whole borough lies at the core of the services that the Council provides to its residents, fostering a sense of respect and consideration.

4.1.2 We will take a positive approach to supporting all sectors of our community, including those who are most vulnerable. We will promote active and healthy lives for all and a rich programme of cultural and community events.

4.2 Responsive Council:

4.2.1 Surrey Heath Borough Council engages meaningfully with our community on all key policies.

4.2.2 We provide accessible services for all to meet the needs of the diverse communities we serve.

4. Resource Implications

4.1 There is a base budget growth proposal of £180,000 to be considered at Council on 21 February 2024.

5. Section 151 Officer Comments:

5.1 Whilst the desire of the Council/Executive is to provide certainty of funding for some organisations through a ring-fence of budget, it is advised that these are a discretionary service provision and therefore any ring-fence cannot be guaranteed if the Council is required, through budgetary constraints to restrict expenditure to the provision of statutory services only.

6. Legal and Governance Issues

6.1 A Service Level Agreement for monitoring each revenue grant should be agreed with each grant recipient. This should include the Council's right not to renew agreements.

7. Monitoring Officer Comments

8.1 No matters arising.

8. Other Considerations and Impacts

Environment and Climate Change

9.1 No matters arising.

Equalities and Human Rights

9.2 There is a strong need for the Council to provide support to organisations undertaking vital work which supports the diverse community of residents in Surrey Heath Borough. This funding is particularly important for the most vulnerable people in the borough and any ending of funding will impact on residents across the borough including those with protected characteristics for example age, disability and those from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds. Recent evidence from the Hope Hub and Surrey Heath Citizens Advice indicates that individuals who may have one or more protected characteristics are more likely to access the services they provide and therefore reductions in Revenue Grant funding are likely to disproportionately impact on those with protected characteristics.

Risk Management

9.3 No matters arising.

Community Engagement

9.4 No matters arising.

Annexes

A- Grant Application: Summary of proposals

B- Report from the External Partnerships Committee

C- Service Level Agreements: Outcomes to date

ANNEX A - Grant Application, Summary of Proposals

Organisation	Grant Use	Award 2023/24	Funding level applied for	Proposed Award 2024/25	Other Council in-kind benefits for the year 2023/24
Surrey Heath Citizens Advice (CASH)	Helps people from within the community to resolve their legal, money and other problems.	80,000	124,300	95,000	Offices £25,000 & Car parking no specific cost (these figures are for 23/24 but are currently under review and likely to be at a comparable level for 24/25)
Voluntary Support North Surrey	The service has several roles including developing volunteering, providing advice on governance and funding for voluntary organisations.	20,000	30,000	20,000	Office subsidy £8,400 Car parking £2,350 (these figures are for 23/24 but are currently under review and likely to be at a comparable level for 24/25)
Surrey Heath Age Concern	Provides a coffee shop in Camberley for use by the 50+ age group, a visiting and befriending service and an information signposting and support service.	10,000	16,000	10,000	Tea room 10,000 rentable value Car parking up to £2,850 Business Rate Relief £5,376 (As above, under review)
Camberley & District Job Club	Provision of a Job Club facility within Camberley that includes	6,000	10,026	8,000	N/A

	a dedicated course helping clients return to work				
The Hope Hub	To provide a service to those who are homeless or preventing homelessness, and a crisis care fund.	40,000	40,000	40,000	£18,500 office subsidy and Business Rates Relief £7,424
VSNS – Time to Talk	To provide a visiting and befriending service 'time to talk'	10,000	10,000	7,000	N/A
Basingstoke Canal Authority	Revenue support in maintaining facilities	10,000	10,000	0	n/a
Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership	Revenue support in maintaining facilities to residents and visitors to Blackwater Valley	10,000		0	n/a
TOTAL		186,00		180,000	

Annex B: Report from the External Partnerships Committee

Report from the External Partnerships Select Committee

Strategic Director/Head of Service Gavin Ramtohal
Report Author: Eddie Scott
Wards Affected: All

Summary and purpose

To detail the recommendations of the External Partnerships Select Committee following its consideration of Revenue Grant Applications for the 2024/25 financial year.

Recommendation

The External Partnerships Executive is advising the Executive to take the following actions in relation to the Revenue Grant Scheme for the 2024/25 financial year:

- I. The following organisations be awarded revenue grants for the 24/25 financial year as follows:
 - a) Camberley and District Job Club: £10,026
 - b) Citizens Advice Surrey Heath: £95,000
 - c) Surrey Heath Age Concern: £10,000
 - d) The Hope Hub: £40,000
 - e) Time to Talk (VSNS): £5,000
 - f) Voluntary Support North Surrey: £20,000
- II. The funding for Citizens Advice Surrey Heath be ringfenced for 3 years;
- III. It be communicated that clearer Key Performance Indicators, and Case studies, including continued monthly updates, were required from Voluntary Support North Surrey to illustrate sustained value for money;
- IV. £27,521, from the Containment Outbreak Management Fund, currently allocated to create a new charity enabling fund be reallocated to fund the above revenue grants for the 24/25 financial year;
- V. Any unspent monies allocated to the Emergency Food Fuel and Energy Grant Scheme be reallocated to fund revenue grants for the 24/25 financial year;

Background and Supporting Information

- 1.1 The above recommendations follow thorough consideration of the Revenue Grant Scheme by the External Partnerships Select Committee, which included informal information gathering, formal scrutiny at its Committee meeting on 5 September 2023, and sub-group style discussions.
- 1.2 On 24 July 2023, Councillors, including Members of the External Partnerships Select Committee, informally met representatives of the existing Revenue Grant holders at an all-day Community Networking and Practice Sharing event at Camberley Theatre. As part of the event Members of the Committee

Annex B: Report from the External Partnerships Committee

were able to visit small stands run-by the Revenue Grant Holders, which provided information about the organisations' work, impact and outcomes.

- 1.3 All the Revenue Grant recipients presented reports to the External Partnerships Select Committee on 5 September 2023. The Select Committee in turn asked questions of the Revenue Grant holders as to the services and value provided to the borough as a result of their revenue grants. Moreover, the Committee examined the individual organisations' challenges and plans for forthcoming years.
- 1.4 Following the Committee Meeting, Members of the Select Committee considered the reports and their findings from the Scrutiny Meeting, and discussed what recommendations it was inclined to formally make to the Executive and its Select Committee Meeting on 28 November 2023.

Reasons for Recommendation

- 1.5 During the Committee's informal considerations it was noted that whilst Voluntary Support North Surrey evidently provided crucial support and 'infrastructure', to support a thriving third-sector in the borough, it was sometimes hard to quantify and illustrate this. Thereby Members emphasised the continued need for Key Performance Indicators, and Case studies, including monthly updates from revenue grant holders such as Voluntary Support North Surrey.
- 1.6 Moreover, although there was no formal conclusion to discussions; it was suggested that the Integrated Care Board should take more of the responsibility for the commissioning of befriending services.

Proposal and Alternative Options

- 1.7 The Executive has the option to accept the recommendations from the Select Committee or to partially accept the recommendations; including the option to award different amounts to revenue grant applicants and to find funding from other sources.
- 1.8 The Executive also has the option to reject the Committee's recommendations, and make its own decisions in relation to the revenue grant applications.

Legal and Governance Issues

- 1.9 In accordance with section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000, the Executive is required to consider this report and its recommendations and, within two months of the Executive Meeting at which they are received.

Annex C: Service Level Agreements – Outcomes to Date (2023/24)

Organisation	Service Level Agreement	Achievements
Citizens Advice Surrey Heath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To retain an a-political stance at all times. • To be open M-T 10-4 and Friday 10-1, and accept phone calls Friday from 1-4pm. • Retain service the average daily numbers of clients interacted at 36 • To acknowledge the support of the Council in all publicity: • To maintain independently examined accounts to be provided as requested. • To deliver the changing needs as outlined within your annual Business Development Plan and to continue to develop joint funding bids where appropriate to meet local priorities: • To continue to work in partnership with the Council Community Support WG, and to operate the Hardship Fund introduced in November 2020. • Delivery of a cost effective outreach service designed to meet local needs and coordinate with other initiatives such Surrey Heath's Warm Banks. • For the Service Level Agreement to be reviewed by both parties prior to the 1st April 2024. 	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved/Ongoing</p> <p>Achieved/Ongoing</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>TBC</p>
Voluntary Support North Surrey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deliver the outcomes and outputs specified within the 2023/24 Partnership Funding Agreement with SCC/the CCGs/Runnymede BC/Spelthorne BC. • To continue working in partnership to support the community organisations being: ODCoG, the Community Support WG. • To maintain an office base within Surrey Heath that is available from 9-4pm, Monday to Friday. 	<p>Achieved/Ongoing</p> <p>Achieved/Ongoing</p> <p>Achieved/Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review with your clients the ongoing need and requirement of the IGC tenancy as a matter of urgency. • To actively promote and build awareness of the services provided by VSNS. • To place 150 volunteers during the year, and clear details of the local organisation placements and referral numbers quarterly. • To retain an a-political stance at all times. • For VSNS and the Council to review the performance data provided. • Acknowledge the support of the Council in all its publicity. • To work with an average of 8 organisations a month to build capacity in areas such as policy, trustee development, fundraising and volunteer recruitment. 	<p>Achieved/Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing – on target</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved – ongoing</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p>
Surrey Heath Age Concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work collaboratively with VSNS on V&B service in maximising the impact to recruit and retain volunteers, and to increase the volunteer numbers to ensure the local demand can be met. • Retain a maximum waiting time of 2 months from the time of referral, for either home or telephone befriending service. • Maintain audited accounts to be provided as requested by the Council. To retain your community fundraising strategy, building your financial independence. • To retain accurate information data and user numbers at the Rainbow Café. • To retain an a-political stance at all times. • For the Council and SHAC to work collaboratively to renew the lease for the Rainbow Café facilities from November 2022. 	<p>Achieved/Ongoing</p> <p>Data not provided</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Ongoing but not achieved to date</p> <p>Data not provided</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Not achieved – although in progress</p>
Camberley & District Job Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide accurate information on the outcomes of the services provided: numbers of those who have found work, numbers of clients 	<p>No data provided</p>

	<p>seen, referral information, who, and numbers within the quarterly return:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To secure CIO status by the 31st March 2024. • Over the period of this SLA to evidence the numbers of clients who have found work and for this to achieve 50 within the year. • Maintain audited accounts to be provided as requested by the Council. • To further develop a community fundraising strategy, that reduces the financial dependence from the council. • To continue to work with the Workshop initiative when required. • To support a minimum of 40 clients per month. • To retain an a-political stance at all time 	<p>Not achieved – in progress Ongoing</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Not achieved – in progress</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>No data provided</p> <p>Achieved</p>
The Hope Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To fund the gap for the crisis provision service when required within Surrey Heath, to bridge the gap with the funds provided by Frimley Fuel Allotments which cover their geographical areas which is different to Surrey Heath, so this grant ensures that the whole of SH is covered to support with crisis provision when required: We need data around how many people have been helped, when, where they live and the expenditure. • To work in partnership with other organisations where there is an overlap in service delivery e.g. Camberley and District Job Club, Citizens Advice Surrey Heath and Voluntary Support North Surrey. • To retain an a-political stance at all times. • Acknowledge the support of the Council in all its publicity and to note that the funding for this period. • To note that The Hope Hub is a ringfenced organisation with funding agreed for a 3 year period from 1st April 2023, subject to an agreed service level agreement. • The funding is provided by the Councils Housing area noting that additional information and statistics 	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p>

	<p>may be required to satisfy the funders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To provide quarterly statistics on the service and user numbers of the Hope Hub wider services to include the categories outlined below:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The number of people directly secured accommodation.• The number of case work session provided to individuals.• The number of courses run.• The number of people supported to claim benefits.• The number of people supported to register with a GP.• The number of people supported into training or employment.• The number of people who are homeless within Surrey Heath	<p>N/a</p> <p>Achieved / ongoing</p>
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Time to Talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To retain all existing service standards within Surrey Heath, pending any alteration and/or expansion of provision and/or area. • Retain the service provision for a further 12 months. • Work collaboratively with Surrey Heath Age Concern by maximising the impact to recruit and retain volunteers. • Increase volunteer numbers in line to meet the demands of the service • It is noted that the clients can include those with mental health amongst other disabilities, for clients who are held on a waiting list a phone check-in service will be introduced to help alleviate loneliness. • To retain a maximum waiting time of 2 months from the time of referral to be offered a service. • To retain an a-political stance at all times. • Acknowledge the support of the Council in all its publicity 	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p>
Basingstoke Canal Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect, manage and maintain a safe and accessible Basingstoke Canal for Surrey Heath residents; • Maintain services by working collaboratively with partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors. • Working with partners to improve the health & wellbeing of our community, through access to canal greenspace with opportunities for exercise using both the towpath for running and cycling and walking as well as the water through water sports and green volunteering opportunities. 	<p>Achieved</p> <p>On target/ Ongoing</p> <p>On target/ Ongoing</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ratio between public use of the towpath in Surrey Heath and accidents reported in the Borough area of the Canal remain below 0.0025% • To provide quarterly written updates based upon the outcomes of the services provided. • Acknowledge the support of the Council in all its publicity. • Maintain audited accounts to be provided as requested by the Council. • Ensure the organisation remains apolitical. 	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p>
Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners planners and leisure officers to increase public greenspace in the Valley including new SANG sites. • Manage the Hawley Meadows/Blackwater Park SANG and Swan Lake Park SANG both used by SHBC. Produce annual reports for these sites. • Organise and lead 135 conservation projects within the Valley for local volunteers, involving 1,350 people, at least 13 projects involving 100 people in Surrey Heath. • Work to partnership budget as agreed by BVCP members committee with at least £210,000 raised additional to core LA contributions. • Value of volunteer activity in direct support of BVCP activities to be £135,000. • Work to the value of £7,250 will be undertaken on sites within Surrey Heath Borough. • To provide quarterly written updates based upon the outcomes of the services provided. • Acknowledge the support of the Council in all its publicity. • Maintain audited accounts to be provided as requested by the Council. • Ensure the organisation remains apolitical. 	<p>Achieved / Ongoing</p> <p>Achieved/ awaiting annual reports</p> <p>On target</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>On target</p> <p>Ongoing/On target</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p>