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**AGREED INTERIM PROTOCOL FOR GRANTS FROM THE FUND**

In view of the coronavirus pandemic and its effects on the wider community in the borough of Southend-on-Sea, the Southend Emergency Fund has been established under the auspices of Shared Space, to fulfil the following charitable object:

1. The relief of the poor and needy or to or for such other charitable purpose, institution, society, or object as the trustees shall in duly constituted meeting from time to time direct.
2. This will be a restricted fund to be known as the “Southend Emergency Fund”, with the purpose of receiving charitable donations of cash from members of the public, businesses, churches, community organisations and from other charities. This fund will be disbursed in the form of grants to applicant agencies, intended to relieve individuals and families from poverty arising both directly from the virus and the steps taken to contain it.
3. The SEF will be held and administered by Shared Space, which will donate an amount of staff time to its management and administration. Shared Space will reclaim tax through donations made under the gift-aid scheme and apply 100% of this to the fund.
4. The awards committee will meet at least weekly to receive a report on the balance of the fund and to consider applications received. Applications will be by submission of our form and will be considered on a rolling basis. The awards committee will function as a working party of Shared Space, which will invite participants. To make valid decisions, there will need to be present a minimum of two members of the committee and at least one trustee of Shared Space.
5. The board of Shared Space has delegated authority to whichever trustee represents it to make decisions up to £5,000 per week, although this may be varied by agreement. Meetings will take place by online conferencing for the duration of the lockdown.
6. Decisions on awards will be made on the strength of each application, taking into account the following:
   1. Is the applicant organisation active in the Borough of Southend on Sea?
   2. Is it still able to address beneficiaries’ current needs in the present crisis?
   3. Is there clear evidence of need?
   4. How many people will benefit from the requested grant and in what ways?
   5. Would any grant adversely affect beneficiaries from accessing Universal Credit or other benefits?
   6. Are the costings realistic and do they represent best value?
   7. What level of unrestricted reserves does the applicant currently hold?
   8. Has the applicant confirmed that they will not withhold any part of the grant for administration or management costs?
   9. Does the applicant hold a UK bank account (as grants will usually be made through BACS)?
   10. Is the applicant able to offer an independent referee who can speak knowledgeably about the organisation?
   11. Have they agreed to return any grant which is not deployed within the agreed time?
   12. What light-touch monitoring would be appropriate for each grant made?
7. We expect the grants protocol will evolve over time, in light of the committee’s evolving experience.
8. The need for the fund will be reviewed periodically, following developments in the coronavirus pandemic and its effects on the local population.

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