

MEETING: 25/09/2014

Ref: 12281

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Improving Londoners' Mental Health

Victim Support

Adv: David Farnsworth

Amount requested: £112,106

Base: Westminster

Amount recommended: £112,200

Benefit: Westminster

The Charity

Victim Support (VS) is an independent charity which has existed since 1974. The organisation has 5,600 professionally trained volunteers who support people who are the victims of crime, both emotionally and practically. They also provide a witness support service in every criminal court. VS works with over 1 million victims, witnesses, and families every year throughout the country.

The Application

Your grant would support the costs of a full-time project worker over 3 years. The project worker will recruit and train 15 volunteers. Together, the team will provide support and advocacy to 16 - 24 year old homeless young people who are accessing 4 Westminster hostels run by the homelessness charity, Centrepont.

The Recommendation

VS is a mature organisation with a well-established operational model. It is well-networked, and the project worker, and volunteer team, will benefit from this when working with the beneficiary group. The delivery partnership with Centrepont further strengthens this application: it is an innovative approach and has the potential to scale through the VS network.

£112,200 over 3 years (£37,200; £37,300; £37,700) for a full-time Project Worker providing support and advocacy for homeless young people in Westminster. The grant is conditional upon a service level agreement between VS and Centrepont being in place and that this service level agreement takes account of each organisation's policies and procedures, in particular in relation to child protection and vulnerable adults.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
18/03/2010	£80,000 over two further years (2 x £40,000) for a post managing services for young victims of crime in Croydon.
07/05/2009	£120,000 over three years (3 x £40,000) for a post managing services for young victims of crime in Croydon and their parents.

Background and detail of proposal

Research commissioned by VS and Mind in 2013 ('At Risk, yet dismissed') confirmed homeless people are often the victims of crime, but that many do not recognise themselves as such, as the crime becomes normalised. These people often have additional support needs in terms of mental health, and substance misuse, which this project worker and her/his team will work to address.

The case worker and volunteer team will support 100 users a year to do the following:

- Provide support and advocacy, with tailored needs assessment, to ensure that support packages meet individual needs;
- Work collaboratively with mental health organisations, by existing referral arrangements, including Mind, to provide holistic care packages that cater for service users mental health needs;
- Deliver early interventions of support and advocacy that will alleviate some of the issues aggravating mental health issues;
- Support all vulnerable victims, in particular victims of domestic and sexual abuse, hate crime, child exploitation, child abuse, honour based violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage;
- Monitor by service user, survey reports for how people using their services feel before and after interventions, by measuring emotional wellbeing, feelings of safety, confidence and of being back-on-track;
- Work in partnership with other agencies, including the Police, Crown Prosecution Service, Probation Service, Social Services, Health Service;
- Reduce repeat victimisation by the delivery of prevention sessions working alongside Centrepnt; and
- Develop and enhance local key stakeholder relationships and preventative strategies, working alongside Centrepnt.

Financial Information

Total income in the current year to 31st March 2015 is expected to be £50.4m, of which £49m had been confirmed at 24th July 2014.

The charity's reserves policy is to hold free unrestricted reserves of £11.9m which is equivalent to 2.8 months' worth of 2014/15 expenditure. At 31st March 2015 free unrestricted funds are anticipated to be £14.4m which is equivalent to 3.3 months' worth of 2014/15 expenditure and is in line with the reserves policy.

Year-end at 31 st March	Notes	Audited Accounts 2012/13 £	Draft Accounts 2013/14 £	Current Year Forecast 2014/15 £
Income and Expenditure				
Income		48,351,000	50,077,000	50,381,000
Expenditure		47,211,000	49,805,000	51,893,000
Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)		3,351,000	900,000	(486,000)
Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)		(2,211,000)	(628,000)	(1,026,000)
Total Surplus / (Deficit)		1,140,000	272,000	(1,512,000)
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover		2.4%	0.5%	(3.0%)
Cost of generating funds (% of income)		585,000 (1.2%)	1,001,540 (2%)	979,420 (1.9%)
Free unrestricted reserves				
Unrestricted free reserves held at Year End		14,030,000	14,930,000	14,444,000
How many months' worth of expenditure		3.6	3.6	3.3
Reserves Policy target (£)		11,900,000	11,900,000	11,900,000
How many months' worth of expenditure		3.0	2.9	2.8
Free reserves over/ (under)target		2,130,000	3,030,000	2,544,000