

Report on Crisis Fund Expenditure to date

Summary of funding

In June 2020, the Town Council established 2 streams of “Crisis Funds” to support the local community in Saffron Walden; these will be referred to as the “Foodbank” scheme and “Crisis Fund”.

Both streams are fully funded by the Town Council and their aims and objectives are primarily to support local residents who face difficulties arising from the impact of the Covid-19 global pandemic. A copy of the Town Council’s Crisis Fund is appended to this report (agenda item 10b) for further information, showing the key objectives of the funding along with examples of how the funding can be utilised.

Balances

The current balance of available monies is shown below:

Opening Balance	Spent Year to Date	Closing Balance (as at 10.02.21)
£1,900 Foodbank	£1,414.60	£485.40
£5,000 Crisis Fund	£449.98	£4,550.02

Foodbank Funds

A strong relationship has been formed between SWTC/TIC and the Uttlesford Food Bank. There are regular communications between the 2 parties with the Food Bank providing details of food required on a “needs” basis. In response to these needs, a SWTC staff member purchases food from local supermarkets and directly delivers this to the Food Bank. This system has been in operation for several months and works well, with the Food Bank arranging for direct distribution of food and parcels to families and individuals as necessary. There is little consistency on the demands of the money or items required as it is very much needs driven and we react to specific requests from the Food Bank who are in turn, reacting to the immediate needs of local families and individuals.

It is anticipated that the balance held in this fund (£485.40) will be spent by year end with perhaps an increase in demand with the cessation of the Furlough scheme (anticipated April 2021) along with an anticipated increase in unemployment rates and those claiming benefits.

Crisis Funds

The £5,000 Crisis Fund is delivered to the community via a partnership arrangement with the Salvation Army (SW) and Citizen's Advice Uttlesford. This partnership approach was established in recognition that these partners deal directly with those residents in need of further help and support and have an established and trusted relationship. Protocols and procedures are in place regarding the validity of any applications (which are vetted by the partner agency) and an established mechanism exists for making payment to the partner agency. All records are held and maintained according to the governing GDPR regulations and the organisation's own internal procedures.

Uptake of this funding has been slow with just 2 applications being submitted (by Salvation Army on behalf of individuals). Both organisations are aware of and fully informed of the funding and actively promote it to individuals utilising their services. It is noted that both partners will utilise specific national Government funding and benefit schemes in the first instance before using the Town Council's Crisis Fund. Both partner agencies were reminded of the funding very recently and both noted that with the cessation of the furlough scheme, the needs on this funding may increase considerably as the number of residents seeking new employment may increase. Both partner agencies have therefore requested that funds remain available in anticipation of any increased demand post April 2021.