

MEETING: 21/03/2019

Ref: 15052

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Positive Transitions

Evolve Housing + Support

Amount requested: £69,018

Amount recommended: £69,000

Adv: Tim Wilson

Base: Merton

**Benefit: Lambeth, Croydon,
Bromley, Merton and
Kensington & Chelsea**

The Applicant

Evolve Housing + Support is a registered charity providing residential accommodation and support to vulnerable customers through its bed spaces and project activities in several London boroughs. The organisation has grown through a series of mergers with other supported housing providers. The accommodation units managed by the charity assist different client groups including but not limited to young people leaving care, people released from the custodial system, those leaving secure psychiatric wards and individuals with long histories of sleeping rough. The organisation's work is concerned with supporting clients to lead independent lives.

The Application

City Bridge Trust supported Evolve to establish its mental health support service in early 2015 with a two-year grant. The charity applied for a third year of funding in 2017, and now seeks a further two years to maintain services in line with your policy on continuation support. Evolve understands that if this application were successful, there would be a fallow period before it could seek any further Trust funding. This grant would be applied across Evolve's expanded operations, now covering two further boroughs compared to the original funding application. Evolve expects to work with 300 clients over the two years, giving counselling services to 200 and supporting the remaining 100 through psychological wellbeing funded by a Big Lottery grant. In addition, the project will deliver 24 health and wellbeing workshops covering a range of issues including anger management, sexual and emotional health, confidence and improved self-esteem.

The Recommendation

Evolve's clients typically have complex needs and may have spent many years outside mainstream services before they engage with the charity. As a result of their homelessness, they are rarely registered with a GP and would not otherwise be able to access therapeutic support on the NHS. Evolve has established counselling facilities in its premises, draws from a strong network of volunteer therapists, and delivers ancillary support to ensure that client work is provided with regard to the underlying reasons why someone made first contact with the charity. Evolve has made several cost efficiencies to its service since the initial City Bridge grant and so less is sought now than in previous awards. The charity is also committing some of its free reserves towards project costs. Funding is advised as follows:

£69,000 over two years (£35,000; £34,000) for further two years of continuation funding towards the mental health services Evolve Housing + Support deliver for homeless clients.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
11/05/2017	£55,000 for a third year for a full-time Wellbeing Manager plus running costs to deliver mental health support services for homeless people.
28/01/2015	£98,700 over two years for a full-time Well-being Manager plus running costs to establish a mental health support service for homeless people living at the South London YMCA.

Background and detail of proposal

Evolve has developed its health and wellbeing services since receipt of its 2015 grant from City Bridge Trust. Following initial assessment, each client receives a health and wellbeing timeline with details of the support that Evolve will provide. Depending on the presenting needs and the complexity of the client case, this could range from counselling, to assistance with alcohol and substance misuse, to employability training. Many clients have experienced significant trauma, and the specialist support Evolve is able to deliver is measured using clinical standards of evidence.

Financial Information

Evolve has grown through a series of mergers since City Bridge Trust's first grant was awarded in 2015. Then, turnover was approximately £8.5m compared with the £12.5m shown in the table below. The mergers have ensured that services delivered by financially vulnerable organisations have been maintained through falling under the Evolve umbrella. The charity is slightly more resilient now than in 2015 when free reserves were around only one month of operating expenditure, but there is still scope to get closer to the trustee target. The expected growth shown in the table below indicates that Evolve expects to be in a stronger position by the end of 2020.

Year end as at 31st March	2018 Audited Accounts £	2019 Forecast £	2020 Budget £
Income & expenditure:			
Income	12,876,990	12,382,857	12,662,000
- % of Income confirmed as at 30th Jan 2019	n/a	100%	78%
Expenditure	(12,308,557)	(12,181,541)	(12,127,088)
Total surplus/(deficit)	568,433	201,316	534,912
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	54,810	(9,442)	(38,000)
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	513,823	210,758	572,912
	568,433	201,316	534,912
Cost of Raising Funds	220,277	211,892	227,088
- % of Income	1.7%	1.7%	1.8%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	12,345,217	11,888,736	11,677,088
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	1,506,719	1,717,477	2,290,389
No of months of operating expenditure	1.5	1.7	2.4
Reserves policy target	3,086,304	2,972,184	2,919,272
No of months of operating expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	(1,579,585)	(1,254,707)	(628,883)