

Main Grants 2017-18 report

Name of organisation	Contact a Family
Date of meeting	5 September 2016
Names and positions of attendees	Sarah Grand, Manager, Contact a Family Rosie Noble, London Projects Manager, Contact a Family Petra Marshall, Community Resources Manager LBL

Group Name:	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
Total funding received 2015-16	£53,640	N/A	£17,880	£17,880	£17,880					
Total funding to be received 2016-17	£71,520	£17,880	£17,880	£17,880						
Outcomes										
Support										
Support for families with disabled children										
Reduced isolation/social exclusion of parents of disabled children and young people										
Parents reporting increased confidence and more informed to make better choices										
Parents of disabled children and young people report improved quality of life and improvement to their personal circumstances										
Parents from excluded communities will overcome barriers to accessing appropriate support										
Outputs:	2015-16 Target	2015-16 Q2	2015-16 Q3	2015-16 Q4	2015-16 Total	% Achieved	2016-17 Target	2016-17 Q1	2016-17 Q2	% Achieved TD
1. Family Worker (April 2016-Mar 2017) 480 families to be supported through face to face	360	162	160	175	497	138%	480	70		58%

<p>advice and information workshops (average 40 families per month). 80% will be BME and approx. 10% will have English as a second language. (360 in 2015/16 9 month period).</p> <p>Of the 480 families: 1a. 80% of parents report feeling less isolated as a result of participating in a workshop 1b. 90% of parents report feeling more informed about how to get the support they need after attending a workshop</p>										
<p>2. 120 new referrals are received from partner organisations and services, enabling us to reach new families (approx. 10 per month). (90 in 2015/16 9 month period).</p>	90	10	46	25	81	90%	120	26		87%
<p>3. 4 workshops are delivered for 40 parents (10 parents per workshop). (3 workshops in 2015/16 9 month period).</p>	3	1	2	2	5	167%	4	2		200%
<p>4. 240 telephone enquiries are answered, providing one-to-one information and advice to parents with disabled children (average 20 per month). (180 in 2015/16 9 month period).</p>	180	43	50	60	153	85%	240	55		92%

5. Provide information and advice at a minimum of 8 school events, e.g. parent evenings, reaching 48 parents (average 6 parents per visit). (7 in 2015/16 9 month period).	7	2	4	0	6	86%	8	1	100%
6. Organise 8 outreach activities to engage harder-to-reach and more vulnerable families, reaching 40 families. (6 in 2015/16 9 month period).	6	2	4	3	9	150%	8	3	150%
7. Quarterly newsletters will be sent to 850 families and the updating of the Contact a Family website will take place	3	1	1	1	3	100%	4	1	100%
8. Continue to engage in strategic representation across the borough of Lewisham	Meetings	10 meeting	8 meeting	6 meeting		YES	Meetings	5 meeting	YES
9. Continue to support the development and sustainability of the now independent Lewisham Parent Carers Forum	Ongoing support	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing		YES	Ongoing support	Ongoing	YES
10. Work with 10 agencies in a collaborative partnership	10	5	10	3	18	180%	10	3	120%

11. To attend at least 3 Lewisham Parent Carers Forum events/meetings	3	2	3	2	7	233%	3	4		533%
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1. Remove funding from under-performing groups/those performing least well

Have you achieved at least 90% of the agreed reporting outputs and outcomes in all quarters since the start of the programme?

2015/16: Contact a Family have achieved 90% or above on 9 out of 11 outputs; with most exceeding target significantly. Of the two outputs that did not reach target they were 85% and 86%, due primarily to staffing changes within the organisation (they had a new manager start in February 2016). Contact a Family have not been collecting feedback specifically for output 1a and 1b; but have been asked to do this for 2016/17 onwards.

2016/17: In Quarter 1 Contact a Family achieved 90% or above on 9 out of 11 outputs. The two that did not reach target were due to illness (a specific staff member was not at work due to ill health for 3.5 weeks); however the organisation is confident they will make up the numbers during the course of the year. Output 5 target is 8 but is unevenly spread across the four quarters due to school term times, and the delivery of 1 school event by the end of quarter 1 is on track for the year as a whole.

Have you achieved all of the wider outcomes outlined in the initial grant application?

Contact a Family are achieving all of the wider outcomes; for example delivering services and support to families with disabled children that enable increased confidence and reduces isolation. The organisation encourage and facilitate parents supporting other parents, thereby increasing the self-sustainability of what they deliver. Parents can also join the steering group in order to assist steering the organisation. Currently there are 6 parent carers on the steering group; and their support equates to over 100 hours a year.

Contact a Family provide the following support and opportunities, amongst others, for parents and carers which meet the outcomes:

- Drop in sessions enable parents / carers to get on the spot advice
- Targeted workshops enable parents / carers to raise issues, ask questions and get detailed information on specific issues
- Peer support opportunities during informal coffee mornings enable friendships, sharing stories, and supporting one another
- Family outings and trips offer developmental opportunities to children and young people and give peer support
- Newsletters and e-bulletins inform parents / carers about local issues and matters related to children with SEND
- Membership of the steering group supports parents / carers to shape the work of the office

If no to either of the above:

- what are the mitigating factors?
- what plans are in place for improving performance?
- what progress has been made against actions agreed with your Development Officer?

See above.

What local support/evidence of need can you identify for the work you are undertaking?

There is an increasing need for Contact a Family support e.g. changes in benefits, housing, cuts to services; children with additional needs living longer (medical advances); and an increase in diagnosed autism; as well as local issues such as school places. Since 2008 the number of families contacting the organisation has grown considerably, from approximately 300 to 950 currently. Contact a Family have received more requests from schools and other agencies to give regular sessions to parents / carers to share information, give advice and guidance on the work of the organisation and other support in the borough.

The type of support needed by a family changes as their circumstances change and the children grow up. These relate to education, transport, work experience/employment, housing, debt and money matters, concerns around siblings, PIP/DLAs, specialist health care issues and understanding diagnosis.

The use of feedback forms and informal feedback allows the organisation to respond appropriately. For example they recently changed the venue for their informal drop in sessions to coffee shops following feedback from attendees. These are now better attended, the attendees feel valued and they can be held in different parts of the borough.

2. Negotiate reductions and seek alternative funding streams

Are there any proposals that you can put forward that will deliver significant saving against current expenditure? This can include capital investment to change your delivery/business model.

Contact a Family Lewisham sit as part of a much larger national organisation which does limit the autonomy they have to make changes. A reduction in grant funding in 2015 required the organisation to make savings previously and there is little scope for making further significant savings.

What alternative funding streams are you already pursuing?

Local fundraising takes place; for example they recently received funding from the Lewisham hospital choir for family trips and activities.

The work funded by Lewisham Council enabled the organisation to evidence the need for their work and resulted in securing a 4 year grant from the Big Lottery to help with income maximisation and transition issues (£280,000). They are also in receipt of a grant from the Children with Disabilities Council to support work with EHC plans.

The organisation state that it is difficult to get funding as often funders believe the work they do is statutory and should be funded by the local authority.

The national Head Office provide added value through support such as a national helpline, publications, specialist advice, government advocacy and national campaigns, fundraising, quality assurance (PQASSO), IT, policies and procedures, staff development and a business plan.

The introduction of membership fees was explored at the national board level but a decision was taken not to introduce it.

Are there any other funding streams that you can identify that the council can support you to access?

None identified at this stage but Contact a Family will let council officers know if support is required in the future.

3. Work with groups to consider mergers or asset sharing

Are there any organisations doing similar work to you in the borough who you may consider sharing resources or merging with? Who have you considered/approached?

Contact a Family are resident in Leemore community hub and are looking forward to developing further the partnership with other advice agencies including CAB and Talking newspaper when they move in.

The organisation recently supported the Parent Carers Forum to become an independent body; and the two organisations share some costs relating to specific activities and events.

The organisation has very small overheads and small number of staff; and is part of a larger national organisation; therefore there is little opportunity for further sharing of assets and a merger wouldn't be possible.

Are there other groups in the local area that you could share resources with even if they are delivering a different type of service? Again, who have you considered/approached?

The organisation is in discussion with Youth First (the mutualised youth service) about supporting and working with them.

What support might you need to move these suggestions forward?

N/A

4. Pro-rata reductions across all groups

What would a 25% cut in your grants look like in service delivery terms? What are the wider impacts?

A 25% cut would likely translate into 25% reduction in outputs. The organisation will look at different ways of delivering to minimise this impact; e.g. using more group activities than 1:1 in order to still reach the same numbers of people; however this will have the impact of potentially not being able to reach the most needed families (e.g. BME families, more isolated families).

Head office provide a lot of the back office functions for the organisation (as described above) meaning it is difficult to make savings here to off-set the impact on front line service delivery.

Have you modelled this cut and developed an action plan for its implementation?

The organisation has modelled three options for reducing staffing levels and other costs to deal with the proposed cut and are considering these currently. The three options are:

1. Reducing all costs by 25% (resulting in manager post reduced to 3.75 days and family worker to 15.75 days)
2. Keep family worker at 3 days per week, manager reduced by 25%, and reduce other costs
3. Keep manager full time and reduce family worker by 25%

Conclusion

Any other comments / areas discussed

Conclusion and recommendation

Contact a Family deliver a much needed service, and are delivering their outputs and wider outcomes (and where they are not there are good mitigating factors in place and plans to ensure delivery against 2016/17 targets). There is little scope for asset sharing or other funding opportunities, **therefore a pro-rata cut is recommended.**

Equalities groups disproportionately impacted by recommendations

Ethnicity:		Pregnancy / Maternity:	
Gender:		Marriage & Civil Partnerships:	
Age:	x	Sexual orientation:	
Disability:	x	Gender reassignment:	
Religion / Belief:			

Commentary and potential mitigations:

Contact a Family provides advice, information and support for families with disabled children. As such any pro-rata cut will have a disproportionate effect on the protected characteristics of age and disability. Officers will work with Contact a Family to agree new outputs for 2017/18 which seek to minimise the impact as much as possible.