

**MEETING: 14/03/2018**

**Ref: 14219**

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Reducing Poverty**

**Alternatives Trust East London**

**Adv: Sandra Jones**

**Amount requested: £90,000**

**Base: Newham**

**Benefit: Newham**

**Amount recommended: £90,000**

**The Applicant**

Alternatives Trust East London (ATEL), a charity, was set up in 1994 to support the physical and mental health of women relating to pregnancy. This was initially achieved by providing pregnancy choices and support along with support for pregnancy loss (adoption, termination, miscarriage, stillbirth) and sexual health education. As ante-natal services and sexual health education within the health service increased, the focus of the organisation changed and from 2005 ATEL has worked with pregnant women in difficult situations in need of significant, long term help to cope with life and parenting. Over the last year the organisation has helped a growing number of African and Albanian women who have suffered sexual exploitation. All women using the services are living in poverty, sometimes destitute, with the majority coming from an abusive situation with little or no support from friends or family in the UK. Services include providing emergency food, baby equipment and clothing; and support to address long-term causes of the destitution.

**The Application**

ATEL is seeking your support to employ a full time Destitution Co-ordinator to respond to the growing demand for the service. The post will co-ordinate the response to new clients, either helping them directly or referring them to other staff within the organisation or agencies as appropriate. Currently new clients are seen by a range of staff in addition to their current jobs; this post will enable the organisation to manage an increase in numbers. There is no large or publicly funded alternative provision, with the local authority often referring families to the organisation.

**The Recommendation**

Over the years the organisation has built a good track record for supporting young women and their families who find themselves in abject poverty. With an increase in demand for their services, the creation of a specific post to undertake the liaison of support for the clients will enable them to support more individuals in a holistic and effective way. The organisation will be using its reserves to fund the increase in activity that the Co-Ordinator will generate.

***£90,000 over three years (3 x £30,000) towards the FTE salary of a Destitution Co-Ordinator.***

**Funding History**

Meeting Date	Decision
04/10/2007	£21,000 over three years (3 x £7,000) towards a programme of life skills training for young parents in Newham.

**Background and detail of proposal**

Working with a range of partners, ATEL aim to provide a holistic service for those women and their young families that find themselves in a position of extreme

poverty. Referrals come from a range of sources such as midwives, social services, health and education providers, other voluntary organisations as well as word of mouth. Immediate support is usually around providing food, clothing and equipment as well as finding accommodation. 79% of the 100+ current clients are homeless, with 79% also having no recourse to public funds. 90% have a background of abuse. Often this is the first time the client has asked for help, fearing that by being homeless with nothing for the baby, the child will be taken away.

The Co-ordinator will triage the individual, referring them to either a trained advisor from the organisation or other appropriate support; it could be the local advice agency for legal advice, food bank, homelessness agency or refuge. Local agencies and businesses do donate goods, but not enough to meet demand. The post-holder will monitor the progress of the client, giving support when necessary.

### Financial Information

Trustees have a policy to hold free reserves of between 3 and 6 months in order to manage risk and safeguard the charity against fluctuations in income and level of demand for its services, the latter having increased significantly over recent years. The reserves reflect the fact that most of the voluntary income comes through a Christmas appeal. Restricted grants are awarded at the end of ATEL's financial year to be spent in the following year.

In the financial year just ended, the organisation received a £85,000 legacy which the trustees have agreed will be designated for developing a training room within their grounds. This will be utilised by the organisation as well as provide them with some income from hiring. With the appointment of the new post identified in this bid, the level of free reserves will reduce as it will be used for clients who will be supported through provision of food, clothing and equipment.

Year end as at 31 December	2016 Examined Accounts £	2017 Draft Accounts £	2018 Forecast £
<b>Income &amp; expenditure:</b>			
Income	184,133	232,607	243,000
- % of income confirmed as at 25/01/2018	n/a	n/a	24%
Expenditure	(163,356)	(169,617)	(225,000)
Total surplus/(deficit)	20,777	62,990	18,000
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	24,028	784	12,400
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	(3,251)	62,206	5,600
	20,777	62,990	18,000
Cost of Raising Funds	3,570	12,968	22,600
- % of Income	1.9%	5.6%	9.3%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	33,552	49,524	59,400
<b>Free unrestricted reserves:</b>			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	30,440	92,646	98,246
No of months of operating expenditure	10.9	22.4	19.8
Reserves policy target	8,368	12,381	14,850
No of months of operating expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	22,052	80,265	83,396