

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Older Londoners

Carers Support (Bexley)

Adv: Jack Joslin

Base: Bexley

Amount requested: £166,849

Benefit: Bexley

Amount recommended: £166,900

The Charity

Carers Support Bexley (CSB) was established as a project of Bexley Voluntary Service Council in 1994 and became a registered charity in 1999. CSB is committed to tackling the isolation and loneliness that many carers feel. The charity works with carers young and old and their families, providing a range of respite, information and support services. They provide a commissioned respite-at-home service in both the London Borough of Bexley and the Royal Borough of Greenwich. Alongside these services the charity provides information and advice to carers and those they care for around housing, benefits and debt. They provide advocacy services where needed and run a variety of groups that provide emotional and peer support for carers and those they care for.

The Application

CSB are looking for your support to expand their Carers Breaks service that will specifically provide breaks to carers aged 65 and over across Bexley and Greenwich. The project will enable carers who have no other respite to take a break so that they can recharge their batteries and get the opportunity to have some time for themselves. CSB are looking for your support to recruit three additional full time volunteers to specifically expand their work to target carers aged 65 and over. The service uses young volunteers aged 18 to 25 who are recruited through Volunteering Matters for a one year commitment. Volunteers, usually from overseas, are provided with accommodation, subsistence, travel expenses, training and support for the duration of their stay. Volunteers that are recruited bring youth, enthusiasm, commitment and cultural diversity into the lives of the people that are house-bound and often isolated.

The Carers that they plan to support through this project would be those who do not qualify for support from the local authority but who are still in great need of respite. Each volunteer would work with up to 10 families at any one time offering one full day break per family every two weeks. Volunteers can also provide up to two weeks of live-in care when required to enable for carers to take a substantial break or holiday. This project will have significant outcomes for the carers being offered respite but also provide support for the persons being cared for.

The Recommendation

CSB are offering an innovative approach through their well-established carers breaks service by providing full-time volunteering respite care service to carers and those they care for across the London Boroughs of Bexley and Greenwich. Your funding is sought to allow for the Charity to target carers over 65 who are in need of respite from those they care for but who do not meet the threshold for support from the local authority. This project is closely aligned with your Older Londoners

programme outcomes as it will work with carers aged 65 and over to be able to access support, advice and respite. Funding is recommended as follows:

£166,900 over three years (£55,200; £55,600; £56,100) to support the cost of the Service Manager (24hpw), Volunteer accommodation, expenses and training for three volunteers and associated running costs of the carers breaks service.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
13/03/2014	£11,500 for a third and final year towards the salary of an advice worker (10hrs/week) and related costs for an advice and advocacy service for people with disabilities and their carers considering a more independent life through a personal budget.
12/01/2012	£23,000 over two years (2 x £11,500) towards an advice and advocacy service for carers and their dependents considering a more independent life through individual budgets.

Background and detail of proposal

In the 2011, 23,522 people in Bexley and 22,014 people in Greenwich stated that they provide unpaid care. Many of these provide care up to 20 to 50 hours a week or more with a high percentage being older carers over the age of 65. Older carers have their own health problems as well as needing to look after a partner or very elderly parent who depends on them. Although many carers qualify for support and benefits from the local authority they often do not qualify for any support to access respite services. The local authority can provide respite care only for carers that meet their specific requirements and with local budgets shrinking this is becoming more acute. CSB is looking for your support to be able to offer respite services to older carers who are not eligible for support but still in great need. This work will not be replacing any statutory duty or topping up an under-funded contract and will be managed differently from the commissioned service provided on behalf of Bexley and Greenwich council.

The three volunteers recruited to deliver this work will be sourced by Volunteer Matters who provide a matching service. Volunteers that are recruited will often be from overseas and offered the opportunity to live in London and commit to caring responsibilities for a one year period. All the volunteers are young people between 18 and 25 and will be offered accommodation that the Charity rents, travel expenses and a weekly allowance. In return they will commit to working with 10 families at any one time, working with around 25 families each year. The volunteers will offer full day breaks for older carers allowing them the opportunity to carry out tasks that most of us take for granted like going to the dentist or doctor. Longer breaks of up to two weeks will be offered to older carers with the volunteer living in with the person being cared for. This project will provide significant outcomes for the carers who can take holidays and take a break from their responsibilities. The persons being cared for will also benefit as they will have a young, enthusiastic volunteer, usually from a different background to engage with. The service is CQC accredited and a recent external evaluation of the work concluded the project to be an innovative way of delivering respite service for carers and the people they care for.

Financial Information

CSB receives funding from both Greenwich and Bexley to deliver Carers services. The Bexley grant goes to March 2018 and Greenwich to March 2019. The charity has received verbal assurance that this will continue for a further three years but to expect cuts in line with local authority budgets. The charity holds fairly high free reserves. When questioned about this at assessment by your officer the charity stated that they hold six months' worth of operating expenditure in a designated reserve while holding additional money in an employer's liability fund in the event of the organisation winding up. They are prudently planning for cuts to their funding from the local authority and other long standing funders and do not wish for services to need to suffer because of this. At assessment it was clear that the board continually review the level of reserves and that they have made reasonable designations of their funds for future changes to funding.

Year end as at 31 March	2016	2017	2018
	Examined Accounts	Draft	Budget
	£	£	£
Income & expenditure:			
Income	420,191	453,344	345,009
- % of Income confirmed as at 16/08/2017	n/a	n/a	98%
Expenditure	(382,551)	(385,122)	(390,291)
Total surplus/(deficit)	37,640	68,222	(45,282)
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	(7,978)	19,212	0
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	45,618	49,010	(45,282)
	37,640	68,222	(45,282)
Cost of Raising Funds	0	4,420	4,420
- % of income	0.0%	1.0%	1.3%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	318,094	308,218	306,680
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	304,520	353,530	308,248
No of months of operating expenditure	11.5	13.8	12.1
Reserves policy target	159,047	154,109	153,340
No of months of operating expenditure	6.0	6.0	6.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	145,473	199,421	154,908