

MEETING: 24/11/2016

Ref: 13549

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - English for Speakers of Other Languages

Kings Cross - Brunswick Neighbourhood Association

Adv: Tania Bronstein

Base: Camden

Amount requested: £105,005

Benefit: Camden

Amount recommended: £81,200

The Charity

Kings Cross Brunswick Neighbourhood Association (KCBNA) is a local charity run by local people delivering services for people of all ages in the Kings Cross and Brunswick wards of London Borough of Camden. Its activities, run from three community centres, include: a large youth and sports programme; day services for older people; dedicated projects for the local BME population; a healthy living centre and community gym; advice services; and community safety initiatives and local festivals.

The Application:

KCBNA seeks a three-year grant to run four weekly ESOL courses per year, each lasting 35 weeks and delivered by qualified tutors from Working Men's College and Mary Ward Centre at KCBNA's venues. The courses target economically inactive Somali and Bangladeshi women with no or very poor command of English and low skill levels and include: ESOL Speaking and Listening, "ESOL with Sewing", "ESOL with Hand Stitching", "and ESOL Entry Level 1. The request covers salaries and running costs of recruiting and supporting 180 learners, including their progression to further education, training and income generation opportunities.

The Recommendation:

KCBNA has a solid track record of engaging with Bangladeshi and Somali women, which are groups that most local agencies find exceedingly "hard to reach". This ESOL programme is creatively interwoven with skills learning and is an essential part of a wider portfolio of services to support the local BME population to break out of cycles of poverty and disadvantage. As some aspects of this portfolio are beyond the remit of your funding programme, and classes would run for part, but not for the whole year, the level of recommended grant has been adjusted.

£81,200 over three years (£26,700; £27,000; £27,500) towards salary (0.5 FTE) and associated costs of providing ESOL classes.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
01/02/2007	£100,000 to provide full disabled access in a community centre

Background and detail of proposal

Kings Cross and adjacent areas south of Euston Road are home to an ethnically diverse community of some 16,000 people, of whom 51% were born outside the UK, two thirds live in social housing, and a high proportion are economically inactive or unemployed (53% and 48% of people aged 16+ in Kings Cross and Bloomsbury respectively). The area has a long-established Bangladeshi community and large numbers of Somali single parent families. Women in these communities share

common obstacles to integration. These include low levels of education and skills, poor literacy in their own language and isolated lifestyles with limited contact with people outside the immediate family. These issues combined make it hard for them to have confidence or know-how to enrol in an English language course.

KCBNA uses an approach that builds trusting relationships with women who call upon the charity for help over issues such as translating a letter from their GP or children's school, and which encourages and supports them to leave their homes to take part in community activities, enrol in ESOL classes, learn skills to earn a living and independently navigate the system. This help extends to supporting individual ESOL course completers to attend local colleges to further their language learning or vocational aspirations and/or their plans to pursue gainful occupation or employment. There is evidence to infer that this customized supportive approach yields results, as former basic ESOL learners have moved on to pursue the opportunities above.

Financial observations

Forecast income in 2016/17 is £535,762, of which £431,215 (80.5%) was secured as of 20 October 2016. The charity enjoys good financial health and has been successful in raising charitable funds to sustain activity levels further to reduced grant income from LB Camden (which in 2011/12 provided a third of the annual income). The Council will charge 65% of the commercial rent for the three premises used by KCBNA (currently rent-free) from April 2017. The charity advises that it is holding free reserves above the policy target to make provision for these forthcoming charges.

The cost of generating funds is not reported in the annual accounts. The figure below has been estimated on the basis of staff time spent preparing funding applications and managing hire of space. The charity has given assurances that accounts for 2015/16, currently in draft form, will meet reporting requirements in full.

Year end at 31 March	2014/15 Externally Examined Accounts	2015/16 Draft Accounts	2016/17 Current Year Forecast
Income and Expenditure	£	£	£
Income	585,174	623,732	535,762
Expenditure	559,139	595,557	548,068
Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	15,647	42,538	(12,306)
Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	10,388	(14,363)	(19,333)
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	26,035	28,175	(31,639)
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover	4.4%	4.5%	5.9 %
Cost of Generating funds (% of income)			27,763 (5.1%)
Free unrestricted reserves			
Unrestricted free reserves held at Year End	279,974	322,512	310,206
How many months' worth of expenditure	6	6.5	6.8
Reserves Policy target	279,569	297,780	274,034
How many months' worth of expenditure	6	6	6
Free reserves over/(under) target	405	24,732	36,172