

10th December 2008

David Hughes
Chief Executive
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
Gibson Building
Gibson Drive
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent ME19 4LZ

CHIEF EXECUTIVE	
PASS TO CE	FOR INFO: FOR ACTION
12 DEC 2008	
COPY SENT TO	
COPY TO BE SENT TO	
ACKNOWLEDGED	YES/NO



Dear Mr Hughes,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 9th December, concerning the 2009/10 Community Grant Scheme that the Council has seen as necessary to restrict, due to the budget deficit. I of course understand that these, and I am sure other measures are wholly necessary for the Council to continue operating its essential services and I thank you for letting potential recipients know of this decision as early as you were able.

I have given careful consideration to the matter of whether the Bridge Trust has "special circumstances" and therefore be allowed to continue receiving a grant for next year, and I conclude that it is proper that I should appeal to the Cabinet on this basis.

The Bridge Trust offers a fairly unique and valuable service within Tonbridge & Malling in our support for single homeless people. Our main services we offer to clients are Supported Housing, Supported Move-on and homelessness advice and mediation, and we serve between 300 and 400 – including housing about 40 of these. We have already started to see the impact on charitable giving from individuals, community groups and charitable trusts, with a reduction in our own income, and it is generally accepted that a direct impact of the recession is that the homelessness situation is likely to worsen throughout the 2009/10 financial year. This means that **the call on our services will certainly increase, against a backdrop of reduced funding.**

As a local Tonbridge & Malling charity, we rely heavily on the local community, which includes the Council, for their support of our work. We receive only about 25% of our required income from KCC Supporting People, about 25% from our clients' housing benefits and the rest – about 50%, we have to raise through donations, events and grants. The Council's current grant to the Trust is £2,100.00, and it was our fervent hope that due to the increasing demands on our accommodation, advice and mediation services, we may receive an increase in this for 2009/10. This money was especially earmarked for our "Community Involvement" initiative, which we believe to be an essential part of helping vulnerable, homeless people re-integrate back into society, and form part of their supported journey back into employment and ultimately, independent living. We believe that it would be very sad to see this initiative fail due to the lack of, what we believe to be, some modest funding. We would therefore be forced into the unenviable position of having to decide whether we would cut back on our existing services or not to pursue this and other initiatives.

As I am sure you are aware, the Citizens Advice Bureaux, across all three of the West Kent boroughs, have reported an increase in demand for debt advice, but in addition, all three are forecasting that this will translate into housing/mortgage advice, which indicates that they too

THE BRIDGE TRUST CORPORATION, 17A QUARRY HILL ROAD, TONBRIDGE, KENT, TN9 2RN
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1050291 - A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE - REGISTERED NO. 3111576

PATRONS: LORD ASTOR OF HEVER; SUE ALDRED; THE RT REV MICHAEL NAZIR ALI, BISHOP OF ROCHESTER; THE RT REV JOHN HINE,
AUXILLARY BISHOP FOR ARCHDIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK; THE RT REV BRIAN CASTLE, BISHOP OF TONBRIDGE; TIM HAYNES, HEADMASTER OF TONBRIDGE SCHOOL;
SIMON MAYO, RADIO AND TV PRESENTER

TEL: 01732 368363 FAX: 01732 369534 EMAIL: info@thebridgetrust.org.uk

WEBSITE: www.thebridgetrust.org.uk



are of the opinion that the number of local people reaching a housing crisis, will increase next year and we at the Bridge Trust need to position ourselves to deal with this when it happens.

Without adequate funding, the Bridge Trust, which is not a large charity (total income of under £424,000 for 2007/8), will certainly have to reduce its services to homeless people in our borough. For these reasons I would respectfully request that the Council give consideration to the Trust being treated as having special circumstances and allow our grant to continue for 2009/10.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Handley', written over a horizontal line.

John Handley
General Manager

David Hughes
Chief Executive
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
Gibson Building
Gibson Drive
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent
ME19 4LZ

11 December 2008

Dear Mr Hughes

CHIEF EXECUTIVE	
PASS TO CE	FOR INFO FOR ACTION
16 DEC 2008	
COPY SENT TO	
COPY TO BE SENT	<input type="checkbox"/>
ACKNOWLEDGED	YES/NO



YWCA West Kent Young Women's Centre
Hope House
7 Lyons Crescent
Tonbridge
Kent TN9 1EX

t 01732 365831
f 01732 773562

Voluntary and Community Sector Grant Scheme 2009/10

Many thanks for your letter of 9 December, informing us that the council is unable to provide financial support through the Voluntary and Community Sector Grant Scheme during 2009/10.

Whilst we understand the Council must be under significant financial pressure following such a substantial reduction in the value of its assets, the West Kent Young Women's Centre (YWCA) was extremely disappointed to hear this news, as our programmes working with disadvantaged young women are reliant on such local statutory funding. Funding from Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council in particular has made a huge difference to our work in recent years.

Over 200 disadvantaged young women per year attend our centre, based in Tonbridge, to take part in our informal education & training programmes, and whilst we have provided financial and debt support as part of our work for many years, we have recently seen a sharp increase in the need for support around urgent financial issues, particularly in relation to housing, benefits and debt.

In response to this, we were in the process of preparing an application to the VCS grant scheme for support to provide information and guidance around debt and other urgent financial issues. Many of the women who attend the centre struggle to fully take part in our programmes and progress in other areas of their lives due to immediate and urgent financial problems, and increasingly we are unable to provide the financial support needed in addition to meeting the young women's education and training needs.

You identified in your letter that organisations providing assistance with debt issues may, in occasional situations, be provided with financial support. In response to this, I would be extremely grateful if you could consider supporting the West Kent Young Women's Centre for provision of one-to-one debt and financial support for young women during 2009/10.

Chair: Christine Freshwater Patron: HM The Queen
Vice-Patron: HRH Princess Alexandra, The Hon. Lady Ogilvy
YWCA England & Wales is a registered charity,
a company limited by guarantee registered in England no.0137113.

I would be pleased to provide more detailed information for our plans in this area if this would be useful, and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries.

Yours Sincerely



Von Dawson
Centre Manager
T: 01732 365831
E: von.dawson@ywca.org.uk