

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
City Bridge Trust	6 <sup>th</sup> July 2018
<b>Subject:</b> Supporting organisations led by disabled people – a joint initiative with Trust for London (Reference: 14833)	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Chief Grants Officer & Director of City Bridge Trust (CGO)	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Ciaran Rafferty, Principal Grants Officer	

### Summary

This report requests funds to support an initiative – *Strengthening Voices, Realising Rights* - to be led by Trust for London which aims to increase access to legal advice and support by disabled Londoners, provided by organisations led by disabled people themselves.

### Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Agree a grant of £300,000 over three years to Trust for London to establish a joint fund to support the extension and sustainability of Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations (DDPOs) in providing access to advice, support and voice for disabled Londoners.

### Main Report

#### Background

1. "Nothing about us without us" is a slogan used to communicate the idea that no policy should be decided nor service delivered by any representative without the direct participation of those affected by that policy or service. The term became particularly prominent in disability activism in the 1990s and is a concept still valid today.
2. In the disability movement the principle is reflected in the form of Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations (DDPOs) – organisations where the majority of the leadership comprises deaf or disabled people. Such organisations, it is argued, know what's best for the people they serve.

## **Current Position**

3. Mounting evidence shows that disabled Londoners are experiencing rising levels of poverty and inequality. DDPOs play a vital role in supporting them in asserting their legal rights, in challenging discrimination, and in promoting inclusion in the wider community.
4. However, despite being suitable mechanisms for voice and action, DDPOs are few and far between and those that do exist are facing serious funding and sustainability challenges. Nine London boroughs have no pan-impairment DDPOs providing social welfare law advice; seven boroughs have no DDPO at all; and four existing DDPOs are struggling to remain viable.
5. Over the past year Trust for London has commissioned research to determine the current situation regarding access to justice for disabled Londoners and has made a considerable effort to inform and engage other funders on this subject, with the aim of creating a joined-up approach to the issue and a pooled fund to support more and stronger DDPOs in the capital.
6. TFL, in conjunction with London Funders, has coordinated several meetings of funders interested in this subject. Whilst few are able to pledge funds to a joint pool some, such as the Big Lottery, would consider aligning some of their funding with particular aspects of the Initiative (eg in supporting groups' other work). The proposed initiative aims to deliver a framework which enables diverse stakeholders with different agendas to participate at a level and in a manner that suits their strengths and accommodates their operational limitations.

## **Options**

7. Trust for London is seeking other funders' support to implement two elements in this *Strengthening Voices, Realising Rights* initiative:
  - a) a funders' platform to host a network of independent funders with the strategic goal of supporting peer-led initiatives to advance equality and improve the quality of life for disabled Londoners; and
  - b) a pooled fund to provide grants to individual organisations, capacity-building programmes, and a learning component.

## **Proposals**

### Funders' Platform

8. The detail and costs of the Funders' Platform are yet to be determined, hence they are not included in Table 1 below, though it is hoped that London Funders may be able to provide the secretariat for this given their success with the similar platforms they developed for the Grenfell funds.

### Pooled Fund

9. The Pooled Fund will offer at least 5 x 3-year grants of c.£60,000 per year to existing DDPOs to increase their capacity to offer advisory services to disabled

residents of boroughs with little or no current DDPO. The services will aim to ensure that residents understand and exercise their rights, access services and entitlements, have a voice and can challenge discrimination.

10. Funds will also be available to provide organisational capacity building to increase their effectiveness and impact (eg by increasing their advice-giving competences and obtaining Advice Quality Standard accreditation; for quality training to support self- and peer-advocacy development; and for resources and training to collate casework and to better champion the needs, views and interest of disabled people).
11. The third component of the Pooled Fund will be to engage a learning partner to carry out a formative evaluation to generate ongoing knowledge into how the funded projects are operating and to gain timely information to refine the initiative in a systematic way and based on evidence.

#### Co-production in decision making

12. It is proposed that a Grants Advisory Panel be established to allocate the funds and one which encompasses – in addition to representation from the funding bodies – advisors with lived experience of disability, to uphold the spirit of “nothing about us without us”. The key tasks of the Panel would be to:
  - Refine the grant-making guidelines prior to launch
  - Assist in the selection of a learning partner
  - Undertake the shortlisting of applications (which would then, following assessment, go to the Trust for London trustees for final decision)
  - Support the sharing of learning from the initiative with the wider UK grant making community to promote inclusive grant-making practices.
13. Trust for London would host the initiative and administer the funds, therefore if you agree the recommendation to contribute then the grant would be payable to them. You have, of course, a track record with this type of arrangement and a long collaborative history with Trust for London – going back to the *Fear & Fashion* initiative begun in 2006 to the current partnership on the *Moving on Up* and the *Citizenship and Integration* projects. TFL would also coordinate all the processes and stakeholders, including the recruitment and induction of advisors.

#### **Implications**

14. TFL has advised that a pooled fund of approximately £1.5m would be needed to launch the grants initiative. Its trustees have already agreed £500,000 and are due to consider an additional contribution of £250,000 at their meeting in June. In addition, an application for one of the budget components of the initiative (that of “voice”) for £225,000 over three years is in their pipeline. If agreed, this component will be funded from TFL's main grant programme, bringing their likely total commitment to £1m. Table 1 below illustrates the components and costings:

Table 1: Estimate of costs

No. of Grants	Description	Annual cost	Cost for 3 years	Funds already committed
5	Individual DDPOs to provide services in boroughs of need	£300,000	£900,000	
1	Pan-London Casework support	£40,000	£120,000	
1	Pan-London advice service development coordination	£60,000	£180,000	
1	Pan-London strengthening voice, campaigning & influence	£75,000	£225,000	(£225,000) Trust for London
	Cost of monitoring, evaluation & learning		£45,000	
	Co-production costs		£12,500	
	Administration & events	£12,500	£37,500	
	<b>Total</b>		<b>£1,520,000</b>	<b>(£225,000)</b>
	Balance required		£1,295,000	

15. If the anticipated total of £1m is agreed by Trust for London (and this will be known by the time of your Committee on 6<sup>th</sup> July) this will leave a shortfall of c.£295,000 which is equivalent to the sum you are being advised to contribute.

16. It should be noted that Trust for London submitted two funding scenarios – the above as shown in Table 1 and another where there were 6 or 7 DDPO services funded (as opposed to 5). It is advised that you consider the above costings at this stage and, if it should transpire in the future that more DDPO services should be supported, then other funders can be encouraged to join the collaboration or, if that fails, a further report can be brought to your Committee.

### Financial information

17. Your Committee is currently co-funding the *Moving on Up* initiative with Trust for London – with a contribution of £300,000 over 2.5 years agreed in March 2018. You are also co-funding the *Citizenship and Integration* initiative for which £100,000 over 15 months was agreed in September 2017.

18. Audited accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016 show a strong balance sheet with total group funds of £319,030,880. After expenditure, the charity incurred a net operating loss of £6,675,039 which, after net gains and losses on investments and revaluation of the Trust's fixed assets, generated a surplus of £21,148,523 as shown below.

19. It is Trust for London's policy not to maintain any unrestricted reserves as ongoing working capital is available from the endowment under the total return policy adopted. A small proportion of the grant budget is permitted to be carried over the year end, if unspent. The 2018 budget does not show gains on investments as these are not predicted in advance. However, Trustees are confident enough in the investment income to allow for the level of expenditure on grants as forecast.

Year end as at 31 December	2016	2017	2018
	Audited Accounts	Draft	Forecast
	£	£	£
<b>Income &amp; expenditure:</b>			
Income	8 483 398	8,104,024	9 105,062
Expenditure	(15 158 437)	(16 094 386)	(16 277 000)
Surplus/(deficit)	<b>(6,675,039)</b>	<b>(7,990,362)</b>	<b>(7,171,938)</b>
Net gains	27 823 562	21,255,282	n/a
<b>Total surplus/deficit</b>	<b>21,148,523</b>	<b>13,264,920</b>	<b>(7,171,938)</b>
Net assets held	319,030,880	45,168,008	n/a

## Conclusion

20. You have a significant history of supporting advice services through your Investing in Londoners programmes and this will continue with Bridging Divides. However, for good reason, your priority is to support only those organisations which are suitably qualified and experienced in this area as the quality and accuracy of advice is so important. This initiative is different from your standard programmes in that it recognises the particular value of organisations led by disabled people being equipped as advice providers and as vehicles for voice and representation for this community.

## Appendices

None

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