

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Advice and Support**Home-Start Barnet****Adv: Samantha Grimmitt-Batt****Amount requested: £55,455****Base: Barnet****Benefit: Barnet****Amount recommended: £55,400****The Applicant**

Home-Start Barnet (HSB) was founded in 1997 and registered as a charity in 2007. It operates as an independent charity, with support from Home-Start UK. Its mission is to support vulnerable families with young children who are experiencing difficulties, using an early intervention ethos. Fully trained volunteers with parenting experience undertake the core work and the organisation also runs a number of group and one to one advice sessions. Since its inception, Barnet Home-Start has supported over 10,000 children, young people and families, and recruited more than 600 local volunteers. Due to the closure of home-starts in neighbouring boroughs, the charity has recently received funding to start working in Brent, Harrow and Enfield

The Application

The application is for continuation funding towards two further years of HSB's home-visiting support for families in Barnet. As part of this core work it has integrated its Money Smart programme to help low-income families learn about money and budgeting. This is particularly effective since poverty levels and financial problems among families referred to Home-Start are increasing.

The Recommendation

Home-Start Barnet provides an important service, the need for which is growing. The charity has reported well during the course of your current grant, and, in the most recent delivery period, 60% of respondents reported that support from HSB led to a reduction in depression due to not having to worry about where the next meal is coming from, 65% reported that their economic situation had improved, and 85% reported an increase in self confidence. Funding is advised:

£55,400 (2 x £27,700) over two further and final years for the salary of a p/t (21 hpw) Coordinator and related costs of providing support services, including money management guidance, to vulnerable families with young children in Barnet.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
24/05/2016	£75,000 over three years for the salary of a p/t Coordinator and related costs of providing support services, including money management guidance, to vulnerable families with young children in Barnet.
04/05/2006	£75,000 over three years for the salary and associated costs of a Co-ordinator post.
02/03/2006	Application withdrawn due to the organisation reporting a material change in its circumstances.

Background and detail of proposal

Barnet is a borough with areas of great affluence and pockets of significant deprivation. The child poverty rate is 27%, compared to the national rate of 21%. One foodbank gave 1337 emergency food supply packs last year; there are six in the borough. The high volume of referrals demonstrate ongoing demand.

Volunteers undertake an 8 week induction course, developed and approved by the national organisation Home-Start UK. Relevant safeguarding checks are in place and all staff, volunteers and committee members have regular enhanced DBS checks. A number of people become volunteers – either for families or in the charity shop - after being helped by Home Start themselves. and several have gone on to paid work. The benefit cap has led to an increase in housing evictions which has further led to an increase in applications for discretionary housing benefit. As many families do not meet the threshold to receive such payments, HSB has seen an increase specifically in the number of families requiring financial and budgeting support, a need which is expressly met by this project. Key staff have been in post for over 10 years contributing to the efficiency of the organisation and its ability to provide a holistic service. It is well networked with both statutory and voluntary sector organisations.

Financial Information

Principal funding includes contract income from the London Borough of Barnet and Public Health Barnet. Pending the outcome of your decision, and an application to the National Lottery Community Fund, the charity has successfully secured ongoing funding for the next two to three years. 2018 accounts disclose fraudulent activity discovered during the year, of c£21,000. The majority of this loss was recovered from insurers. The staff member responsible no longer works at HSB and has been prosecuted. Following the discovery, the charity underwent a restructuring process, and back-office and governance review, and implemented recommended changes.

Year end as at 31st March	2018	2019	2020
	Signed Accounts	Management	Budget
	£	£	£
Income & expenditure:			
Income	492,284	556,057	588,000
- % of Income confirmed as at 12/08/2019	N/A	N/A	87%
Expenditure	(477,535)	(489,176)	(565,000)
Total surplus/(deficit)	14,749	66,881	23,000
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	(768)	54,056	33,000
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	15,517	12,825	(10,000)
	14,749	66,881	23,000
Cost of Raising Funds	0	1,093	11,000
- % of Income	0.0%	0.2%	1.9%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	184,807	191,853	215,000
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	61,543	74,368	64,368
No of months of operating expenditure	4.0	4.7	3.6
Reserves policy target	46,201	47,963	53,750
No of months of operating expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	15,342	26,405	10,618