

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Reducing Poverty**Homeless Action In Barnet Limited****Adv: Tim Wilson****Amount requested: £90,000****Base: Barnet****Benefit: Barnet****Amount recommended: £90,000****The Applicant**

Established in 1997, Homeless Action in Barnet Limited (HAB) is a charity working with clients who are either homeless or facing homelessness. HAB provides a drop-in centre during the working week, assistance to clients in shared accommodation (which it delivers in partnership with Barnet Homes, a housing association) as well as support services to help people develop or maintain their ability to live independently.

The Application

HAB's application to City Bridge Trust is concerned with housing advice. Originally for two part-time Resettlement Officers, project management and support costs, following assessment, HAB has revised its request to one full-time Resettlement Officer. The post-holder will address the often-complex reasons that lie behind homelessness, working with clients to move them towards safe and stable tenancy. The Resettlement Officer will identify and build relationships with private landlords, and help clients liaise with the borough's rent deposit scheme. The Officer will also recruit and train a group of volunteers to provide additional support, particularly in the development of the skills needed to make a success of independent living. HAB expects to house 40 clients each year through this scheme.

The Recommendation

The charity ran a resettlement service for day-care centre clients in the early 2000s. In recent years, HAB's work has been largely in-centre. HAB notes the local authority's funding focus has now moved towards the prevention of homelessness, primarily with families in vulnerable accommodation, resulting in limited resettlement activity in the borough. The funding requested from City Bridge Trust does not pick up statutory funding directly, but rather helps HAB expand its current offer and help clients make a positive transition towards independent life. The application included details of applications to other Foundations which were only partly successful. As a result, HAB has revised plans and wishes to recruit one full-time Resettlement Officer rather than two part-time staff. The level of funding requested from the Trust and the expected project outputs remain the same. Funding is advised as follows:

£90,000 over three years (3 x £30,000) towards the salary, support and management costs of a full-time Resettlement Officer at Homeless Action in Barnet Limited.

Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
21/05/1998	£26,000 over two years towards a worker providing services to homeless people with physical disabilities and mental health problems.

Background and detail of proposal

HAB's clients typically self-refer or are referred by Barnet Homes. A new client receives refreshments, and some time with HAB staff to complete a basic assessment form to establish the connection with the borough. For Barnet-based clients, HAB draws up support plans, and monitors progress against an 'outcomes star' (a tool for assessing difference made over time across a range of criteria). City Bridge Trust funding will cover a new post, with the Resettlement Officer working from the centre out into the community, preparing clients with the logistics and life skills needed to take on tenancy, and then helping them engage with a wider network of services to prevent a relapse to further homelessness in the future.

Financial Information

HAB experienced a 25% reduction in Income between 2015-16 and 2016-17 because of unexpected in-year cuts in statutory contracts. The charity is working to replace this funding (and redesign services) with funding from Trusts and Foundations as well as local fundraising. HAB has reduced expenditure levels through redundancies, and the forecast for 2017-18 is prepared cautiously, with only the income HAB has secured, or is very confident of securing, being included. It hopes to achieve a better year end than the forecast below suggests.

Year end as at 31 March	2016 Examined Accounts £	2017 Draft Accounts £	2018 Forecast £
Income & expenditure:			
Income	437,972	319,976	346,552
- % of Income confirmed at 1st Nov '17	n/a	100%	76%
Expenditure	(436,631)	(344,951)	(350,470)
Total surplus/(deficit)	1,341	(24,975)	(3,918)
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	0	0	0
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	1,341	(24,975)	(3,918)
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Cost of Raising Funds	24,308	15,375	10,000
- % of income	5.6%	4.8%	2.9%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	436,631	344,951	350,470
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	104,106	79,131	75,213
No of months of operating expenditure	2.9	2.8	2.6
Reserves policy target	109,158	86,238	87,618
No of months of operating expenditure	3.0	3.0	3.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	(5,052)	(7,107)	(12,405)