

MEETING: 25/07/2019

Ref: 15293

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Positive Transitions

Prison Advice and Care Trust

Adv: Ciaran Rafferty

Amount requested: £131,711

Base: Southwark

Benefit: London-wide

Amount recommended: £132,000

The Applicant

Prison Advice & Care Trust (PACT), a registered charity, originated in 1963 and grew through a merger with a similar organisation in 2001. Its principal aim is to help prisoners and their families to make a fresh start post incarceration and offers people support at every stage in their journey through the criminal justice system, from the point of sentencing through to resettlement. It is quite unique in its focus on families, ensuring that the children, carers and families of prisoners have access to appropriate advice and support; and in facilitating opportunities for positive contact between prisoners (particularly women) and their families.

The Application

In 2014 you funded PACT's London Women's Resettlement Programme. This was a 2-year grant but, soon after its commencement, the Government decided to close Holloway women's prison where the project was centred. Although this initially caused considerable disruption to the project it was eventually able to continue following the eventual relocation of the women to prisons outside London. This request is to continue that programme for a further three years. It is vital work aimed at ensuring the continuation of key relationships within families and the community so that, on release, the women will be better able to transition to "ordinary" life.

The Recommendation

The early work had significant success and supported 147 women prisoners to build a better life for themselves on release. Women from London are now dispersed across HMPs East Sutton Park, Downview and Bronzefield which makes the task of rebuilding their lives on return all the harder due to the difficulties in their maintaining positive relationships with their children and families whilst incarcerated. In this application the annual sum requested is higher in year 2 than in the others as it includes a contribution to independent evaluation, which will greatly help this approach to be adopted elsewhere and, hopefully, to be supported by commissioning. A grant is recommended:

£132,000 over three years (£41,000; £49,000; £42,000) towards the salaries, operation and evaluation costs of the London Women's Resettlement Project.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
15/05/2014	PROJECT DESCRIPTION £142,000 over two years (£67,000; £75,000) for the salary of a f/t Programme Manager; a p/t (2.5dpw) Volunteer Co-ordinator; and the running costs and independent evaluation of the London Women's Resettlement Programme.
18/04/2013	Application withdrawn.

Background and detail of proposal

This project will give women prisoners from London the best possible chance to rebuild their lives and to move on from offending through enabling and supporting the stability of the families involved; helping to repair relationships with partners, children and extended family; to access benefits they are entitled to; to access training or education; and to seek help with mental health issues and/or addiction issues where relevant. The need for this type of support was made evident in the report by Baroness Corston in 2007. Almost 50% of female prisoners are re-convicted within one year of release; more than 50% report issues with alcohol or drugs; only 5% of children whose mother is imprisoned stay in the family home; whilst 6 in 10 boys with a parent in prison go on to offend. Her report stated that the effects of maternal imprisonment on children "are nothing short of catastrophic".

The project, should you award a grant, will support 56 women per year across the three prisons mentioned above. PACT has been working in and with prisons for many years and has excellent relationships with the authorities and individuals. It also works in solidarity with Women in Prison, whom you funded recently with a large strategic grant aimed at those women with complex needs, so this project will complement that work and not duplicate it, even though there is a dearth of resettlement support for women prisoners in London.

Financial Information

Income increased in the 2018/19 period due to an increase in trust applications and contracts with prisons and community rehabilitation companies. The deficit forecast in the current 2019/20 financial year is largely a result of the expenditure of restricted funds awarded in prior years.

Year end as at 31 March	2018 Audited Accounts	2019 Draft Accounts	2020 Budget
Income & expenditure:			
Income	6,046,000	7,277,000	6,780,000
- % of Income confirmed as at 18 June 2019		100%	98%
Expenditure	(5,777,000)	(6,758,000)	(7,401,000)
Total surplus/(deficit)	269,000	519,000	(621,000)
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	322,000	548,000	(751,000)
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	(53,000)	(29,000)	130,000
	269,000	519,000	(621,000)
Cost of Raising Funds	106,000	113,000	119,000
- % of income	1.8%	1.6%	1.8%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	5,063,000	6,254,000	6,578,000
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	430,000	401,000	531,000
No of months of operating expenditure	1.0	0.8	1.0
Reserves policy target	588,000	730,000	767,433
No of months of operating expenditure	1.4	1.4	1.4
Free reserves over/(under) target	(158,000)	(329,000)	(236,433)