

**VOLUNTARY SUPPORT GRANT COMMITTEE held at COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 7pm on 23 November 2016**

Present: Councillor H Rolfe (Chairman)
Councillor L Wells and Councillor S Howell

Also present: Councillor E Hicks

Officers in attendance: R Dobson (Principal Democratic and Electoral Services Officer), P Evans (Leisure and Performance Manager) and S Hayden (Community Development Officer).

VG2 CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman reminded members that this meeting continued from the one which had taken place on 21 November 2016, and that decisions from both meetings would be taken this evening.

Councillor Hicks declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to the Council for Voluntary Services for Uttlesford, as he had been extensively associated with the organisation.

VG3 CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS FOR GRANTS

COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE UTTLESFORD

Clive Emmett gave a presentation on the role of the organisation and the reasons for its application. Points in support of the application included:

- The role of the CVSU was more critical than ever.
- It was smart, innovative and effective, and maintained a strong partnership with the local voluntary sector, enabling it to be efficient and informed, and to operate in a modern way.
- The CVSU sought funding to support three objectives: establishing a development officer role to support the Funding Officer, to act in an outreach capacity and to map real need and reduce waste; to establish a Community Garden project, to meet a need within the district for elderly people to tackle overgrown gardens, for which a co-ordinator was required to organise volunteers; establishing a business exchange forum, to take place four times annually, to bring together local businesses and the voluntary sector to see how business could support the sector.
- The CVSU also wished to become more sustainable, and was looking at providing a virtual office for voluntary sector groups.

Members asked the following questions:

What was the overall funding and budget?

A: There were various pots, but the majority came from the support of both the District (£32,000) and Essex County Council (£32,900), as well as a sum from the Citizens Advice Bureau (£9,500).

How do you assess impact?

A: We have worked with the ECC Development and Performance Officer to develop a framework, as what the voluntary sector achieve is under-represented. Capturing the contribution of Uttlesford's voluntary sector is important, and can be a powerful tool to leverage funding.

Funding from UDC will not support that element.

A: UDC funding collectively contributes to our existence. We want to look at universal benefits. Developing a way of measuring impact would be very useful.

VOLUNTEER UTTLESFORD

Members listened to a presentation given by Robin Lee and Lizzie Petrie of Volunteer Uttlesford. Robin Lee said the organisation now wished to ask for different amounts from what had originally been requested, as a five year lease had been taken out, and £16,000 was sought to be used from the request for the year. The aim of the organisation was to give and receive volunteer opportunities. There were three paid staff, working over four days a week. The aspiration was to enhance their role to cover five days.

Councillor Rolfe declared a non-pecuniary interest as the patron of Volunteer Uttlesford.

Robin Lee said Volunteer Uttlesford had helped over 1,000 people, and over 300 organisations, but could do more. The organisation wished to raise its profile and that of volunteering in Uttlesford itself. There were a large number of health and wellbeing opportunities.

The sum of £51,675 over two years was sought.

Core funding was crucial to support those with additional needs, such as the young, and those who were socially isolated. The charity was committed to greater transparency and improving statistics. In 2015-16 they had had 195 volunteers, so assuming half a day per month undertaking assistance at an assumed value of £12 per hour, the return was estimated at £250,000, of enormous value. The charity wished to offer this service across the district, not just in the Saffron Walden area. Aspirations included a refresh of the website and the creation of pop-up events to raise the profile of volunteering, and a course in February aimed at mentors.

Members asked the following questions:

How many of the volunteers were aged under 20?

A: Figures were available for volunteers aged up to 25: a quarter of all volunteers with the charity fell into this group. The charity had close links with

Saffron Walden County High School and Walden School, and wanted to expand.

Volunteer Uttlesford has free accommodation here at the Council Offices. How else are you funded?

A: The majority of funding is from Essex County Council, 7% from the Essex Community Fund, 15% from Essex Youth and 13% from the Time Bank project. Some funds are short term and committed for specific projects.

Do you have a breakdown on how much an extra day or extra locations would cost?

A: We wish to do more outreach so any additional money would go towards that on one extra day.

To what extent are you Saffron Walden based?

A: We do a lot in Dunmow, Thaxted and Stansted too, but would like to get out more to the villages.

Do you use the office in Dunmow?

A: Yes, not on regular days.

Could one of your volunteers help you to raise funds?

A: Yes, we are exploring this option. Many however do not feel they can give a long-term continuous commitment. We intend to set up a fundraising committee.

If you are not awarded the full amount, what would happen?

A: Any additional money would allow us to expand and we would have more paid hours.

Councillor Rolfe asked that Volunteer Uttlesford work as closely as possible with CVSU.

SUPPORT 4 SIGHT

Mary Martin and Paul Atkins gave a presentation on the Support 4 Sight bid for funding, explaining the role of the resource centre in providing advice and equipment, giving demonstrations and carrying out home visits. Computer training was also offered. There was a toy library, a peer support group, telephone advice and social activities.

Paul Atkins related a success story regarding one beneficiary who had come to Support 4 Sight.

Mary Martin said the funding requested was directly to support the resource centre and home visiting. Previously ECC had supported core services but the charity had now lost £4,000 per annum following a review of services. Therefore the charity wanted to ask UDC to support its core service and its befriending service. The resource centre needed to be maintained over the

next two years. If core funding was obtained this would help secure the centre together with the National Lottery grant for the next three years.

Members asked questions as follows.

You say you have £11,000 and have lost £4,000, which together amount to £15,000. Why are you asking for £20,000?

A: We are also launching our training service and DBS checks. The rent in George Street has increased, which is £16,000 plus various insurances. We would use the grant to pay for core costs.

How much has rent gone up by?

A: We can get that information for you.

Are you operating only in Saffron Walden?

A: The resource centre is based in Saffron Walden, but we have a base in eye clinics in Harlow, Chelmsford and Braintree.

Do you receive any support from other district councils?

A: No.

Are the people you help usually residents of Uttlesford?

A: People from Uttlesford can go further afield to hospitals so we support all we can. 91.5% of our service users are Uttlesford residents.

Are your services free of charge? Do you recover some of the costs?

A: Yes our services are free. We raise a lot of the money for social trips ourselves, but we also offer a membership scheme of £15 per year or £16 for joint membership. This covers the cost of some of the services such as the newsletter.

What is the size of membership?

A: Membership is 200 people, but we support approximately 4,000 people.

HOME-START

Sophie Marriott and Deborah Gilder gave a presentation on the work of Home-Start and the reasons supporting the bid put forward for funding. It was their aspiration to continue visits to homes by referral, to assist families with a child under five, or to help the family to be supported by other services. Home-Start was an early prevention service. Volunteers were drawn from those with parenting experience, and were given 40 hours of training. The big funders continually sought innovation, but Home-Start had been doing the same work for 32 years, and it was working really well. The request of £5,000 represented 550 hours of volunteering and support.

Changes were coming up. The charity wished to strengthen its base and copy the model done in other counties. As it was part of Home-Start Essex, there was only one set of administration costs, which was more efficient. Uttlesford

money still served Uttlesford families, and this support was important because there were people who needed this help, even in a place like Uttlesford.

Members asked the following questions.

Why not ask for more?

A: We prioritise, and if we had more money we could do more. We go through key concerns, so if we had volunteers for all referrals we would allocate help to all of them.

How many people do you help a year?

A: 80 – 90 families across the district plus 50 attending the drop-in centre.

Could you usefully use more money?

A: Yes.

How else are you funded?

A: Through Friends' Groups and the Lottery which supports a project for school readiness, but these funds are becoming harder for us to access.

Is the need for support getting worse?

A: Yes, because of the threshold for social services and more families with mental health problems.

What is the relationship between you and Home-Start UK?

A: Home-Start UK is the umbrella organisation, providing us with legal, policy and recruitment support. They don't help us with finding volunteers.

Do you work with Volunteer Uttlesford?

A: Yes.

VG4

AWARD OF GRANTS

The Committee assessed all information obtained during the presentations held at this meeting and on 21 November 2016.

RESOLVED that grants be offered to voluntary sector organisations as set out in the following schedule.

The meeting ended at 9.20pm

Organisation	Requested 2017/18	Requested 2018/19	Members Agreed Funding 2017/18	Members Agreed Funding 2018/19
Council for Voluntary Service, Uttlesford	£36,000	£38,000	£34,000	£34,000
Uttlesford Community Travel	£42,000 + £15,000 vehicle replacement	£43,000 plus £15,000 vehicle replacement	£42,000 + £15,000 vehicle replacement*	£42,000 + £15,000 vehicle replacement*
Uttlesford Citizen Advice Bureau				
	£144,908	£154,150	£145,000	£145,000
	Frontline	Frontline	Frontline	Frontline
	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000
Volunteer Uttlesford	£24,530	£43,145	£16,000	£16,000
Support 4 Sight	£20,300	£20,500	£12,000	£12,000
Citizens' Advice East Herts	£11,554	£11,670	£11,500	£11,500
Home-Start Uttlesford	£5,000	£5,000	£8,250	£8,250
Voluntary Sector Training	£6,900	£7,475	£6,000	£6,000
Action for Families	£14,493	£14,945	£14,500	£14,500
Hearing Help Essex	£2,000	£2,030	£2,000	£2,000
St Clare Hospice	£20,000	£20,000	£3,750	£3,750
Uttlesford Buffy Bus Association	£15,000	£15,450	Nil**	Nil**
Dunmow Malting Preservation Trust	£5000	£5000	£4,000*** (not to be included)	£4,000*** (not to be included)
Total spend	£352,685	£385,365	£300,000	£300,000
Budget – VSG	£286,570		£286,670	£286,670

* UCT £15,000 not included in this grant scheme. It will be taken from capital budget for vehicle replacement

** No funding offered at this time. Consideration will be given in the future for capital expenditure (replacement of bus).

*** £3,670 to be transferred from this budget and £330 from other budget to fund Dunmow Maltings Preservation Trust as a standalone grant.

£17,000 to be used from contingency pot for 2017/18 and 2018/19 to make up deficit therefore £40,000 will remain unallocated in each year.