

Main Grants 2017-18 report

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| Name of organisation | Lewisham Speaking Up |
| Date of meeting | 31 August 2016 |
| Names and positions of attendees | Will Davies, Advocacy Service Manager Lynne Laidlaw, Trustee Petra Marshall, Community Resources Manager LBL |

| Group Name: | Total | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Total funding received 2015-16 | £65,000 | N/A | £21,666 | £21,667 | £21,667 |
| Total funding to be received 2016-17 | £86,666 | £21,666 | £21,666 | £21,666 | |

| Outcomes | Support |
|-----------------|---|
| | 1. As a result of our advocacy activity, service and support, people with learning disabilities will gain access to services they need and are entitled to, with an increasing emphasis on voluntary support, working to improve quality of life plus social well-being of our beneficiaries. |
| | 2. People with learning disabilities will gain advocacy support to tackle exclusion, feel better connected and will have improved confidence when asserting rights and views within their own local communities. |
| | 3. People with learning disabilities with a diverse range of abilities, needs and backgrounds will have improved independence, choice, and control over lives that are safer with strong local advocacy support. |
| | 4. Lewisham Speaking Up, as an Independent Advocacy organisation, will strengthen its impact and influence on local policy and practice in the area it works for the benefit of people with learning disabilities |
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| 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. Provide a 1-2-1 advocacy service for up to 100 adults with learning disabilities in Lewisham, supported by professional and volunteer advocates. | 75 | 25 | 26 | 23 | 74 | 98.6% | 100 | 18 | | 72% |
| 2. To support 8 active volunteers as both 1-2-1 advocates and self advocacy group supporters. | 8 | 7 | 8 | 7 | Average 7.33 | 91.66% | 8 | 8 | | 100% |
| 3. Facilitate self advocacy activities such as Big Group and People's Parliament for 320 people with learning disabilities. | 240 | 77 | 90 | 119 | 286 | 119% | 320 | 68 | | 85% |
| 4. Support 6 self advocates who have learning disabilities as experts by experience for participation work as instructed by Lewisham. | 6 | 6 | 6 | 5 | Average 5.66 | 94.44% | 6 | 6 | | 100% |
| 5. Produce a quarterly newsletter. | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 66.66% | 4 | 0 | | 0% |

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|--|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|----|----|--|-------------|
| 6. Provide Self Advocacy Training for up to 40 people with learning disabilities. (10 per quarter) | 30 | 7 | 7 | 11 | 25 | 83% | 40 | 18 | | 180% |
| 7. Support four people with learning disabilities as Trustees, to maintain the organisation's user led ethos. | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 100% | 4 | 4 | | 100% |
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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?

In 2015/16 Lewisham Speaking Up (LSU) achieved over 90% in 5 out of their 7 outputs and exceeding the target in one output. They under achieved against output 5 – quarterly newsletter; only producing 2 out of the 3 required newsletters. This was due to the Director retiring who previously had responsibility for this, and the bedding in of new projects. These new projects will now provide content for forthcoming newsletters. They also underachieved against output 6, providing self-advocacy training for 25 rather than 30 people with learning disabilities. This was a new project, piloted in the first two quarters and as such was finding its feet. Quarter 4 saw an increase in take-up; partly fuelled by a collaboration with LESOCO which LSU hope to continue. It is anticipated that the shortfall of 5 beneficiaries will be achieved during 2016/17 on top of their target of 40 for the year; and indeed performance in the first quarter for 2016/17 for this output was 180%.

In 2016/17 LSU are against target for 4 out of their 7 targets; but are confident that they will catch up and deliver against the year's target by March 2017 (indeed 2 of the main outputs where they are slightly below target both exceeded 90% in 2015/16).

2016/17: in Q1 4 out of 7 outputs achieved over 90%, with one exceeding target. Output 1 is lower than expected at Q1 due to the reliance on volunteers for this part of the project, which makes it unpredictable. A drop-in advocacy service will be added to the 1-2-1 project to help boost numbers and meet the target. No People's Parliament took place in Q1 (output 3) due to recruiting for a new Parliament Lead. No newsletter was produced in Q1 (output 5) due to the Director retiring; but LSU expect to be back on track from Q2 and are looking to produce an online newsletter.

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

LSU seek to improve the lives and experiences of people with Learning Disabilities such as access to services and entitlements, social well-being, tackling exclusion, confidence to speak up and assert rights. It is clear from the qualitative and quantitative feedback that LSU are meeting these wider outcomes outlined in the original grant application. LSU are particularly proud of employing people with learning disabilities as 'experts by experience', paying a rate above the living wage. LSU is the 'go to' organisation for the council when engaging in quality checking; collecting views to ensure quality provision.

In addition they had a condition to provide support to adults with learning disabilities during the adult social assessment process. This was provision for the council to call upon LSU if advocacy was required around Care Act requirements. To date this hasn't been requested but LSU are willing to respond (within reason) to such requests should they come through.

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 first box above. Whilst there are a small number of outputs not met, it is felt that there are mitigating reasons for this and where possible LSU will make up the shortfall during 2016/17. Two new projects have now started and so the organisation is more settled. In addition five new volunteer advocates were trained and ready to take on cases in July plus two volunteers who will support the Advocacy Service Manager.

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

LSU always seek to evaluate their impact and understand the need for their services and support. For example, feedback from the self-advocacy training has been very good (especially young people in transition), outlining the need for this new project. Applying for and being successful for Comic Relief and Trust for London / City Bridge Trust helped focus the organisation on the impact of their service.

LSU helps Lewisham Council meet its responsibilities related to quality services for vulnerable people; improves inclusion and equality and provides statutory agencies with the opportunity to hear all voices. Officers from Learning Disability commissioning within the council strongly support the work that LSU undertake.

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.

The organisation moved away from paid advocates to volunteers two years ago, reducing its expenditure significantly in response to budget cuts. From then the organisation has built a solid base and are confident that they can continue to recruit and train further volunteers to support delivery of agreed targets.

There are no other opportunities for significant savings that could be made that wouldn't have a knock on effect on service users.

What alternative funding streams are you already pursuing?

With the support of a consultant fundraiser the organisation has successfully secured three year grant from Comic Relief for core funding of the People's Parliament (£112k). The Lewisham grant supports the 'feeder' work with individuals and groups, attracting larger participation in the parliament.

At the time of the meeting LSU had an application in for £17k for core funding from Comic Relief Core Strengths Funding; however subsequently found out that they were unsuccessful.

LSU were also successful in getting grants from City Bridge and Trust for London to establish Hate Crimes programme, totalling £125k.

LSU is also commissioned to provide services to the council e.g. supervision of volunteer programmes and quality check exercises, to the value of £20k per year.

LSU have started providing services to other organisations, e.g. Voice for Life work at Lewisham College, which they hope to build on.

The organisation note that many trusts and donors are reducing the amount of funding available and many consider the services that LSU deliver to be a statutory responsibility of government and local authorities and therefore are reluctant to fund.

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

LSU were keen to point out that the confidence that the council places in the organisation and its work via the grant contributes to their reputation as an effective and reliable organisation, and that this helps with fundraising from trusts and foundations.

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?

LSU are in conversation with Heart n Soul and Entelechy to possibly share some of the management of volunteers, e.g. recruitment, training, vetting etc. They have met with Lewisham Disability Coalition and are working in partnership to organise a forum of Lewisham based organisations providing range of services including advice work and advocacy. LSU are collaborating or seeking to collaborate with a number of organisations, including Mencap, and Contact a Family.

Whilst there is clear partnership working in place and small scale sharing of resources there is limited scope for financial savings from these.

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?

As above.

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?

LSU rely heavily on volunteers (having moved to volunteer based 1:1 advocacy programme) and have two paid members of staff. A reduction of 25% would require a cutting of staff hours, reduction in communications to beneficiaries and would have an impact on wider service delivery and subsequently grant outputs. It is likely that the most vulnerable advocacy cases would be hardest hit as these are most resource heavy.

The part time Director retired recently and is unlikely to be replaced; and the two staff remaining have received a small pay rise to reflect the additional duties they took on as a result. This has left a modest saving to the organisation which will help cushion some of the impact of a 25% cut.

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

LSU have modelled the 25% cut and an action plan is now being developed which has and will continue to take into account the wishes of the organisation's beneficiaries as to their preferences for continuation. Review of reserves policy has indicated that a small sum could be made available each year to help with budget management and 'rainy day' needs; still leaving around 4 months of core expenditure.

Conclusion

Any other comments / areas discussed

Conclusion and recommendation

Lewisham Speaking Up are performing well, and where there is slight under performance they are forecast to make this up over the course of the year. They are a well-respected organisation delivering a much needed service and challenge. There are no obvious options for alternative funding, mergers or asset sharing, **therefore it is recommended that they receive a pro-rata cut.**

Equalities groups disproportionately impacted by recommendations

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

Commentary and potential mitigations:

Lewisham Speaking Up provides advocacy and support to people with learning disabilities. Any pro-rata reduction in their funding will have a disproportionate effect on the protected characteristic of disability; however officers will work with the organisation to mitigate this impact as much as possible when agreeing new outputs for 2017/18.