

MEETING: 15/06/2017

Ref: 13968

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Improving London's Environment

Oasis Children's Venture

Adv: Kate Moralee

Amount requested: £135,435

Base: Lambeth

Benefit: Lambeth

Amount recommended: £105,000

The Charity

Oasis Children's Venture (OCV) runs facilities for children/young people and their families in Stockwell, a highly deprived part of the capital. It is 45 years old and is a grassroots organisation with many local people/residents involved as Management Committee members, staff and volunteers. Oasis is rebranding currently to become OasisPlay to better reflect its services and offer. It offers children and young people playful and educational activities that: are healthy and creative; improve health, fitness, aspirations and employability; raise local knowledge of and access to nature and promote social cohesion in a fragmented, poverty-stricken area.

The Application

City Bridge Trust is asked to support the delivery of a Green Prescription Programme including a dedicated playworker, community adviser and gardener to work with young people to: increase outdoor confidence and appreciation of the natural world, and improve skills, health and wellbeing through learning.

The Recommendation

The organisation has a long history and is well rooted in the local community. It involves local people in developing and managing the activities it develops and offers. This project has been developed and informed by the recommendations of an evaluation of a 4 year project funded by BIG Lottery as well as by focus groups with children and parents. Oasis Children's Venture is currently at second stage of the BIG Lottery Reaching Communities application process for a project which will complement this application. The amount for equipment has been reduced from £6,000 to £3,000 in year 1 and £1,500 in years 2&3, and publicity budget reduced from £1,000 to £500, hence the recommendation of:

£105,000 over 3 years (3x £35,000) towards a Green Prescription Programme for children and young people.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
17/03/2011	£118,000 over three years (£40,500; £39,500; and £38,000) for the salaries and associated costs of a Lead Inclusive Play and Youth Worker (20 hours per week) and an Inclusive Play and Youth Worker (15 hours per week) who will work to facilitate the accessibility of Oasis recreation sites to disabled children and young people.
03/12/2009	Application withdrawn

Background and detail of proposal

Oasis Children's Venture currently operates 6 days per week for local children, young people, families and residents. They have approximately 96 volunteers, most of them local people who benefit from the services offered. It is based in Stockwell,

one of the most densely populated wards in the country and the 22nd most deprived ward in the country (2015 IMD) with a complex social and ethnic mix, large African, Portuguese and Caribbean communities. The site operates six days a week and has a contract with Lambeth BC to deliver play services. OCV works in partnership with many local organisations representing youth provision, childcare and environmental awareness.

One of its projects "Next to Nature" has been supported by BIG Lottery for the last 4 years, until June 2017. It provides a managed wild space area and supervised learning opportunity. The area has a greenhouse, 13 raised allotment beds, fruit bushes and herbs. Produce from the garden is cooked on an open fire pit, cob oven or using the small classroom facility. An evaluation of the project provided evidence of its impact: children who use the garden are more active, spend more time outdoors and have improved physical and mental health, learn new skills and try new things improving confidence and have improved teamwork, social and communication skills. It also provides recommendations for improvement which have informed this proposal.

Oasis Children's Venture has also consulted with local parents to identify any barriers preventing involvement, particularly with the stay and play for under 5's. This project aims to continue to run after school session for local 6 to 12 years olds and increase morning nursery sessions with under 5's and their parents/carers.

Financial Information

Oasis Children's Venture is steadily increasing its free unrestricted reserves in line with its reserves policy and has diverse income streams.

Year end as at 31st March	FY 15/16 Examined Accounts £	FY 16/17 Draft Accounts £	FY 17/18 Forecast £
Income & expenditure:			
Income	701,146	731,329	674,002
- % of Income confirmed at 25.5.17	n/a	n/a	84%
Expenditure	(687,359)	(682,198)	(631,754)
Total surplus/(deficit)	13,787	49,131	42,248
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	20,661	(41,840)	(36,168)
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	(6,874)	90,971	78,416
	13,787	49,131	42,248
Cost of Raising Funds	5,620	31,116	32,616
- % of income	0.8%	4.3%	4.8%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	87,170	117,000	116,000
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	40,138	89,269	131,517
No of months of operating expenditure	5.5	9.2	13.6
Reserves policy target	123,000	123,000	123,000
No of months of operating expenditure	16.9	12.6	12.7
Free reserves over/(under) target	(82,862)	(33,731)	8,517