

MEETING: 09/07/2015

Ref: 12572

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Improving Londoners' Mental Health**

Off The Record Twickenham

Adv: Joan Millbank

Base: Richmond

Amount requested: £61,820

Benefit: Richmond-upon-Thames

Amount recommended: £61,820

**The Charity**

Off The Record (OTR) was set up in 1991. In 2005 OTR merged with another youth charity to form Richmond Youth Partnership. The partnership closed in March 2013 when the borough's Strategic Partnership ceased, leaving OTR to form itself into a new charitable company. OTR provides a range of counselling, sexual health and information services to young people aged 11 to 24 years - accessible via telephone and face-to-face contact six days per week. It provides a free service to under 18 year olds and offers the only drop-in service in the borough. Twenty-three volunteer counsellors and psychotherapists work alongside a small part-time paid staff team.

**The Application**

OTR is seeking a three year grant towards its Coordinator post, with some running costs. The focus of the bid has been clarified in the assessment meeting. You are being asked to contribute towards the core counselling service with a focus on OTR providing specialist help for young people experiencing significant mental health issues including depression, anxiety and self-harm.

**The Recommendation**

OTR has a strong track record in providing counselling and information services to young people in Richmond. Whilst it is in its third governance structure, it has retained a loyal and experienced small staff and a large volunteer team. As a consequence it has been able to both maintain and expand its range of services. It has recently secured two contracts to run the borough's community counselling service, delivered in youth centres and a school, which illustrates its local reputation.

***£61,820 (£20,000; £20,600; £21,220) towards a part-time (28hpw) Coordinator and running costs to provide a counselling service to improve young people's mental health.***

**Funding History**

Meeting Date	Decision
01/02/2007	£30,000 over three years towards the salary and running costs to maintain direct service provision, supporting young people at risk.

**Background and detail of proposal**

Richmond borough has above the national average recorded incidents of neglect and emotional abuse in its young people, including a high level of mental health issues. OTR works in collaboration with other health providers with two-way referrals to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Primary Mental Health Team, GPs and other charities including RELATE counselling service. While young people do self-refer, over 50% come to OTR via a GP referral. Presenting issues include relationship problems, low self-esteem, loneliness, eating disorders, bullying, bereavement, anger issues, self-harm, anxiety and depression, and suicidal thoughts. Referral also accompanies transition to adult services.

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The team of counsellors and psychotherapists bring a range of training backgrounds and approaches to benefit the young people including cognitive behavioural therapy, integrative counselling, play therapy and family therapy. They are all registered members of the British Association of Counselling, are required to commit to on-going training and supervision, and all are checked via the Disclosure and Barring Service. OTR has secured a Department of Health quality mark and Richmond Borough's Healthy Schools kite mark.

In 2013-14 OTR took on 800 new referrals, provided 1,020 counselling interventions, 884 drop-in and crisis sessions, and 790 sexual health sessions. Drop out was less than 5%. Your grant, if agreed, will help OTR to provide 150 young people each year with short term counselling sessions, of whom 60% are expected to have pronounced to severe mental health issues. Evidence to demonstrate improved mental health will be gathered through an established, specialist, monitoring system.

### Financial Information

Forecast income for the year ending March 2016 is £145,600, of which £69,800 (48%) had been confirmed by May 2015. This figure includes rent free office / counselling accommodation valued at £6,000 per annum.

The charity advised that it has been successful in securing two contracts to provide the borough's community counselling and school service for young people, which led to a significant increase in income in 2014/15 and a further increase in current year 2015/16.

The cost of generating funds was not disclosed in the independently examined accounts for 2013/14. The charity has provided an estimate for the current year 2015/16 which appears relatively low. The charity has noted that this is due to its Trustees undertaking bid writing and the majority of other fund-raising on a voluntary basis.

Year end at 31 March	2013/14 Audited Accounts	2014/15 Draft End of Year Figures	2015/16 Current Year Forecast
	£	£	£
<b>Income and Expenditure</b>			
Income	58,469	117,000	145,600
Expenditure	48,696	92,000	137,800
Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	9,773	20,000	7,800
Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	0	5,000	0
<b>Total Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>9,773</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>7,800</b>
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover	16.7%	21.4%	4.4%
Cost of Generating funds (% of income)	0	NK	437 (0.3%)
<b>Free unrestricted reserves</b>			
Free unrestricted reserves held at Year End	9,773	29,773	37,573
How many months' worth of expenditure	2.4	3.9	3.3
Reserves Policy target	12,174	23,001	34,449
How many months' worth of expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	(2,401)	6,772	3,124