

MEETING 26/03/2020

Ref: 15578

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Advice and Support****Age UK Merton****Adv: Sandra Jones****Base: Merton****Amount requested: £178,840****Benefit: Merton****{Revised request: £248,035}****Amount recommended: £248,000****The Applicant**

Age UK Merton (AUKM) has been providing a wide range of services to older people since 1950. The organisation has its own social centre from which it runs several activities such as footcare, information and advice, after-stroke and incontinence support and well-being classes. AUKM also delivers outreach work including cleaning and handyperson services. Merton is a very mixed borough with a sharp distinction in poverty levels between western and eastern wards. Some wards in east Merton, for example, have a life expectancy almost 13 years below the average of West Merton.

**The Application**

AUKM is seeking funding to increase its advice services to older people by appointing an additional full time Information and Advice Adviser and associated running costs. This will increase to service from 2.4 to 3.4 posts. The initial request was for three years of funding, however after discussions with your officer they increased the bid to five years. They also decreased the annual amounts that they originally applied as the request was for more than one post.

This funding will enable the organisation to develop its outreach and home visiting service. Funding will also allow AUKM to develop the Planning for the Future programme which introduces younger older adults to issues around finance; legal, housing and care to prevent future crises.

**The Recommendation**

AUKM has a good reputation for delivery and partnership work in Merton. The majority of AUKMs' clients face poverty, poor physical health, isolation, and mental distress, most of whom lack knowledge about their entitlements. This additional post and associated costs will enable the organisation to meet a current rise in demands for their services by providing quality services, particularly for the most vulnerable older people. Also, to offer preventative work for those older adults by supporting them to plan for the future.

**£248,000 over five years (£47,600; £48,600; £49,600; £50,600; £51,600) towards the costs of a full-time advice worker, management costs and associated running costs.**

**Funding History**

Meeting Date	Decision
25/09/2014	£158,300 over three years (£51,600; £52,600; £54,100) for the salary of a f/t Health Programme Officer plus related project costs of the Active Life health programme in Merton.

## Background and detail of proposal

This funding will work on different levels. Part of the work of the project will involve the development of the organisation's outreach programme to collaborate with other advice providers, partners in health and social care and increase referrals from older people most in need of the service, and not accessing the service currently.

In particular AUKM will work with BAME community groups in East Merton, delivering advice clinics at the groups' premises to break down barriers. It is anticipated that 40% of advice and casework will initially be provided in clients homes and where clients feel most comfortable. The level of support offered will differ, depending on need. Some clients might only need two sessions, others up to five. Where there are complicated cases the advisor will provide longer term support, based on the individuals needs or complexity of the case.

On the preventative side, the project works with younger older adults to introduce them to issues around finance, legal, housing and care. This will be through an initial annual event, with follow up workshops on specific issues identified by the participants.

## Financial Information

The organisations finances for 2019/2020 are on track with the forecast as at the beginning of February 2020 being 90% of their budgeted income, with the outstanding amount due from fees charged. The organisation is holding unrestricted reserves slightly above their target which is the reason that they have a planned deficit for 2020/21.

Year end as at 31 March	2019	2020	2021
	Independent Examined Accounts	Forecast	Forecast
	£	£	£
<b>Income &amp; expenditure:</b>			
Income	654,494	751,770	686,210
- % of Income confirmed as at 07/02/2020	n/a	90%	n/a
Expenditure	(615,742)	(663,520)	(689,428)
Total surplus/(deficit)	<b>38,752</b>	<b>88,250</b>	<b>(3,218)</b>
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	4,662	17,853	17,661
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	34,090	70,397	(20,879)
	<b>38,752</b>	<b>88,250</b>	<b>(3,218)</b>
Total expenditure	615,742	663,520	689,428
<b>Free unrestricted reserves:</b>			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	175,366	245,763	224,884
No of months of totalled expenditure	3.4	4.4	3.9
Reserves policy target	153,936	165,880	172,357
No of months of total expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	21,431	79,883	52,527