

MEETING: 26/09/2019

Ref: 15348

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Positive Transitions

Southwark Day Centre for Asylum Seekers

Adv: Kate Moralee

Base: Southwark

Amount requested: £78,200

Benefit: Southwark

Amount recommended: £78,200

The Applicant

Southwark Day Centre for Asylum Seekers (SDCfAS) has been in existence since 1996 and aims to relieve poverty and distress, promoting health and further education, by providing a wide range of services to asylum seekers and refugees in Southwark. It offers a drop-in service across three centres in Southwark consisting of access to: advice and guidance; health professionals; skills training including ESOL classes; lunch, clothing and emergency packs; childcare and social activities including art therapy, storytelling, women's groups and community gardening.

The Application

SDCfAS provides regular drop-in services for Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Southwark. The Centre your officer visited was very well attended with attendees accessing advice and guidance, healthcare, building skills through ESOL classes, utilising childcare, volunteering in the community garden and participating in a communal lunch. Both sites are open 48 weeks per year. SDCfAS has strong links with Guy's and St Thomas Health Inclusion Team, Southwark Law Centre, Citizens Advice Southwark, local Faith Based organisations and is a strategic partner of Southwark Council. It has a high number of volunteers, some of whom are ex-service users.

The Recommendation

SDCfAS has been providing services to refugees and asylum seekers in Southwark for 23 years. It has developed strong relationships with several complementary organisations with whom it works in partnership practicing cross referral and signposting. The applicant has requested a contribution to its core costs, namely rent, for two of its drop-in centres. All the work of SDCfAS contributes to meeting the outcomes of Bridging Divides under Positive Transitions programme priority area "Support for migrants and refugees to access mainstream services and widen participation in the community in which they live". Full funding is recommended:

£78,200 over 5 years (£17,840; £16,840; £15,840; £14,840, £12,840) as a contribution to core costs (rent).

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
04/09/2013	Declined as did not adequately address your Bridging Communities' priorities.
10/01/2013	Application withdrawn.

Background and detail of proposal

London Borough of Southwark has a high number of refugees and asylum seekers, approximately 16,000. It has an ethnically diverse population and hosts one of

London's two temporary accommodation centres for asylum seekers. SDCfAS has operated in the local area for 23 years and has experienced increased numbers accessing its services and increasing complexity of need. SDCfAS adapts its services to meet the needs of its beneficiaries, introducing new services as required. Last year over 1,000 people from 20 different countries of origin attended the three centres and accessed services over 5,100 times. It works closely in partnership with other providers in the borough and in SE London, maximising use of scarce resources to meet the wide and varied needs of its beneficiaries.

Financial Information

The increased income levels are a result of improved fundraising, from greater involvement with local communities resulting in an increased variety of local donors through activities such as book sales, concerts etc, as well as from increased income from Trusts and Foundations. This has helped SDCfAS to increase its levels of free reserves which covers 3 months of its total expenditure (£43,000) plus a contingency for costs which would arise in the case of financial difficulty (£50,000). As SDCfAS mainly operates with restricted funding it needs to ensure it has sufficient funds to cover any potential redundancy costs, particularly as it has staff members who have been with the organisation for a long period of time.

Year end as at 31st March	2018 Signed Accounts £	2019 Draft Accounts £	2020 Forecast £
Income & expenditure:			
Income	174,691	214,090	224,582
- % of Income confirmed as at 5/08/2019	N/A	N/A	76%
Expenditure	(183,585)	(194,762)	(202,910)
Total surplus/(deficit)	(8,894)	19,328	21,652
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	(2,969)	18,850	17,142
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	(5,926)	478	4,510
	(8,895)	19,328	21,652
Cost of Raising Funds	0	0	0
- % of Income	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Operating expenditure	183,585	194,762	202,910
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	31,966	32,444	36,954
No of months of operating expenditure	2.1	2.0	2.2
Reserves policy target	93,000	93,000	93,000
No of months of operating expenditure	6.1	5.7	5.5
Free reserves over/(under) target	(61,034)	(60,556)	(56,046)