

**MEETING: 24/05/2016**

**Ref: 13246**

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Making London More Inclusive**

**Sycamore Trust U.K.**

**Adv: Jack Joslin**

**Amount requested: £112,006**

**Base: Barking & Dagenham**

**Benefit: Barking & Dagenham**

**Amount recommended: £112,100**

**The Charity**

The charity was founded in 1995 as Parents of Autistic Children Together (PACT). In 2011 they amended their governing document to allow the charity to merge with Barking and Dagenham Mencap. In 2014 the merged organisation re-branded and became Sycamore Trust U.K. The charity provides relief for people with Autistic Spectrum disorders, learning difficulties and their families through the provision of advice, support, information and educational activities, aiding them towards equal opportunities and social integration.

**The Application**

The Sycamore Trust seeks funding towards a 'Family Services Coordinator' that will help families in Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge who have had a child recently diagnosed with Autism. The Coordinator will work with families through the initial stages of diagnosis and provide information and support. They will work with existing families providing on-going support and advice, providing a crisis intervention service when necessary. The programme will build the resilience of the parents and carers to ensure the best outcomes and that support is available for their child. The funding is for a full time Family Services Coordinator over three years and related overheads.

**The Recommendation**

The Sycamore Trust is an established and respected organisation with over 25 years' experience providing services and support for people with Autism and their families. This programme fits with your priority of Making London More Inclusive by delivering services helping people with a newly acquired or diagnosed disability to maintain choice and control in their lives.

**£112,100 over three years (£36,600; £37,400; £38,100) for a full time Family Services Coordinator and related overheads.**

**Funding History**

Meeting Date	Decision
14/02/2008	£68,000 over three years (£22,000; £22,400; £23,600) for the salary of a part-time (25hrs) Family Support Worker and some running costs for a project supporting families affected by Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

**Background and detail of proposal**

In 2015 the Sycamore Trust worked with more than 500 families and up to 1,000 individuals with Autism and learning difficulties. They are well established in the area and deliver a range of projects and contracts across the boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Redbridge and Havering. They have been delivering the Family Services project successfully for 8 years and have seen the difference it makes to

families and their recently diagnosed children. In the past year they have noticed an increase in demand on their services and anticipate that 50% of the families they work with will have children with a new or recent diagnosis. This post has been traditionally sustained from reserves, the organisation is looking to re-structure their services as local funding reduces and are looking for you to support the continuation of this work.

This programme offers a complete service for parents, carers and their children. They will provide initial support, training, advice and information to families with a recently diagnosed child and work with them to access additional support. They will also provide focus groups, volunteering opportunities, and training sessions to allow families to build support networks. This service is crucial to building the resilience of families and providing on-going support to them, which in turn will lead to positive outcomes for their children.

### Financial Information

Income for the organisation for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 is expected to be £445,579 of which £411,282 was confirmed by 29<sup>th</sup> February 2016. Budgeted income for the following year ended March 2017 is £505,583, of which £296,511 (59%) has been confirmed.

The cost of generating funds was not disclosed in the accounts for 2014/15. The charity has advised that these will be included in its accounts in the future. They have provided this information for last year and the current financial year and anticipate this to be low as the majority of their income comes from contracts and statutory sources which requires minimal resource.

The organisation is currently looking to increase its unrestricted reserves over the next couple of years to prepare for a re-structure of their services as they look to deliver personal budgets and anticipate reductions in funding from the local authority.

Year end at 31 March	2014/15 Independently Examined Accounts	2015/16 Current Year Forecast	2016/17 Following Year Budget
	£	£	£
<b>Income and Expenditure</b>			
Income	379,602	445,579	505,583
Expenditure	397,921	477,055	463,047
Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	(11,332)	12,233	39,536
Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	(6,987)	(43,709)	3,000
<b>Total Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>(18,319)</b>	<b>(31,476)</b>	<b>42,536</b>
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover	(4.8%)	(7.1%)	8.4%
Cost of Generating funds (% of income)	0	2,285 (0.5%)	3,000 (0.6%)
<b>Free unrestricted reserves</b>			
Free unrestricted reserves held at Year End	216,809	229,042	268,578
How many months' worth of expenditure	6.5	5.8	7
Reserves Policy target	198,960	238,572	231,524
How many months' worth of expenditure	6	6	6
Free reserves over/(under) target	17,849	(9,530)	37,054