

MEETING: 21/03/2019

Ref: 15240

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Positive Transitions

Women@thewell

Adv: Geraldine Page

Base: Islington

Amount requested: £77,076

Benefit: Islington

Amount recommended: £77,000

The Applicant

Women@thewell (W@W) supports women trapped in or vulnerable to street prostitution, to exit chaotic lifestyles and to divert them away from prostitution and the criminal justice (CJS) system. It offers a safe drop-in providing hot meals, showers, laundry and storage facilities; and advocacy, service brokerage, and counselling to help users to address their complex, multiple needs. W@W was set up by Catholic nuns with support from the Institute of Our Lady of Mercy which acquired a property for the charity near Kings Cross, and has core funded it since inception 2006. W@W is a registered charity and helps c.250 women annually.

The Application

In September 2015 you awarded W@W £105,000 over 3 years towards the salary a Senior Support Worker and running costs of a life-skills programme for women who have offended or are at risk of offending or re-offending. This application is for a further 2 years' continuation funding, which is permitted under your Bridging Divides programme.

The Recommendation

W@W's recent 3-year grant has been very successful and met targets. Your funding will continue to attract and sustain women's engagement with W@W's services; to help them to gain skills and resources towards safer, healthier lives; as a stepping-stone towards formal learning/training; and ultimately to open chances away from street life and offending. W@W's work with vulnerable women in street prostitution is viewed by CJS funders as exemplary and trailblazing. This project fits well with your Positive Transitions programme outcomes and priorities. Funding is recommended:

£77,000 over two further years (£38,000; £39,000) towards four days/week salary costs of a Support and Advocacy Worker and running costs of a life skills programme for women who have offended or are at risk of offending or re-offending.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
23/09/2015	£105,000 over 3 years (£34,600; £34,800; £35,600) towards four days/week salary costs of a Senior Support Worker and running costs of a life skills programme for women who have offended or are at risk of offending or re-offending.

Background and detail of proposal

W@W works with vulnerable women with complex needs, typically including homelessness, addictions, child abuse experiences, lack of qualifications and skills, and poor health. Street sex workers are often exposed to serious and violent crimes and are prone to re-offending cycles and to serving short prison sentences for non-violent offences such as soliciting in public spaces, shoplifting, possession of drugs

and for breach of ASBOS and public space protection orders. W@W was set up to offer a holistic approach to putting the "jigsaw pieces of support" together by helping women to meet immediate needs attendant to rough sleeping, addictions, crises, and CJS involvement; and to offer service brokerage, advocacy, therapeutic and other support to help women stabilise their lives. This process is neither linear nor quick, because the problems street working women have are so entrenched that they tend to move in and out of chaos many times before achieving a changed lifestyle.

Since the original CBT grant was awarded the organisation has expanded significantly adding a further 2 areas of work, Outreach & Support and Exiting in addition to Advocacy & Support. This is a result of the Trustees strategy launched in 2015 which builds on the work of the Women's Centre and aims to see the organisation grow and reach out to women where they are. Advocacy & Support continues to be its core service but through successful fundraising WATW have been able to add these complimentary support services. The team has expanded from 6 employees to 16. W@W received a 5-year grant from Big Lottery (July 2016) to enable it to deliver on the strategy and reach out to women involved in or at risk of becoming involved in prostitution. During 2018 the Trustees undertook a 3-year strategy review and W@W will focus on embedding its three service delivery teams and look again at its systems and processes to ensure that it is in the best position to meet the needs of its beneficiaries.

Financial Information

The last three years have been quite a time of growth for W@W, in line with its previous strategy to expand its areas of service delivery to include both Outreach and Exiting services, alongside its centre-based services. In 2017 due to the timings of income received (some of it unrestricted grants) it had a significant surplus of around £60k. However, much of this income was for planned expenditure in 2018. Draft figures for 2018 show a small deficit against income, which with the carry forward from 2017 was not unexpected. Going forward, the Trustees' strategy is to work to diversify income base, from both corporates and from training, to increase the proportion of unrestricted income and get to a point where it can increase reserves, to buffer gaps in funding and to properly reflect the increase in staffing it has had over the last few years.

Year end as at 31 Dec	Audited Accounts 2017	Draft 2018	Budget 2019
	£	£	£
Income & expenditure:	662,222	669,895	784,717
Income		100%	71%
- % of Income confirmed as at 11/02/2019	(600,256)	(682,240)	(772,040)
Expenditure	61,966	(12,345)	12,677
Total surplus/(deficit)			
Split between:	17,684	9,323	10,091
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	44,282	(21,668)	2,586
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	61,966	(12,345)	12,677
	23,003	25,729	27,000
Cost of Raising Funds	3.5%	3.8%	3.4%
- % of Income	600,256	682,240	772,040
Total expenditure			
Free unrestricted reserves:	107,487	85,819	88,405
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	2.1	1.5	1.4
No of months of expenditure	150,064	170,560	193,010
Reserves policy target	3.0	3.0	3.0
No of months of expenditure	(42,577)	(84,741)	(104,605)
Free reserves over/(under) target			

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