

MEETING: 26/09/2019

Ref: 14935

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Positive Transitions

The Food Chain

Adv: Shegufta Slawther

Base: Camden

Amount requested: £266,250

Benefit: London-wide

Amount recommended: £266,250

The Applicant

Established in 1988, The Food Chain (TFC) was set up by friends of people living with HIV (PLWHIV) at a time when effective medication was not available, wasting was common, and good nutrition helped support the immune system and maintain a healthy body mass. The charity delivered its first meal on Christmas Day in 1988 and has continued to deliver meals every week since.

The Application

Funding is requested for the delivery and growth of its services for disadvantaged PLWHIV experiencing food poverty by providing specialist food and nutrition support services. This will include individually tailored dietetic assessment and advice from British Dietetic Association (BDA) registered HIV specialist dieticians, membership of TFC's Eating Together programme, as well as volunteering opportunities for service users to transition from receiving support to developing new skills, confidence and independence. The charity has also requested a one-off contribution towards relocation costs as its current landlord, Terrence Higgins Trust (THT), has decided to sell the property and TFC will likely move its office with THT by the start of 2020.

The Recommendation

The charity has established itself as a recognised, specialist provider of food and nutrition support to PLWHIV. With a track record of working in partnership with charities such as Positive East and THT, its ambition is to strengthen and increase opportunities beyond food and nutrition; skills, experience, training, and volunteering to support disadvantaged PLWHIV to live more independently.

£266,250 over five years (£56,700, £50,900, £54,100, £52,900, £51,650) towards the project to support disadvantaged PLWHIV with specialist dietetic, nutrition support as well as volunteering and work experience opportunities to support transition to independence, and one-off relocation costs in year one, conditional on receiving satisfactory management accounts on a quarterly basis.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
25/09/2014	£48,100 towards a third and final year of the 'Eating Together' programme for HIV-positive clients.
20/10/2011	£95,675 over 2 years (£45,300, £50,375) towards "Eating Together", a project for isolated people with depression living with HIV.

Background and detail of proposal

Over the last six years, TFC has developed its services and introduced several face-to-face nutrition support services, in addition to the emergency grocery delivery

service that was the origin of its support on offer. Health and social care professionals across London refer individuals to the charity for one-to-one dietetic assessment and advice. The majority of beneficiaries have low CD4 count (or T-Cell count) and a high viral load; two health markers that indicate they are not living well with HIV or able to manage their health conditions to achieve a healthy life. This health crisis is often linked to malnourishment and experiencing food insecurity. For a myriad of factors relating to social and economic circumstances, HIV-related stigma, immigration status or access to healthcare, beneficiaries experience inequality in gaining access to the services that will support them to improve and maintain their health, and live more independently.

The support on offer includes practical nutrition and cookery classes, serving of nutritious, home-cooked meals three times a week and dietetic advice. Further to this, the charity has been developing opportunities to train, volunteer, and up-skill beneficiaries through its existing kitchen and dining area; a café and catering setting. The proposed relocation includes a move of catering functions into the kitchen of Positive East; another organisation supporting PLWHIV and one of your current grant-holders, whilst moving its office functions with THT.

Financial Information

The charity had historically been the recipient of significant funding from the Elton John Aids Foundation. Following the end of this grant in 2016, it has found it difficult to maintain such levels of funding and has worked towards sustaining a feasible level of funding.

TFC is conscious of improving its reserves position through public fundraising campaigns. A crowdfunding campaign launched in July has already secured £15,000 against a target of £40,000. The charity is also pursuing funding from a number of different trusts and foundations. The proposed relocation of its office function with THT's office move will help keep costs low. A condition has been attached to the recommendation to enable monitoring of the organisation's financial situation.

Year end as at 31st August	2018 Signed Accounts £	2019 Forecast £	2020 Budget £
Income & expenditure:			
Income	342,970	392,865	398,286
- % of income confirmed as at 28/8/19	N/A	100%	37%
Expenditure	(412,252)	(376,092)	(395,000)
Total surplus/(deficit)	(69,282)	16,773	3,286
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	(17,280)	0	0
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	(52,002)	16,773	3,286
	(69,282)	16,773	3,286
Cost of Raising Funds	96,831	86,600	90,000
- % of income	28.2%	22.0%	22.6%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	291,588	344,092	389,000
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	7,878	24,651	27,937
No of months of operating expenditure	0.3	0.9	0.9
Reserves policy target	72,897	86,023	97,250
No of months of operating expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	(65,019)	(61,372)	(69,313)