

Six-Monthly Funding Report - October 2020 -

SMTC Funding

In the financial year, 2020-21, Shepton Mallet Town Council provided Citizens Advice Mendip (CAM) with funding of £10,000. This contributes to the overall funding of a high quality advice and information service to the residents of Mendip District, including individuals and families that live, work, and do business in the town of Shepton Mallet.

Key Statistics

In the 6-months since CAM went into lock-down (16th March 2020) we have continued to deliver advice and support services for our clients. In the absence of face-to-face services (drop-in and appointments) we responded by enhancing our telephone and email advice capacity - previously the lesser of our three advice channels.

This was achieved this within CAM by:

- Significant investment in new IT and telephony
- Increasing our paid supervisor capacity
- Training and supporting our volunteer advisers to deliver email and telephone advice

Externally, we achieved this by:

- Securing new, Covid-19 related, funding to transform our services
- Working collaboratively with the other four Somerset CAs to:
 - develop a new website portal for additional client and third-party access
 - joining together to provide greater capacity on our shared Adviceline to reduce the waiting time for callers

Our workforce

Our remote workforce is made up of 28 volunteers, with a paid staff team of 11. We have continued to recruit and train new volunteers throughout the pandemic.

In the 6-months ahead

We will continue to review and transform our service further to meet the changing needs of our client group, reflect the demographic variances and increase in specific pandemic rated advice issues - employment, benefits, Universal Credit, Housing, and debt.

Ian Byworth
Chief Executive Officer
6th October 2020