

MEETING: 02/05/2018

Ref: 14553

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Improving Londoners' Mental Health

Baobab Centre for Young Survivors In Exile

Adv: Jack Joslin

Amount requested: £122,652

Base: Islington

Benefit: London-wide

Amount recommended: £123,000

The Applicant

The Baobab Centre for Young Survivors in Exile (BCYSE) was first formed in 2008 and registered as a company limited by guarantee, later registering as a charity in 2010. The Centre was set up by a group of clinicians - experienced human rights workers - who identified many unmet needs in the models of treatment and support offered to young asylum seekers and refugees who had experienced human rights abuses during their developmental years. BCYSE works with some of the UK's most disadvantaged and marginalised young people whose complex needs are often invisible. The Centre is run as a non-residential transitional therapeutic community focused on supporting young asylum seekers and refugees who have been separated from their parents. The charity currently works with 115 young people registered, who live across London and come from 23 different countries.

The Application

This application is seeking your support to enable the Centre to provide clinical, advocacy and operational capacity to help the increasing numbers of young asylum-seekers with complex trauma being referred to it for specialist support to improve their mental health. Many of the young people they work with have been raised in war zones and have seen and experienced horrific trauma. Most of the young people have been trafficked to this country and have been exploited criminally or sexually, the majority of beneficiaries are suffering from PTSD. The charity is seeking a contribution to the core salaries that underpin its work to ensure that a consistent service can be provided to the young people it supports.

The Recommendation

The Baobab Centre provides an essential service to young asylum seekers and refugees who have experienced significant trauma in their home country and are learning to cope and understand their new life in London. The charity provides clinical, holistic and person-centred support for these young people helping to improve their mental health and navigate the immigration system. At assessment your officer discussed the request of a contribution towards 5 core salaries. It was recommended that the Centre requests, instead, a contribution to the core running costs of the organisation as all the work of the Centre meets the outcomes of your Improving Londoners mental health programme by providing specialist mental health support to this very disadvantaged group of young people. Funding is therefore recommended as a core grant over 3 years to ensure the charity can cope with the current demands on its services while developing its capacity to deal with increasing demand. Funding is recommended as follows:

£123,000 over three years (3 x £41,000) to contribute to the core costs to ensure the charity can continue to provide specialist therapeutic mental health interventions for young asylum seekers and refugees in London.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
24/05/2016	Application declines as the organisation was within the fallow period and therefore ineligible.
28/07/2011	£72,000 over three years (£24,000; £23,500; £24,500) towards the costs of a counselling and therapy service for young traumatised refugees.

Background and detail of proposal

In 2016 3,175 unaccompanied minors arrived in the UK to seek asylum, up from 1,861 in 2014. During and since this period the Baobab Centre has seen an increased demand on the services it provides. At assessment the charity outlined how this was due to the growing reputation of the Centre as a specialist provider but also because of increased cuts to specialist CAHMS services. BCYSE provides ongoing, non time-limited, support to young refugees and asylum seekers to help them to overcome their psychological difficulties. All the beneficiaries that the Centre supports have undergone traumatic experiences in their childhood including witnessing the murder of a parent or a family member, detention, torture, being forcibly recruited as a child soldier, or being trafficked for sexual exploitation or labour. Upon arrival in the UK, they must navigate an unfamiliar and complex asylum system in which their experiences can appear to be diminished and discounted and their ages disputed. The cumulative effect of all these experiences has a significant impact on their mental health and how they form relationships with others.

The recovery and rehabilitation of young people who suffer psychological and developmental difficulties can only take place when they feel safe and stable. BCYSE offers a therapeutic community approach that includes providing individual and group psychotherapy, practical case work support and advocacy as well as a range of other services and activities such as arts, music workshops, English lessons and assistance with the asylum process. This complete wrap around support for these traumatised young people allows them to improve their mental health, cope with past trauma's and to build confidence in their new life in the UK. Your support will help the charity to maintain this essential work while developing capacity to take on more young people.

Financial information

The charity receives most of its income through Trusts and Foundations for the specialist work it delivers. At assessment the organisation outlined how it is always planning 9 months in advance of grants coming to an end and ensuring it can maintain a strong pipeline of applications for funding. The charity holds reserves equivalent to 3 months identified core operating costs. The overspending in restricted expenditure outlined in the 2018 forecast and the 2019 budget is covered by restricted funds bought forward from previous years.

Year end as at 31 March	2017 Independently Examined Accounts £	2018 Forecast £	2019 Budget £
Income & expenditure:			
Income	373,275	317,310	333,650
- % of Income confirmed as at 06/04/18	n/a	N/A	64%
Expenditure	(301,783)	(369,762)	(378,349)
Total surplus/(deficit)	71,492	(52,452)	(44,699)
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	53,085	(66,992)	(44,699)
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	18,407	14,540	0
	71,492	(52,452)	(44,699)
Cost of Raising Funds			
Cost of Raising Funds	22,041	31,676	31,784
- % of income	5.9%	10.0%	9.5%
Operating expenditure (total funds)	301,783	369,762	378,349
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	58,246	72,786	72,786
No of months of operating expenditure	2.3	2.4	2.3
Reserves policy target	47,746	72,890	72,875
No of months of operating expenditure	1.9	2.4	2.3
Free reserves over/(under) target	10,500	(104)	(89)

