

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Improving London's Environment**Freightliners City Farm****Adv: Jack Joslin****Base: Islington****Benefit: Islington****Amount requested: £108,000****(Revised Request: £123,600)****Amount recommended: £123,600****The Applicant**

Freightliners City Farm (FCF) was established as a charity in 1973 and is now located on an open-space site in the heart of Islington, close to Holloway Rd, with the overall purpose of providing farm-themed educational and recreational resources for the whole community. It was originally located on waste land behind King's Cross and used old railway goods' vans to house the animals – hence the name. It moved to its half-hectare current site in 1978 and purpose-built farm buildings were erected in 1988. The Farm runs a variety of programmes and activities for all ages – all centred around a wide range of livestock (including 5 beehives). There are areas set aside for smaller children to handle rabbits, guinea pigs and goats; as well as pens of pigs and a wide variety of chickens and ducks. Other areas of the farm include rare species of apple trees. Classes and workshops are run on spinning and weaving; bread-making; composting and other related subjects – whilst school groups are regular visitors. The farm also runs a cafe on site as a social enterprise.

The Application

Funding is being sought to employ a full time Farm Development Manager over three years who will be responsible for overseeing and bringing together the various practical aspects of the farm's work. Jobs will include work on the farm and managing over 60 volunteers, garden and site improvements, programme development, café management and to oversee the many small community projects that take place on the farm.

The Recommendation

FCF is the second oldest City farm in London and has been delivering on its current site for the last 40 years. The charity is well established in Islington and provides a safe haven for local residents and communities in a densely populated part of London. Funding is being sought to introduce a new management post to oversee the many projects and general upkeep. This role will be crucial to the farm's development and establishing its long-term future as an integral part of the local community. At assessment the applicant acknowledged that they had not included management and some overhead costs in the budget, which has subsequently been revised to include these. This project meets the outcome of your Improving London's Environment programme and funding is recommended as follows:

£123,600 over three years (£40,400; £41,500; £41,700) for the full-time Farm Development Manager (37.5hpw) and associated running costs.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
10/07/2007	£73,000 over three years (£24,500; £24,000, £24,500) for the salary of a full-time Recreation Access Project Co-ordinator and associated running costs of a project to support disabled people.

Background and detail of proposal

FCF is positioned right in the heart of Islington, one of the most densely populated boroughs in UK. It has been based at the site for 40 years and is a hub of activity for the diverse population that surrounds it. The farm hosts an estimated 45,000 visits a year including pupils from local schools, a range of local community organisations and the public. A recent impact evaluation carried out by Rocket Science highlighted the farm as a space of learning and personal development and a refuge and safe haven for visitors and volunteers. Participants identified that their health and well-being was improved by involvement in the farm space and they felt less isolated and more connected with the community through coming to the farm. Maintaining and managing a multifaceted green space for the benefit of a diverse community can be a real challenge and one the farm is looking to bolster with this funding. The Farm Development Manager will increase capacity in the management of the farm and oversee the practical activities on offer, while developing new projects and programmes with the local community. This role will also enable the Chief Executive to focus more on long term strategy, income generation and providing oversight and coordination of the whole farm's objectives to ensure that the small staff team are informed and supported in their roles.

Financial Information

In 2017 the charity moved its financial year end from March to September. March and April are one of the busiest times for the farm and with a small staff team this led to issues with filing accounts with the Charity Commission on time. Reserves for the charity are reflected as negative in the table below, however FCF has a fundraising strategy in place and will be ensuring they can increase unrestricted reserves through donations, local giving and being the Mayor of Islington's Charity of the year for 2018.

Year end as at 30 September	2017 Examined Accounts 18 Month Period £	2018 Draft £	2019 Budget £
Income & expenditure:			
Income	386,245	245,675	248,000
- % of income confirmed as at 16/10/2018	n/a	100%	32%
Expenditure	(395,102)	(223,302)	(247,600)
Total surplus/(deficit)	(8,857)	22,373	400
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	(9,428)	22,000	0
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	571	374	400
	(8,857)	22,374	400
Cost of Raising Funds	5,187	727	2,000
- % of income	1.3%	0.3%	0.8%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	237,518	172,427	136,600
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	(3,291)	(2,917)	(2,517)
No of months of operating expenditure	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2
Reserves policy target	59,380	43,107	34,150
No of months of operating expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	(62,671)	(46,024)	(36,667)