

**MEETING: 24/11/2016**

**Ref: 13514**

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Strengthening London's Voluntary Sector**

**Kingston Voluntary Action**

**Adv: Sandra Jones**

**Base: Kingston**

**Amount requested: £161,987**

**Benefit: Several south London boroughs**

**Amount recommended: £136,000**

**The Charity**

Kingston Voluntary Action (KVA) is the Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) serving the Royal Borough of Kingston. Working with a wide range of organisations the charity provides support and development services to the sector including liaison, capacity building and community engagement. KVA also undertakes representation and partnership work, funding advice, subsidised training, co-ordinates local projects such as the Volunteer Centre and provides technical and comms support and training.

**The Application**

In October 2013, your Committee agreed a three year grant as a consortium bid of six CVS's across South London led by KVA for a Superhighways project. This project provides a range of tailored services to enable the sector to fully realise the benefits that technology can bring. The request is for a 0.4 Superhighways Manager, two project workers (0.6 each), digital intern (0.4) and a contribution towards running costs.

**The Recommendation**

The Superhighways project offers a strategic approach to meeting the ICT needs of the sector, an area that the voluntary and community sector finds challenging, with many organisations lacking the technical, managerial and strategic approach to meet this need. Over the preceding three years this project has exceeded its targets and the demand for ICT services has increased. The project is looking to cover an additional four boroughs in South London, namely Lewisham, Southwark, Lambeth and Greenwich. The level of grant recommended is less than requested and in line with the previous grant of £65,000 per annum.

***£136,000 over two years (£67,000; £69,000) to fund the salary costs of a 0.4 FTE Superhighways manager, one project worker (0.8FTE) and associated running costs, for the continued delivery of the Superhighways Project.***

**Funding History**

| Meeting Date | Decision   |
|--------------|--|
| 03/10/2013   | £195,000 over three years (3 x £65,000) towards Superhighways, an ICT project supporting voluntary and community organisations in six boroughs in South London.                                  |
| 28/07/2011   | £140,000 over three years (£47,000; £47,000; £46,000) towards the salary and associated running costs of a Capacity Building Manager subject to the receipt of satisfactory account for 2010/11. |

**Background and detail of proposal**

You have funded KVA on several occasions, the most recent being the current consortium bid of Superhighways. The project currently works closely with the

Development Workers at each of the CVSs in the six boroughs (Richmond, Kingston, Croydon, Merton, Sutton, and Bromley) and is strategically linked to the South London CVS partnership. This proposal will be expanding to a further four boroughs. Many voluntary and community organisations, especially smaller ones, struggle with ICT and the purpose of this project is to help build their capacity around ICT and through a range of services including ICT health checks; on site help and remote access technical support; and a helpdesk to support trouble-shooting and procurement advice.

The project will continue to deliver a mix of intensive one-to-one support for voluntary organisations combined with information and awareness raising about how ICT can help the voluntary and community sector be more efficient, for example with monitoring and evaluation systems. Where possible the project will work with other strategic projects at a borough level. Although your officer is recommending funding at the current level, KVA will still be able to expand to the other boroughs.

### Financial Information

Forecast income in the current year is £925,793 of which £638,176 (69 %) is confirmed as at 31 October 2016.

The 2015/16 figures are for an 11 month period as KVA transferred its assets and liabilities to a new CIO vehicle with a March rather than April year end. This transfer has also impacted (downwards) the level of its unrestricted free reserves for this period, due to adjustments necessary under accounting regulations and valuations required including in respect of its defined benefit pension liability.

The cost of generating funds is not disclosed in the accounts. However the charity has estimated that 14% of staff time is taken up with generating funds as shown in the table below.

| Year end at                                | 2014/15<br>Audited<br>Accounts<br>13 months - 30 April<br>£ | 2015/16<br>Draft Accounts<br>11 months-31 March<br>£ | 2016/17<br>Current Year<br>Forecast<br>Year to 31 March<br>£ |
|--|---|--|--|
| <b>Income and Expenditure</b>              |   |  |  |
| Income                                     | 976,660   | 1,120,234  | 925,793  |
| Expenditure                                | 1,000,207   | 815,966  | 879,960  |
| Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)     | (8,388)   | 139,414  | 12,840   |
| Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)       | (15,159)  | 164,854  | 32,993   |
| Total Surplus / (Deficit)                  | (23,547)  | 304,268  | 45,833   |
| Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover     | (2.4%)  | 27.2%  | 5.0%   |
| Cost of Generating funds (% of income)     | 140,029(14%)  | 114,235(10%)   | 123,194 (13%)  |
| <b>Free unrestricted reserves</b>          |   |  |  |
| Unrestricted free reserves at Year End     | 98,952  | 72,533   | 85,373   |
| How many months' worth of expenditure      | 1.19  | 1.07   | 1.16   |
| Reserves Policy target -3 months of income | 225,000   | 203,991  | 219,990  |
| How many months' worth of expenditure      | 2.7   | 3  | 3  |
| Free reserves over/(under) target          | (126,048)   | (131,458)  | (134,617)  |