

MEETING: 25/07/2019

Ref: 15012

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Positive Transitions**

**Advocacy In Greenwich**

**Adv: Jack Joslin**

**Amount requested: £148,341**

**Base: Greenwich**

**Benefit: Greenwich**

**Amount recommended: £147,400**

**The Applicant**

Advocacy in Greenwich (AG) is a registered charity providing assistance to people with learning disabilities, to ensure their voice is heard in securing the support they need to run their daily lives. The charity is based in the Royal Borough of Greenwich and provides independent one to one advocacy, a range of self-advocacy groups, accessible learning disability awareness training and a people's parliament programme. AG has a strong track record of working with adults and young people with learning disabilities in creative ways.

**The Application**

AG is looking to deliver a self-advocacy project working with young people with learning disabilities in Greenwich. The project will focus on those who are about to transition to adult services to ensure they are prepared and to help develop the skills required to be more independent. Funding is being sought to fund a part-time Self Advocacy Worker who will work with targeted groups of young people. The Group meetings will focus on transition work and will support the young people to develop team skills, confidence and to have information about support and services so that the young people are able to make informed choices about their future independence. Funding is being requested over a five-year period to ensure that this work can be offered consistently and to provide stability for the charity to seek additional funding to add to and expand the delivery.

**The Recommendation**

AG is a well-run and well-respected organisation delivering essential advocacy work for people with learning disabilities in Greenwich and other London boroughs. This project will make a huge difference to the disabled young people involved in the self-advocacy project by providing support at a specific transition in their lives. This project meets the criteria for the Positive Transitions programme as it will provide a specialist support service for disabled people to increase choice and control in their lives. A slight reduction in grant is recommended in the first year of the request as the amount sought for recruitment was high. Funding is recommended as follows:

***£147,400 over 5 years (£30,000; £28,000; £28,900; £29,800; £30,700) to support the cost of a part-time Self-Advocacy Development Work (14hpw) and associated project costs to deliver a self-advocacy programme for young people with learning disabilities in Greenwich.***

**Funding History**

Meeting Date	Decision
28/07/2011	£95,000 over three years (£30,000; £32,000; £33,000) to provide independent advocacy for people with a learning disability to support them in gaining enhanced choice and control under the Personalised Budgets system.

## Background and detail of proposal

The Self-Advocacy Development worker will work with schools and colleges in Greenwich to identify young people with learning disabilities that would most benefit from this Self-Advocacy project. AG is a long-established Charity with strong links to the transition team at Greenwich Council. The project will work with small groups of young people on a weekly basis throughout the year to develop their skills and prepare them for transition from children to adult services. The Self-Advocacy worker analyses the assets and skills young people have and develops them to improve this crucial transition in their development. The work is person centred and solutions focused and will have a profound outcome on the young people. Alongside the weekly sessions the Self-Advocacy worker will deliver quarterly workshops and forums for larger groups of young people. The 'Moving on' workshops will provide a range of information to young people and will complement the more in-depth group work.

AG has only 3 registered Trustees though it has been working to increase this number and the Board is aware they need to bolster its governance in this area. Lloyds Foundation has recently awarded funding on the basis that the charity improves the governance of the organisation and has also allocated a mentor to work with the charity to develop the board of Trustees and improve its governance.

## Financial Information

AG receives funding from the Royal Borough of Greenwich, the National Lottery Fund, NHS England and other smaller Trusts and Foundations. They hold reserves just under reserves policy target. They did not list cost of raising funds in 2018 examined accounts but have provided subsequent figures for 2019 and 2020. As the table outlines AG have had deficits in 2018 & 2019 due to some reductions in funding. AG has reduced its staff team, moved office from Greenwich to Woolwich and is working in collaboration with other local charities to share back office functions. All of this has allowed AG to reduce it overspend and it anticipates breaking even by 2020. This grant includes full-cost recovery and will not further reduce the organisations reserves.

Year end as at 31 March	2018 Examined Accounts	2019 Budget	2020 Forecast
<b>Income &amp; expenditure:</b>			
Income	172,300	163,280	227,482
- % of income confirmed as at 14/02/2019		97%	58%
Expenditure	(212,570)	(176,015)	(227,482)
Total surplus/(deficit)	(40,270)	(12,735)	0
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	(20,369)	(4,000)	0
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	(19,901)	(8,735)	0
	(40,270)	(12,735)	0
Cost of Raising Funds	0	20,000	20,600
- % of income	0.0%	12.2%	9.1%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	43,764	37,069	27,115
<b>Free unrestricted reserves:</b>			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	35,769	27,034	27,034
No of months of operating expenditure	9.8	8.8	12.0
Reserves policy target	30,000	30,000	30,000
No of months of operating expenditure	8.2	9.7	13.3
Free reserves over/(under) target	5,769	(2,966)	(2,966)