

**MEETING: 11/05/2017**

**Ref: 13764**

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Making London Safer**

**Her Centre Limited**

**Adv: Shegufta Rahman**

**Base: Greenwich**

**Amount requested: £173,817**

**Benefit: Greenwich**

**Amount recommended: £173,800**

**The Charity**

Her Centre (HC) was registered in 1998 as a charity working to support women who live, work or study in Greenwich with free and confidential advocacy, counselling, outreach, advice and training. These services are delivered in areas of: domestic abuse and violence, rape and sexual abuse, young women's relationship abuse, legal issues, health, language skills, immigration and emergency housing (related to domestic violence).

**The Application**

HC is requesting funding for a Follow Up Support Worker who will build on the charity's crisis services by offering the survivors of domestic and sexual violence support in overcoming challenges such as mental health, long term illness or disability, identify as LGBT or have limited English and limited local knowledge. The project will also provide 12 paid work placements and access to NVQ Training up to Level 3 via Greenwich Local Labour and Business (GLLAB). The project will also deliver more related training courses such as parenting, confidence building, basic DIY, and preparing for work.

**The Recommendation**

HC have a demonstrable track record as the only women-led advocacy service in Greenwich providing a one-stop-shop for information related to domestic and sexual violence. You are asked to fund the total cost of this project, which includes one FTE post and other associated project costs.

***£173,800 over three years (£57,500, £57,800, £58,500) for the Follow Up Support project, including one FTE Follow Up Support Worker.***

**Funding History**

Meeting Date	Decision
28/04/2011	£98,200 over three years (£32,100; £32,700; £33,400) for the salary and running costs of a project bringing women together from different communities, building their confidence and encouraging them to become active citizens.

**Background and detail of proposal**

Police data from 2014/15 shows the number of local domestic and sexual violence cases has been increasing. The needs and characteristics of Greenwich has driven HC's continuous development of work with BAME communities, in line with this growing population in the borough (47.7%) and over 90 languages spoken. As the provider of the Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) service in Greenwich for over five years, HC has engaged nearly 4,000 women and girls, providing legal advice, safety planning, counselling support and signposting. The specialist services meet the needs of all women and girls including those who

identify as BAME, LBT and having a disability. HC has identified that for many women, crisis work alone, even with follow up counselling, is not enough. Support is required to help women move away from abuse for good and feel confident to maintain their independence. This project will help women get back into work through NVQ training, support into further education and through six month paid work placements, as well as training and interview support. The project will also help with long term housing, basic benefits, and supporting links to immigration specialists where needed. HC will work in partnership with GLLAB to place women on 12 six month paid placements each year, which in the pilot has proven a 74% chance of leading to more long term employment. GLLAB will contribute 50% of the costs for each placement.

Impact data from the charity's existing services show 85% of women feel safe from hard, in average there is a 34% increase each year of women reporting feeling less isolated as a result of HC interventions, and 97% report their confidence and self-esteem has improved. This project will add to the existing holistic model which offers both crisis and ongoing counselling support to best empower women who have experienced abuse. It will further help women to move forward and improve their family's circumstances and life options.

### Financial Information

HC have maintained a consistent level of income and expenditure over the years. The significant increase in unrestricted expenditure in 2016/17 is due to the organisation's partnership with Little Fish for work it delivers in Bexley. Little Fish is the lead agency for this work and HC are paid by them as a sub-contractor and this income is treated as unrestricted. Cost of raising funds is very low as this is based on the cost of bid writers for the larger funding applications. The reserves position is below target, however the organisation has demonstrated its ability to secure additional funding, make savings and its tight fiscal management over the years. Two members of staff are on time limited contracts until the charity can confirm the deficit in 2017/18 will be addressed, to avoid further erosion of reserves.

Year end as at 31 March	FY 2015-16 Examined Accounts £	FY 2016-17 Examined Accounts £	FY 2017-18 Forecast £
<b>Income &amp; expenditure:</b>			
Income	563,560	504,843	515,513
- % of Income confirmed	n/a	n/a	98%
Expenditure	490,636	498,116	526,077
Total surplus/(deficit)	72,924	6,727	(10,564)
<b>Cost of Raising Funds</b>			
Cost of Raising Funds	4,560	3,120	3,000
- % of income	0.8%	0.6%	0.6%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	6,373	59,545	59,525
<b>Free unrestricted reserves:</b>			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	64,408	63,282	52,718
No of months of operating expenditure	121.3	12.8	10.6
Reserves policy target	140,890	126,211	128,878
No of months of operating expenditure	265.3	25.4	26.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	(76,482)	(62,929)	(76,160)