

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY – Making London Safer****Solace Women's Aid****Adv: Jenny Field****Base: Islington****Amount requested: £98,184****Benefit: London-wide****Amount recommended: £98,200****The Charity**

Solace Women's Aid (SWA) is one of the key players in the domestic violence field in London. It is the product of several mergers of local refuges and now covers the boroughs of Camden, Islington, Enfield, Lambeth and Haringey, as well as being the Irish/Irish Traveller specialist refuge for the whole of London. The resulting organisation, which also has a significant role within the policy arena, is stronger as a result of achieving economies of scale.

**The Application**

This application requests continuation funding for a further two years for its specialist support work helping children and young people who have been affected by domestic violence. Specifically, the application requests funding for the salary and associated running costs of its Children and Family Support Services Manager.

**The Recommendation**

Whilst three years is the maximum period that you will usually fund a particular project or activity in an organisation, your policies allow you to consider funding, for a further two years, work which is deemed to be of strategic importance to London. Given SWA's leading position in the domestic violence sector and its commitment to sharing good practice and learning with others working in this field, officers are satisfied that this application satisfies the requirement for strategic significance:

***£98,200 over two years (£49,100 x 2) towards the salary and associated running costs of a full-time Children and Family Support Services Manager working with children and young people affected by domestic violence***

**Funding History**

Meeting Date	Decision
17/07/2011	£135,000 over three years towards the salary and associated running costs of the Children and Family Support Services Manager.
19/02/2009	£100,000 over two years for the costs of a Children and Young People's Manager (under the Tackling Violence special initiative).
04/05/2006	Rejection. The application did not meet the criteria of your then Strengthening the Voluntary Sector programme under which it was made.

**Background and detail of proposal**

Today, SWA runs 80 family units in 14 refuges. It runs a total of over 25 projects, comprising a number of community based services, including an advice and outreach service; advocacy for adults and children at risk of domestic violence; a

rape crisis service; counselling (available in a number of languages); and a range of services for children and young people, including therapeutic services.

The children and young people with whom SWA works have either been abused themselves or have witnessed abuse. This has a devastating impact on a child's emotional development. In households where there are children, 90% are in the same or next room at the time of a violent incident. Almost 70% of child protection cases have domestic violence in the background and 40 – 70% of abusers of intimate partners directly abuse their children. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and, in the most extreme cases, dissociative identity disorder, are all mental health conditions commonly found in people who have been abused.

The provision of support services for children and young people is a critical element of the range of services that are needed to help families survive domestic violence. However, there is no statutory requirement to meet the emotional needs of children and young people escaping domestic violence, which means that service provision can be patchy and variable in quality.

### Financial Information

Forecast income in the current year 2015/16 is £6,564,058 of which £6,042,158 (92%) had been confirmed by March 2015.

The cost of generating funds as a percentage of total income is low and SWA advised that this is due to the majority of its income being generated from refuges and community service contracts. However, in 2014/15 the cost of generating funds marginally increased as SWA decided to expand its fundraising capacity. As contract funding becomes increasingly competitive, the charity wanted to diversify its funding base by raising more funds from trusts and foundations, individuals and through fundraising events.

Year end at 31 March	2013/14 Audited Accounts	2014/15 Forecast	2015/16 Current Year Budget
<b>Income and Expenditure</b>	£	£	
Income	6,536,287	6,724,139	6,564,058
Expenditure	6,485,974	6,692,791	6,524,895
Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	124,975	33,856	188,093
Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	(74,662)	(2,508)	(148,930)
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	50,313	31,348	39,163
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover	0.8%	0.5%	0.6%
Cost of Generating funds (% of income)	44,175 (0.7%)	81,115 (1.2%)	118,054 (1.8%)
<b>Free unrestricted reserves</b>			
Unrestricted free reserves held at Year End	855,808	889,664	1,077,757
How many months' worth of expenditure	1.6	1.6	2.0
Reserves Policy target	600,000	600,000	600,000
How many months' worth of expenditure	1.1	1.1	1.1
Free reserves over/(under) target	255,808	289,664	477,757