

MEETING: 12/03/21015

Ref: 12600

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Improving Londoners' Mental Health**

**Action for Stammering Children (ASC)**

**Adv: Ciaran Rafferty**

**Base: Islington**

**Amount requested: £60,000**

**Benefit: London-wide**

**Amount recommended: £60,000**

**The Charity**

Action for Stammering Children (ASC), founded in 1989, is more commonly known as the Michael Palin Centre for Stammering Children. (Members will recall that the actor and geographer Michael Palin was the guest speaker at your Chairman's Dinner in 2010). The work of the organisation was featured in a BBC documentary, "*The Kid's Speech*", where the type and value of interventions and treatments was showcased to excellent effect. The programme illustrated the very severe mental anguish children (and their parents in turn) can experience as a result of stammering.

**The Application**

In late 2011 you awarded ASC £90,000 over three years towards the costs of providing specialist consultations to young people in London. The initial consultations (which include family members, either together or separately) are essential to determining the bespoke programme then needed to treat and support the young person. ASC's services are available to all young people in London and are unique – there is no other charity of this kind in the capital. On this basis the organisation is eligible to be considered for a further two years' support, hence this application.

**The Recommendation**

The work of this charity is quite remarkable, firstly because it is unique in the range and quality of its support for young people with a stammer; and secondly because of the progress that is made in helping each young person lead a "normal" life and to reduce the likelihood of developing acute mental health problems. (Members may wish to view a short but inspiring DVD on the charity's website <http://www.stammeringcentre.org/stammering-information-programme-dvd>). The grant, should you agree it, will fund the provision of specialist consultations for 2 - 18 year old Londoners - essential to enabling the delivery of subsequent treatment/therapies:

***£60,000 over a further two years (2 x £30,000) for the costs of providing specialist consultations to young Londoners.***

**Funding History**

Meeting Date	Decision
17/11/2011	£90,000 over three years (3 x £30,000) towards the costs of providing specialist consultation to young Londoners.
04/10/2007	Application declined as it was for the same purpose as before but within the fallow period, rendering it ineligible.
17/04/2003	£60,000 over three years (3 x £20,000) towards the costs of providing speech therapists to conduct assessments for stammering children.

## Background and detail of proposal

It is estimated that 5% of young children experience stammering though most will grow out of it. However 1% will not and, as they follow their life path through primary school and, crucially, the transition into secondary school, the development and the impact of the stammer will worsen, just at the time in their lives where they begin to establish new social networks and greater self-identity. Stammering has a physiological basis in the brain structure – it is not caused by particular behaviour, incorrect parenting, sudden shocks, or any of the other common misconceptions – though it may be helped or hindered by the activity or reactions of others. This means that children can learn techniques to reduce the stammer (and therefore its impact) whilst parents can be better informed about what they can do to support their child.

In determining the right treatment and support for each child (and their families) it is essential to carry out an initial, specialist, assessment. After this, the charity then is able to establish a bespoke programme (eg it may involve intensive one-to-one therapy; or work within a small group; or a combination). Outcomes of work to date are impressive and show that some progress is always made.

## Financial Information

Of the projected £570,852 income for 2014/15, £496,936 (87%) has been confirmed as of 19<sup>th</sup> February 2015.

Year end at 31 March	2013/14 Audited Accounts £	2014/15 Current Year Budget £
<b>Income and Expenditure</b>		
Income	593,727	570,852
Expenditure	510,434	603,896
Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	164,531	40,008
Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	(81,238)	(73,052)
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	83,293	(33,044)
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover	14.0%	(5.8%)
Cost of Generating funds (% of income)	48,908 (8.2%)	54,000 (9.5%)
<b>Free unrestricted reserves</b>		
Free unrestricted reserves held at Year End	325,736	365,744
How many months' worth of expenditure	7.7	7.3
Reserves Policy target	255,216 – 382,824	301,948 – 452,922
How many months' worth of expenditure	6.0 – 9.0	6.0 – 9.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	70,520 – (57,388)	63,796 – (87,178)