

**MEETING: 11/05/2017**

**Ref: 13958**

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Strengthening London's Voluntary Sector**

**One Westminster**

**Adv: Sandra Jones**

**Amount requested: £129,492**

**Base: Westminster**

**Benefit: Westminster**

**Amount recommended: £130,000**

**The Charity**

One Westminster (OW) is a borough-based infrastructure organisation, widely recognised for the range of support services it offers voluntary and community organisations. OW (the result of a merger of Voluntary Action Westminster (VAW) and Volunteer Centre Westminster (VCW) on 1 April 2014) continues to develop and promote volunteering as well as sustain work supporting, training, sign-posting and networking on behalf of the voluntary and community sector. This is for a wide range of organisations, many of which are small, community based, organisations as well as larger agencies delivering public sector contracts.

**The Application**

The applicant is seeking support to provide capacity building and training to local organisations, support around volunteering policy and practice, monitoring and evaluation, evidencing impact and fundraising. This will be achieved through the employment of a part-time senior post with associated costs along with direct costs of workshops and outreach support.

**The Recommendation**

OW is currently funded by the local authority to provide 'triage and connect', i.e. signpost organisations to capacity building and build a strong network of organisations. Feedback from organisations is that they have often not been able to find appropriate capacity building, and in response to this OW is seeking to meet this need. The post holder will co-ordinate the work of the different teams within OW around capacity building as well as direct delivery of workshops and conferences. Outreach to those organisations who might not seek assistance, but would benefit from capacity building will be targeted as part of the programme. Given the financial position of the organisation it is recommended that release of the grant should be subject to the submission of satisfactory quarterly management accounts, including the cash balance held.

***£130,000 over three years (£44,500; £42,500; £43,000) towards a 0.6FTE post, associated running costs with costs for workshops and outreach support. This is subject to the submission of satisfactory quarterly management accounts, including the cash balance held.***

**Funding History**

Meeting Date	Decision
12/02/2014	£94,000 over 2 years (£46,300;£47,700) towards the salary & support costs of an Organisational Development Officer (0.4FTE) & Information & Communications Officer (0.4FTE) to deliver VAW's Just for You programme.
20/01/2011	£135,000 over three years (3 x £45,000) to support voluntary organisations across Westminster with outcome monitoring, evaluation and communication. The funding to be used for the following posts: 40% of a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer and 40% of an Information Officer.

## Background and detail of proposal

The organisation has undertaken major changes in the way it operates, and 2015/16 was a year of transition and consolidation, setting new solid foundations on which the organisation can move forward. Having lost Westminster Council's Voluntary Sector Support contract, this has now been won back alongside the volunteer contract. However these contracts do not allow the charity to provide the level of support identified by the local voluntary sector around organisational development, volunteering brokerage plus support and corporate volunteering.

The role of the manager post being applied for will enable the organisation to increase support, particularly through workshops, one-to-one support sessions, an annual conference and outreach events and meetings. This will be achieved through the direct capacity building work of the manager as well as through co-ordinating the different teams within OW around capacity building, leading to improved effectiveness and increased support to the sector.

## Financial Information

During recent years the charity faced a number of financial challenges, and identified a number of actions to ameliorate this, including merging VAW with VCW, undertaking a major staff restructure and downsizing. It also includes a policy that all projects should not get into a deficit position, something that had happened in previous years, and this has been fully implemented. The focus of 2015/16 was to implement these measures, and a new part-time interim CEO was appointed to carry this forward. A 3 year business plan for 2017-2020 has been developed, which identifies that the organisation will have built up free reserves to the policy target of three months. Given the deficit position of the charity in 2015/16, officers consider that this is extremely ambitious.

Year end as at March	2015/16 Audited £	2016/17 Forecast £	2017/18 Forecast £
<b>Income &amp; expenditure:</b>			
Income	1,096,953	762,750	694,088
- % of Income confirmed	n/a	n/a	78%
Expenditure	(1,076,369)	(720,216)	(666,915)
Total surplus/(deficit)	<b>20,584</b>	<b>42,534</b>	<b>27,173</b>
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	26,528	0	32,063
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	(5,944)	42,534	(4,890)
	<b>20,584</b>	<b>42,534</b>	<b>27,173</b>
Cost of Raising Funds	5,500	5,500	5,500
- % of income	0.5%	0.7%	0.8%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	282,032	190,153	245,890
<b>Free unrestricted reserves:</b>			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	(61,515)	(18,981)	(23,871)
No of months of operating expenditure	-2.6	-1.2	-1.2
Reserves policy target	70,508	47,538	61,473
No of months of operating expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	(132,023)	(66,519)	(85,344)