

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Improving London's Environment**London Sustainability Exchange****Adv: Jenny Field****Base: Southwark****Amount requested: £89,612****Benefit: London-wide****Amount recommended: £66,600****The Charity**

Longer-serving Members of this Committee will remember the London Sustainability Exchange (LSx) as the first substantive organisation established at the initiative of the Trust. It evolved from a research study you commissioned several years ago which identified a gap in the quality of information and support available across all sectors (public, private and charitable) for organisations that wanted to make their practices greener and more sustainable. LSx was established, originally as a project within Forum for the Future and now as an independent charity in its own right, to meet this need.

The Application

The proposed project will work with six communities that have high potential to engage Londoners in deprived areas, but which are not currently actively greening their local environment. It will also concentrate on areas where there are existing networks to tap into but little green activity. Examples include Muslim communities attending the East London Mosque in a part of London with poor air quality and little access to green space; the West African Pentecostal churches in Mitcham which have large congregations and a strong commitment to improve their surroundings; and the Kurdish diaspora in Hackney and Haringey where there is little participation in the local growing projects taking place in green spaces such as Clissold Park, Finsbury Park and Newington Green, yet high levels of social housing or private rented with short tenure and poor access to green spaces. The object will be that communities learn about environmental issues by participating in activities, designed by their peers with the support of LSx, which are fun and engaging.

The Recommendation

This proposal will build on a project previously funded by the Trust over an 18 month period. Funding has been requested over two years but it is recommended that you award a grant as continuation funding over an 18 month period, making a total contribution to this initiative of 3 years, the maximum period that your policies allow you to usually support a project or activity.

£66,600 over 18 months (£43,600; £23,000) towards several staff salaries (in total 0.55 FTE) and related running costs of a project aiming to improve the local environment in six communities across London.

Funding History

The Trust invested heavily to pump-prime LSx in its first five years, with grants totalling £1.65m. There was a clear understanding that at the end of that support in March 2007, there needed to be a long fallow period before the Trust was approached again, to show that LSx was able to stand on its own financially. From the table below, you will see that a five year gap ensued, during which time LSx

received support from a wide range of statutory bodies, charitable trusts and foundations, and lottery boards, as it continues to do to this day.

| Meeting Date | Decision |
|--------------|--|
| 12/01/2012 | £66,600 over 18 months (£42,000; £24,600) towards a sustainable development project within six London communities. |
| 17/02/2011 | Withdrawn |

Background and detail of proposal

LSx has established itself as a significant agent for social and environmental change through the range of its projects. These include work around environmental behaviour change; encouraging improved health and well-being; and encouraging leaner, greener energy consumption and less waste within the built environment.

The work the Trust has funded with the previous 18 month grant came to an end in September 2013 and monitoring has been of a good standard.

Financial Information

In 2013/14, income was lower due to some time-limited grants coming to an end without replacement funds being secured. During the current year 2014/15, forecast income shows an increase of £110,239 (40.2%) to £384,722, which the charity advises is due to letting out desks within its premises. By 9th December 2014, £354,537 (92.2%) of forecast income had been confirmed.

| Year end at 31 March | 2013/14 Audited Accounts £ | 2014/15 Current Year Forecast £ |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| Income and Expenditure | | |
| Income | 274,483 | 384,722 |
| Expenditure | 335,744 | 358,114 |
| Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit) | (46,502) | 26,608 |
| Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit) | (14,759) | - |
| Total Surplus / (Deficit) | (61,261) | 26,608 |
| Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover | 22.3% | 6.9% |
| Cost of Generating funds (% of income) | 14,008 (5.1%) | 14,683 (3.8%) |
| Free unrestricted reserves | | |
| Unrestricted free reserves held at Year End | 213,004 | 239,612 |
| How many months' worth of expenditure | 7.6 | 8.0 |
| Reserves Policy target | 215,872 | 227,057 |
| How many months' worth of expenditure | 7.7 | 7.6 |
| Free reserves over/(under) target | (2,868) | 12,555 |