

MEETING 30/01/2020

Ref: 15381

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Connecting the Capital****Step by Step****Adv: Lily Brandhorst****Base: Haringey****Amount requested: £247,718****Benefit: Hackney and Haringey****Amount recommended: £247,700****The Applicant**

Step by Step (SBS) is a charitable company founded in 1996, providing leisure and respite activities to disabled children and young people aged 2 – 19 and their families, predominantly from Orthodox Jewish communities in Hackney and Haringey. Children and young people attending have a range of physical and developmental conditions, including Downs Syndrome, Spina Bifida and global developmental delay. The design of many mainstream services and activities presents barriers to access for these young people. SBS provides a variety of accessible activities both in-house and in partnership with other organisations locally: after school sports; Sunday activity clubs; school holiday playschemes; and residential activity camps. It is an Ofsted registered provider, working closely with local schools, social services, children's centres and the Local Authority. SBS works with 130 disabled children and young people a year.

**The Application**

SBS seeks funding for a new arts, crafts and music project for 4 – 18 year olds with moderate to severe disabilities. Participants will be divided into four groups by age, each group doing one session a week, 40 weeks a year. Sessions will take place after school and on Sundays. The groups will be run by professional skilled Instructors and Co-ordinators, supported by Play Workers and volunteers. Support for young people will be on a 1:1 or 1:2 basis to ensure that all participants can benefit fully according to their individual needs. Activities will be varied, including soap making, sewing, painting, baking, music making and many others. As in all of Step by Step's work, users will make their own choices about which activities they want to do, building confidence in their own decision making and allowing them to explore specific interests. Free, accessible transport to and from sessions will be provided.

**The Recommendation**

Step by Step is a well-managed and respected organisation, meeting a clear gap in service provision in the local community and delivering work to a high standard. Match funding for the project has been secured from the Dollond Charitable Trust. A grant is recommended as follows:

***£247,700 over five years (£49,060; £50,232; £49,332; £49,456; £49,620) towards the salary and running costs of dedicated weekly arts, crafts and music sessions for 48 disabled young people aged 4 – 18 years.***

**Funding History**

Meeting Date	Decision
27/09/2012	£120,000 over 3 years (£40,000; £40,000; £40,000) towards a part-time (18 hours/week) Sports and Leisure Coordinator and transport and venue costs.

## Background and detail of proposal

SBS is the only local out of hours childcare provider both specifically working with disabled children and catering to Orthodox Jewish culture (for example, by providing only kosher food). Originally founded in 1996 by two parents of disabled children, today it is a professional and well-respected organisation in the local community. This is exemplified by its board, which is led by parents of disabled children but also takes care to maintain a balance of key skills for managing the charity. At assessment your officer visited the organisation and found a calm and happy atmosphere, with staff and volunteers showing a clear respect for individual children's needs and self-expression. The organisation's work is shaped by users and their families, through meaningful regular feedback and consultation. It has attained the Pqasso Level 1 quality mark and is rated "outstanding" by Ofsted.

The decision to offer dedicated arts, crafts and music sessions comes from the observation that many mainstream activities of this kind are not designed to be accessible to disabled children and young people. Through this project, SBS aims to encourage the children's creative expression and support them to develop new skills, make friends, and grow in confidence as they see what they can make and achieve.

## Financial Information

SBS is in a good financial position. Free reserves are projected above three months' expenditure by the end of 2020. As an organisation providing key services on which many families depend, three months is appropriately set as a minimum level, with the ceiling at twelve months. 69% of projected income for 2021 is already secured and the budget anticipates a stable position going forward.

Year end as at 31st March	2018	2019	2020
	Signed Accounts £	Draft Accounts £	Forecast £
<b>Income &amp; expenditure:</b>			
Income	853,992	637,636	715,000
- % of Income confirmed as at 3/12/19	N/A	N/A	78%
Expenditure	(852,897)	(617,103)	(660,233)
Total surplus/(deficit)	<b>1,095</b>	<b>20,533</b>	<b>54,767</b>
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	66,600	10,866	0
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	(65,505)	9,667	54,767
	<b>1,095</b>	<b>20,533</b>	<b>54,767</b>
Total expenditure	852,897	617,103	660,233
<b>Free unrestricted reserves:</b>			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	188,328	197,995	252,762
No of months of total expenditure	2.6	3.9	4.6
Reserves policy target	213,224	154,276	165,058
No of months of total expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	(24,896)	43,719	87,704