

<b>Committee:</b>	Voluntary Support Grant Committee	<b>Date:</b>	24 February 2022
<b>Title:</b>	Voluntary Organisation Support Grant		
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr Sutton - Communities		
<b>Report Author:</b>	Sue Hayden	<b>Key decision:</b>	

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## Summary

1. Each year the district council opens its Voluntary Organisation Support Grant to registered charities who provide vital assistance to the residents of Uttlesford through the Council's corporate objectives. The organisations apply via an on-line application form, as well as supplying a copy of the organisation's most recent audited financial accounts, medium/long term business plan, copies of the organisation's equalities policy, constitution and safeguarding policy.

## Recommendations

2. To consider all applications and allocate up to £310,000 grant funding as per the Council's Grants policy.

## Financial Implications

3. There is a budget provision of £310,000 for 2022/23 to support organisations, in assisting the council to meet its corporate plan objectives.

## Background Papers

4. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

Applications received from organisations applying to the Voluntary Organisation Support Grant for 2022/23.

## Impact

5.

Communication/Consultation	Applications sort from voluntary sector organisations.
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	Funding is open to all registered charities

Health and Safety	N/A
Human Rights/Legal Implications	The Council has the powers to award grants to organisations using its general power of competence in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011
Sustainability	N/A
Ward-specific impacts	N/A
Workforce/Workplace	Communities Team

## Situation

6. Each organisation has been invited to attend an individual virtual meeting with the Committee of the Cabinet, along with officer support, on 21 February 2022 to talk through their application and answer any questions.
7. A formal Committee of the Cabinet meeting will take place on 24 February, along with relevant officer support, to allocate the £310,000. The decisions will then be ratified at a Cabinet meeting, after which time, the organisations will be informed of the outcome.
8. Below sets out details of the use that will be made of any financial aid given by Uttlesford District Council by each organisation and how much money they are requesting for 2022/23.

### 9. **Accuro**

Any funding provided by Uttlesford District Council will be used to cover revenue funding for the operational project costs, including staff costs and core organisational costs of delivering Accuro's services in Uttlesford.

Any financial aid given by UDC will be restricted to Accuro's services in Uttlesford

- Saturday Play Club – Saffron Walden
- U19s Projects – Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow
- School Holiday project – Uttlesford
- Adult Friendship Scheme – Saffron Walden
- Young adult Friendship scheme – Saffron Walden
- STRIDE – Great Dunmow
- Stay and Play – Saffron Walden
- And to launch new services to meet new needs identified

Support will allow them to continue to deliver services, helping make a real difference to the lives of local people with disability making Uttlesford the best place to live, work and play.

**Amount requested £15,000**

#### **10. Action for Family Carers**

Funding will ensure that all Young Carers and Young Adult Carers in Uttlesford have access to information and advice, practical and emotional support and breaks from their caring role so that they feel better able to enjoy their childhood, to participate in social activities, to maintain their own health and wellbeing and to achieve their potential.

Action for Family Carers will offer comprehensive and holistic support for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers in Uttlesford, based on one worker, dedicating two days per week to Young and Young Adult Carer support across Uttlesford.

Action for Family Carers will organise and facilitate fortnightly club nights for Young Carers alternating between Stansted and Great Dunmow to ensure that there is a club within reasonable reach for all Young Carers across the district.

Young Carer clubs/sessions will be two hours long with an extra half-hour reserved for private conversations with older Young Adult Carers. Which gives Young and Young Adult Carers a consistent and reliable time and place to meet with a worker. Young Adult Carers will also be encouraged to attend the club itself to either meet with others or volunteer with the younger children as a peer mentor. This is mutually beneficial and helps the Young Adult Carers to improve their leadership skills, builds confidence and improves their listening and interpersonal skills.

**Amount requested £16,500**

#### **11. Uttlesford Buffy Bus Association Buffy Playbus**

Financial aid will be used alongside that of the funding already secured from the Lottery (Community Fund) and other sources such as Essex Community Foundation, The Little Butterflies Foundation plus others to continue the present level of service offered, alongside future developments such as supporting SEND families during the summer holidays and an exciting new project planned for summer 2022 to provide outside messy play sessions in the Uttlesford district.

**Amount Requested £6,050**

## **12. Carers First**

Due to being unable to meet carers physically over the last 2 years, support has largely been delivered by telephone and online without any interruption to the service. Since Summer 2020, Carers First have adopted a blended approach of face to face and online services to offer the widest possible menu of options to carers. The project has three strands and focusses on extending and adding value to our personalised support offer:

1. To purchase free carer wellbeing resource packs (30 in total). Packs will include activities that carers can do at home. This will give to support carers who are still, to some extent, shielding or caring for someone shielding, vulnerable, isolated, elderly, unable to leave the house due to the nature of their caring role and those who do not want to go out as they continue to lack confidence to do so. Packs will include mindfulness colouring books, herb growing kits, jigsaws, arts and crafts materials, relaxation oils and exercise dvds.
2. For those carers who can leave the house, activity vouchers to local recreational, leisure venues and wellbeing services and local hairdressers will be offered (30 in total). Carers can request a voucher for a free activity that will give them a break and allow them to access activities that non carers are able to enjoy.
3. A programme of additional carer wellbeing group activities (open to all) including meals out (lunch/cream tea), trips to attractions such as Duxford or training workshops on First Aid or other carer- identified topics will be arranged. A co-production of a programme with Uttlesford carers, and group activities will provide an opportunity to interact with other carers for peer support, offer a break from the caring role and reduce social isolation whilst enhancing carer wellbeing.

**Amount requested £9,660**

## **13. Uttlesford Citizen Advice**

### **Core generalist and debt advice services funding**

Uttlesford District Council funding will cover fixed salary costs associated with providing generalist and debt advice. Uttlesford CA will continue to actively look for new project funding to support the unmet needs of residents, assuming project aims, and objectives complement our own priorities and strengths.

Funds from the District Council ensures adequate staffing levels necessary to manage a large volunteer resource and maintain our high quality of advice. In addition to staff costs associated with advice provision, administrators and managers are paid to ensure that the service is run in a professional, safe manner. Uttlesford CA is audited annually by the national body of Citizens Advice to assess leadership performance in Governance; Strategic Business Planning; Risk Management; Financial Management; People Management; Equality Leadership; Operation Performance Management; Partnership

Working and Research and Campaigns.

Funding from the Council will ensure that paid training resource continues. In 22-23 it is planned to recruit an additional 10 volunteers whilst providing ongoing training and development for our existing workforce.

### **Frontline Funding**

Frontline is a local referral and signposting online platform that was originally built and designed by Uttlesford Citizens Advice using Big Lottery funding secured by a partnership agreement with Uttlesford District Council and other local partners. The project (that is currently migrating to a non-profit company solely owned and controlled by Uttlesford Citizens Advice) is now funded across west Essex by Essex County Council and WECCG, and is now also available in East Herts, Broxbourne and will shortly be rolling out to Northumberland. It's an exciting time for Frontline because it is currently in final testing for a significant upgrade to the platform that will hopefully be rolled out to Uttlesford by the end of the financial year.

The £5,000 contribution from UDC will be allocated specifically to fund an existing member of staff to continue to focus on expansion. The Trustee Board is confident that Frontline has the potential to off-set a significant element of overhead back to UCA over the long term - that will make Uttlesford CA less reliant on grant income from UDC in the future.

**Amount requested £191,000 plus £5,000 plus VAT for Frontline**

## **14. Council for Voluntary Services**

The use any grant funding made by the Council would enable the operational strategy to directly support the local voluntary community sectors (VSC) and the communities operated within, in the areas of need and objectives as laid out for the forthcoming year. Focus upon the specific areas and gaps in provision that the Covid 19 crisis continues to be amplified and will continue to do so over the coming years. The demands that this crisis has and will continue to create within the district cannot be underestimated and the need for the Council for Voluntary Services and those of other VCS organisations interventions will only become greater. It is already being seen that people and families reach crisis point which in turn has a knock-on effect to causing other social and health needs to develop that need our support. The sector and Council for Voluntary Services must be financially resilient and future proofed to be able to cope with the additional demands that are and will be made of it moving forward.

It is vital that behind the project staff there is a core team that can furnish them with a whole system approach that is responsive, operating within a framework that strongly supports their effective delivery, based upon safe, smart, innovative practice and which aligns itself with the districts needs with

partnership being paramount.

**Amount requested £55,000**

### **15. Dig-it**

During 2021, Dig-It worked with volunteers to increase the produce grown on the allotment with a focus on building immunity and educating volunteers on incorporating vegetables, herbs and fruits grown into healthy meals which they can cook.

Strong collaborations have been developed within the local community and partnership working with Mencap Café Cornell to extend the community kitchen has been achieved. A new summerhouse was kindly donated (that will be built in spring 2022) will provide a safe and clean environment for food preparation in 2022. The collaboration with Cornell Café includes groups from their project to be involved in growing from “plot to plate” where morning sessions at the allotment are delivered, followed by bus transport back to Cornell Café where the group will share a meal of the fresh produce they have grown.

Groups are currently run on a Monday and Friday, with Wednesday dedicated to members of Saffron Walden Mencap Society and Cafe Cornell. Further partnerships will be developed with other charities in the community who may also benefit from the site, ensuring the allotment can grow from its current three day use to be in use for the majority of the week by various groups. There has been much interest this year from the local community who work, to run an afterwork/weekend session. This noted by many as much needed following extensive time in lockdown and burn out due to increased screen time and working from home practices. This year Dig-It's aim is to deliver an out of work hours session specifically for this group.

Funding will be used to:

- 1 Develop the plot to plate project in collaboration with Cornell Café and Mencap
- 2 Deliver an after work group that has been much needed for some time and a real highlighted need in our community
- 3 Explore potential for a second site in collaboration with our partners Cafe Cornell and Mencap

**Amount requested £5,000**

### **16. Citizens Advice East Herts**

Historically, Uttlesford District Council has recognised that some Uttlesford residents choose to seek advice in Bishop's Stortford and has been financially supportive of the advice that we give to them.

Despite the move to providing the majority of clients advice by phone and digital for those whose problems can be helped in this way, it is recognised that there are a significant minority who will still need face to face advice. Additionally, we know that 1 in 10 clients require on going casework.

The annual cost of running the advice service across East Herts is around £280,000 comprising of salaries, volunteers, and premises costs. Funding from Uttlesford District Council will allow continuation to not only advise Uttlesford residents by phone and email but also to advise them face to face and offer ongoing casework where their case requires it. It will also contribute to the community and partner engagement work including Information Hubs in community spaces and Community Access Points (including public access computers and free phones) in partner buildings as well as helping to continue Frontline.

Around 4% of clients who give a postcode live in Uttlesford. This means that many residents choose to get advice from Citizens Advice East Herts, despite being over the border in Hertfordshire. Without Council funding Citizens Advice East Herts would be unable to continue to provide advice and importantly ongoing casework to Uttlesford residents

**Amount requested £11,500**

## **17. Hearing Help**

The grant requested will contribute the Uttlesford related percentage of Hearing Help's service delivery costs, core rent, salaries and running costs which have increased considerably to provide a covid-safe service. Sessions used to be drop-in and required very little administration in advance; now a formal registration and booking process needs to be run to ensure social distancing is maintained at all times at each venue, which has increased the work load of the administrative team, as well as provide relevant PPE and additional cleaning supplies.

The total project cost is £11,400 - the remaining funding has been secured as a percentage of larger grants from Essex Community Foundation, and from our own reserves.

This grant will be spent on:  
Training and Vetting x 4 new Volunteers

Provision of Volunteer Kit Boxes  
Volunteer Travel Expenses  
Contribution to administration of service  
Promotion of services  
Contribution to premises hire and insurance

**Amount requested £5,700**

## **18. Home-Start Essex**

Home-Start Essex is seeking financial aid to continue the delivery of its unique Home Visiting service in Uttlesford. A range of individually tailored support services to meet the practical and emotional needs of approximately 50 families per annum is delivered. The financial aid requested would fund 1:1 home visiting support for 11 families within a 12-month period.

Ordinarily the support given would take the following form: upon receipt of referral, an experienced Coordinators would conduct an initial visit to families to assess their needs. Together with the family, they will devise a Family Support Plan, which will include the provision of a trained volunteer parent mentor on a weekly basis who will visit the family within their home for 2 to 3 hours every week, if this is service is appropriate to the family's identified needs.

Referrals are accepted from a wide range of sources including professionals from the Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service, social care and nurseries, with families also able to self-refer.

**Amount requested £12,813.29**

## **19. Radwinter Recreation Ground Charity**

The expenditure will be used to contract for the regular maintenance of the recreation ground - cutting the pitch and playground and car parking, weed control around the Multi Use Games Area, bike track and roadway and hedge cutting. This is particularly needed because many circumstances changed due to Covid.

During 2020-2022 to date (and in agreement with the Parish Council who own the land), the charity had to reduce the cutting of the outfield areas to a minimum to reduce costs. This reflected the ceasing of rental income and lack of bookings during the pandemic. The pitches will no longer be booked by youth football, as they have their own ground, losing further income. The previous contractor has ceased to operate, the village cricket team has closed due to a lack of people to maintain the wicket and the burden of grass cutting undertaken by volunteers has become too great to be reliable.

Radwinter Recreation Ground Charity have requested half of the cost of the maintenance contract for the first year, until its income grows back to pre-Covid levels. The additional cutting will be funded by the cricket rental bookings.

**Amount requested £3,450**



## **20. Saffron Hall Trust**

Saffron Hall Trust is seeking funding to further develop the Come Together project which has been supported by UDC in 2021/22.

Come Together aims to:

- Unite people from across the Uttlesford area, creating new, intergenerational connections.
- Positively impact participants mental health and general wellbeing
- Support participants to develop and utilise creative and artistic skills, to explore issues of importance to them and the community.
- Produce high quality collaborative artistic outcomes which are shared more widely across the community

Due to Covid-19 enforced delays in our live session delivery, the currently funded programme will therefore conclude in July 2022. By the end of the funded period c. 50 residents, aged 14 to over 80 will have participated in sessions and shared their responses to our theme 'Unlocked'.

The request for funding is therefore for £6,000 to support ongoing sessions in Saffron Walden from September 2022 to March 2023 – through which will increase engagement and continuing to build and strengthen relationships with other voluntary sector groups, and for £3,000 to support the delivery of an initial programme of sessions in another part of the district (notionally Stansted).

**Amount requested £9,000**

## **21. St Clare Hospice**

St Clare Hospice is applying for funding to support the development of a new St Clare Hospice Community Hub which will provide accessible, practical, social and emotional support for people with chronic, life limiting illnesses living in the north of Uttlesford, and their families.

It is planned to develop a new 'Hospice Community Hub', based at The Saffron Walden Salvation Army premises. The location is centrally based and is easily accessible for people living in the town and in surrounding villages.

The Hub will be open on a 'drop-in' basis for residents on the third Thursday of every month. Initially staffed by a St Clare Hospice Social Worker and Patient & Family Support Worker, the Hub will also benefit from the help of 2-3 locally based and fully trained hospice volunteers. The team will have established links with all local health and social care providers, including GP's, health centres and Saffron Walden Community Hospital.

**Amount requested £5,000**

## **22. Support 4 Sight**

Following in-depth consultations and a review of Support 4 Sight's delivery model in Uttlesford, which also took in the changes brought on by C19, the service is moving from a single location, at what used to be our Resource Centre, to a community-based model, offering services and activities at different locations across the district combined with home visits.

To deliver these, the a new Outreach Worker post will be established

- staff our Pop-Up Resource Centre in Saffron Walden Town Hall
- undertake home visits to those unable to attend our Pop-Up

Offering the following:

1. bi-monthly Pop-Ups at Saffron Walden Town Hall, lasting three hours each (22 per year), offering equipment information and demonstrations, advice, guidance and signposting to other agencies. A book club is also planned. People will make an appointment or simply drop in (Covid guidelines permitting)
2. home visits (approx. 100 per year) to provide demonstrations and advice in response to enquiries.
3. monthly coffee mornings in Saffron Walden and Dunmow
4. produce and distribute the weekly Uttlesford Talking News
5. provide volunteering opportunities, training and support to local residents (including those with lived experience) – it is expected these to number 50 during 2022/23 (with volunteering having to be largely halted during C19, volunteering is slowly restarting in early 2022)

The financial aid will fund:

1. the outreach worker
2. room hire costs for the Pop-Up at the Town Hall
3. venue hire for the coffee mornings
4. rent of our Hill Street office where the Uttlesford Talking News is produced (existing lease)
4. volunteer and staff travel and other expenses

**Amount requested £15,346**

## **23. Thaxted Disabled Centre**

The Centre hires specially adapted minibuses & trained drivers from Uttlesford Community Travel to transport disabled members to & from the Centre for sessions twice a week on Mondays & Thursdays. Over half of the Centre's annual costs are spent on providing this transport. If funding to cover the cost of providing the necessary transport for members was not available, Members would not be able to attend the Centre & the Centre would no longer be able to function.

This specialised transport costs around £1,500 per month and a grant of £9,000 from Uttlesford District Council would cover this cost for 6 months.

**Amount requested £9,000**

#### **24. Uttlesford Community Travel**

The Grant from Uttlesford District Council is a vital part of Uttlesford Community Travel's income which contributes to the cost of providing services to the residents of Uttlesford, which is increasing due to population growth and with more of UCT's members moving into the 80-100+ age category.

The grant also helps with the extension to weekend working hours assisting the vaccination programme.

Uttlesford Community Travel aim is to replace one vehicle every year with the replacement grant, currently all vehicles comply with the latest emissions EURO 6 - Our long-term vision is to set a Net Zero Carbon goal and project electric vehicles.

With increased demand to vehicle mileage, it is important the vehicle replacement remains to avoid safety concerns, high maintenance charges and reliability issues preventing UCT delivering the service at its current level.

**Amount requested £48,000 plus replacement vehicle project £17,000\* from different grant pot.**

#### **25. Volunteer Uttlesford**

Financial aid given to Volunteer Uttlesford will be used as part of its essential core funding, to enable the continuation of the level of service needed and expected of a successful Volunteer Centre.

Funding received will contribute to and ensure continuity of: -

Salaries and general running costs of Volunteer Uttlesford

Raising the profile of volunteering in the district

Working to ensure that the enormous contribution made by voluntary and community organisations in the district is fully understood by our community  
Encouraging the development of a strategy for greater co-operation and joint working with Uttlesford District Council so that both infrastructure organisations like ourselves and front-line organisations can make an even greater contribution to the health, wellbeing and quality of life for residents of this district

Community engagement, expanding on volunteer opportunities to enhance and promote good neighbourliness

**Amount requested £24,000**

## Risk Analysis

26.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Allocation of grants does not secure their implementation	2 The organisations are well established and have a strong partnership	4	The grants will be subject to grant conditions in accordance with the Grants Policy.

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.