

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Making London More Inclusive**Disablement Association Hillingdon (DASH)****Adv: Jemma Grieve Combes****Base: Hillingdon****Amount requested: £119,600****Benefit: Hillingdon****Amount recommended: £119,600****The Applicant**

Disablement Association Hillingdon (DASH) is a user-led local disability charity that was established in 1984. It offers a number of services, including: advice, advocacy and information, personal budgets support, employability training and a programme of sports and leisure activities. It is a member of H4All, a formal partnership of local organisations that work together to develop services to improve the health and wellbeing of Hillingdon residents. (An application from H4All for a Cornerstone Fund development grant was approved recently.) The organisation is seeing increasing demand, especially for its advice work, which it expects to increase when Universal Credit is rolled out in Hillingdon in the Autumn.

The Application

DASH is applying for funds for a Transitions Officer to support 250 young people aged 16 to 25 a year, through a programme of advice, advocacy, support and independent living training.

The Recommendation

This a strong application that demonstrates a clear need both from current service users and potential service users. Under your last grant to the organisation, users attending activities rose from 50 to 190 a week, many of whom are young people who would benefit from transitions support. By funding a dedicated Transitions Officer the organisation would be able to provide a coordinated and considered response to their needs, and seek out new service users that are not currently benefiting from support. Hillingdon is a target borough for the Trust, receiving less funding than expected given levels of deprivation. The organisation has good links with other local voluntary organisation, schools and other establishments including GP practices and mosques. A grant awarded would have benefits for both residents and organisations across the Borough.

£119,600 over 3 years (£39,200; £38,700, £41,700) towards the costs of a full time Transitions Officer and running costs of a programme of work to support disabled young people in Hillingdon in the transition to adulthood.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
15/05/2014	£90,000 over 3 years towards the salary costs of the full-time Activity Manager and associated project costs of the Activity Programme.
25/11/2008	£122,000 over 3 years towards the full-time salary and associated running costs of a Transitions Officer.

Background and detail of proposal

The project would deliver 2 core elements to help disabled young people in the transition to adulthood.

1. **Advice, advocacy and support:** This would include a mix of 121 advice and support sessions including benefit 'health checks', attendance at medical assessments and attendance at tribunals. The organisation is experienced in advice provision and holds the Advice Quality Standard. They anticipate that the programme of advice may differ from their generic advice work due to a focus on employment and benefits. In particular, DASH is seeing young people turning down work placements and employment opportunities due to parents who are concerned about the affect on their child's benefits. DASH believes that by dispelling myths and explaining how benefits will be impacted they could help 20-30 young people a year in this situation.
2. **Independent living skills:** the need for this has emerged from the organisation's activity programme, but to date they have not been able to address it. Topics would be shaped by young people but might include travel training, attendance at medical appointments (e.g. opticians and dentists), personal care and sexual health. Delivery would involve a mix of group sessions with visiting experts and practical support e.g. accompanying a young person to the opticians.

To shape the work DASH will establish a user group which will meet three times a year. They plan to establish a semi-formal application process to enable young people to use this as an opportunity to develop their skills.

Financial Information

The organisation's income is relatively steady, with a drop in 2017/18 onwards due to changes in their direct payments contract from the local authority. The cost of raising funds is included in the Chief Officer's and Deputy Chief's salaries and not separately specified. The organisation will take advice on how they represent this in the future.

Year end as at 31 March	2017 Audited Accounts £	2018 Draft £	2019 Budget £
Income & expenditure:			
Income	482,971	468,049	364,000
- % of income confirmed as at 01/08/18	n/a	n/a	89%
Expenditure	(449,723)	(450,477)	(357,500)
Total surplus/(deficit)	33,248	17,572	6,500
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	35,266	9,730	6,500
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	(2,018)	7,842	0
	33,248	17,572	6,500
Cost of Raising Funds	not calculated	not calculated	not calculated
- % of income	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total operating expenditure	449,723	450,477	357,500
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	103,605	111,447	111,447
No of months of operating expenditure	2.8	3.0	3.7
Reserves policy target	112,431	112,619	89,375
No of months of operating expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	(8,826)	(1,172)	22,072