



Report – The City Bridge Trust Committee

Partnership with Buttle UK

To be presented on Thursday, 15th January 2015

To the Right Honourable The Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Commons of the City of London in Common Council assembled.

SUMMARY

1. In November 2013, your City Bridge Trust Committee approved a grant of £470,000 over 18 months to enable Buttle UK to establish a hardship fund - known as the Anchor Project - for families, to help them re-build their lives following domestic violence, supporting them to resettle and live independently. This paper now proposes that the Court of Common Council approves a grant of £634,000 to continue the Project over a further 18 months, providing three years' support in total.

MAIN REPORT

Background

1. Following the City Bridge Trust's 2012/13 Quinquennial Review, a number of partnership programmes were approved, one of which was with Buttle UK. In November 2013, your City Bridge Trust Committee approved a grant of £470,000 over 18 months to enable Buttle UK to establish a hardship fund - the Anchor Project - for families to help them re-build their lives following domestic violence.
2. The original proposal was for a three-year programme of work; however, as this was a new way of working for the Trust, funds were committed for 18 months initially to enable the referral network to become established and to gauge likely demand. The City Bridge Trust Committee now proposes that the Court of Common Council approves a grant of £634,000 to continue the Project over a further 18 months, providing three years' support in total.

Current Position

3. Buttle UK has designed the Anchor Project to offer a holistic package of support for families affected by domestic violence, combining practical and emotional support, provided by its network of referral agencies, and administering cash grants of up to £2,000. A more child-centred approach is being employed by referral agencies and,

in order to try and reinforce this, Buttle UK has begun discussions with The Women's Aid National Training Centre to investigate the possibility of raising awareness more widely through a training programme. Buttle UK is also in the process of inviting 15 – 20 individuals to form an advisory group; the Deputy Chief Grants Officer will attend this Group; reporting back to your City Bridge Trust Committee.

4. An independent evaluator has been appointed to evaluate the initiative over its three-year duration. The evaluation will measure the outcomes for participating children and consider the relationship between these outcomes and the support they have received via the project. It will focus particularly on the role of financial/material support combined with multi-agency support. It is proposed that, once the evaluation has been completed at the end of the three years, Buttle UK and City Bridge Trust hold a joint conference to share the evaluation findings, with the expectation that a new model of support for children and their families affected by domestic abuse can be presented.
5. Over the coming months, Buttle UK aims to increase the rate of grant-making in order to award grants to at least 350 families (and, therefore, achieve an estimated reach of over 600 children); complete the external evaluation to understand and illustrate the impact of Anchor grants on children's social, emotional and behavioural well-being; and to work on a programme of dissemination activities to share what has been learned, all with the aim of changing long-term practice around how the needs of children in these circumstances are assessed and how they are met; this would be in conjunction with the Trust.

Proposal

6. That the Court of Common Council approves a grant of £634,000 over 18 months to continue the Anchor Project, which supports families in London who have experienced domestic violence to resettle and live independently.

Financial Implications

7. The total cost of this project over three years is £1,086,375. Your Committee is recommending that 50% of the funding requirement be approved for Year 2 (£210,000), plus the total amount required for Year 3 (£424,000), making a total of £634,000.

Conclusion

8. The Anchor Project is complementing the City Bridge Trust's 'Making London Safer' programme, by providing the support needed for families, escaping domestic violence, to re-settle and live independently. The Deputy Chief Grants Officer will attend the Advisory Group, and it is proposed that a progress report on the Anchor Project is brought to your City Bridge Trust Committee in 6 months' time.

All of which we submit to the judgement of this Honourable Court.

DATED this 27th of November 2014.

SIGNED on behalf of the Committee.

Jeremy Mayhew
Chairman, The City Bridge Trust Committee