

MEETING: 27/07/2017

Ref: 13866

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Older Londoners

Eritrean Community in the UK

Adv: Sandra Davidson

Amount requested: £74,028

Base: Islington

Benefit: Islington

Amount recommended: £70,500

The Charity

Since its inception in 1987, the Eritrean Community in the UK (ECUK) has been supporting the most excluded and disadvantaged groups of the Eritrean community to improve quality of life and encourage social engagement. Its activities include generalist advice and information; youth engagement and children's educational classes. The charity also runs weekly activities for its ageing members to improve health and well-being. By offering quality marked assured advice, overseeing a mother tongue supplementary school, and running health initiative, ECUK have been able to provide valuable services to the Eritrean community.

The Application

ECUK is seeking a grant over three years to develop its work with older people targeting those 75+. The proposed "Healthy Solutions" project will build and expand on the current work with older members facilitating access to support and information, and encouraging participation in cultural and social activities. The request is to cover the salary of a part-time Volunteer and Health Development Officer and associated running costs.

The Recommendation

ECUK is a trusted and well regarded charity with a proven track record of local delivery. It is proactive locally and works in collaboration with the local authority and other Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations. This project has been developed following a survey carried out in 2015/16 with a grant secured from Lloyds Bank Foundation. The report highlighted the need to provide regular activities for older people to increase confidence and social engagement. The budget headings appeared to be on the high side and the recommendation reflects a sum consistent with the Trust's funding practice. Funding is advised as follows:

£70,500 over three years (£25,000; £22,500; £23,000) for the salary of a part-time (17.5 hr/p/w) Volunteer and Health Development Officer (VHDO) and towards associated projects costs working with people aged 75+.

Funding History

| Meeting Date | Decision |
|--------------|---|
| 18/07/2012 | Declined - The applicant organisation is a generalist community support agency and it is not evident from the information provided that they would have the specialist knowledge and experience to deliver this work. |

Background and detail of proposal

Many older people from the Eritrean community are isolated as a result of English language limitations and wider cultural norms. ECUK is seeking to provide a range of activities led by the VHDO, supported by a pool of volunteers, to engage older people over 75. This project will be targeted at elders with health, wellbeing and

wider social needs to increase information, advice and guidance opportunities and encourage social engagement resulting in a better quality of life. Over three years, older Eritreans will be recruited as volunteers. Volunteers will be trained by the VHDO postholder to befriend and support isolated members of the community to access a wide range of agencies and services. In addition, regular bi-monthly awareness raising workshops and events with a focus on healthy eating, financial management and community engagement will be offered. The governance structure, including a steering group, will ensure members' voices are heard. Having a dedicated service, particularly for those over 75, will undoubtedly help improve quality of life for members and their general physical and psychological health.

Your officer received an email from the Council's Voluntary and Community Sector Development Officer offering her full support of their application and providing a positive review of ECUK's work. The charity is also supported by the Trust for London for its advice work.

Financial Information

ECUK has diversified its funding streams over the last couple of years to reduce reliance on the local authority. The cost of fundraising is not disclosed in the accounts. The Charity advises that it will disclose the figure in future accounts.

| Year end as at 31 March | 2016 Examined Accounts £ | 2017 Forecast £ | 2018 Budget £ |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Income & expenditure: | | | |
| Income | 63,082 | 57,690 | 92,942 |
| - % of Income confirmed as at 11/05/17 | n/a | | 53% |
| Expenditure | (47,727) | (56,313) | (92,539) |
| Total surplus/(deficit) | 15,355 | 1,377 | 403 |
| Split between: | | | |
| - Restricted surplus/(deficit) | 6,900 | (563) | (1,917) |
| - Unrestricted surplus/(deficit) | 8,455 | 1,940 | 2,320 |
| | 15,355 | 1,377 | 403 |
| Cost of Raising Funds | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - % of income | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds) | 11,565 | 1,940 | 2,320 |
| Free unrestricted reserves: | | | |
| Free unrestricted reserves held at year end | 14,970 | 16,347 | 16,750 |
| No of months of operating expenditure | 15.5 | 101.1 | 86.6 |
| Reserves policy target | 23,863 | 28,156 | 46,269 |
| No of months of operating expenditure | 24.8 | 174.2 | 239.3 |
| Free reserves over/(under) target | (8,893) | (11,809) | (29,519) |