

3Main Grants 2017-18 report

Name of organisation	Lewisham Multilingual Advice Service
Date of meeting	14th September 2016
Names and positions of attendees	Steve Sellars, Treasurer Liz Yilmaz, Advice Service Manager Winston Castello, Community Enterprise Manager, LBL

Group Name:	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
Total funding received 2015-16	£30,750	N/A	£10,250	£10,250	£10,250					
Total funding to be received 2016-17	£41,000	£10,250	£10,250	£10,250	£10,250					
Outcomes	Support									
	1. At least £100k received in full year benefit payments by service users, reducing poverty and increasing security 2. Users wellbeing, family stability, health and confidence in accessing services for themselves 3. Volunteers speaking community languages gain workplace skills and become more enjoyable 4. Strengthened relationships between Advice Lewisham partners and other voluntary and statutory agencies 5. Being involved in the setting up of Pro Bono advice services available across the borough									
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
<i>To provide benefit claims for 40 users</i>	40/400	156	207	184	547	137%	100/600	257		42%
<i>To provide advice to 200 users with 500 issues</i>	200/500	147	160	142	449	224%	400/800	287		36%

2 volunteer receptionists supported every 6 months	2	1	1	0	2	100%	4	1		25%
1 volunteer advisor advisor supported	1	1	1	0	2	200%	1	1		100%
Quarterly Advice Lewisham Steering Group meetings										
Quarterly Advice Lewisham Forum meetings	3	2	1	1		100%	4	4		100%
Strategic development for options for developing Advice Lewisham free legal advice service						Achieved				
At least £100K received in full year benefit payments by service users	£100k	£38,569	£102,520	£29,784	£170,873	170%	£150,000	£112,004		74%

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?

The organisation achieved all its output targets for 15/16. These were:

- to provide assistance with benefits claims for 400 users
- to provide advice to 200 users with 500 issues
- to support the development of two volunteer receptionists and one volunteer adviser
- to attend quarterly Advice Lewisham steering group meetings
- to assist users to receive an additional £100,000 in benefits payments

Targets have been updated for 16/17 to reflect the organisation's experience in delivering in the first nine months of the new grants programme. These are now:

- to provide 600 benefits claims
- to provide advice to 400 users with 800 issues
- annually to achieve a target of 400 service users reporting an improvement in wellbeing after accessing the service
- volunteer reception supported
- attendance at Access Lewisham events
- £150,000 received in benefits payments by service users

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

The organisation has achieved its wider outcomes, including developing users' wellbeing, achieving improved health outcomes and increased confidence, and improving the skills of volunteers to make them more employable.

The organisation has also played an important role in the development of the Advice Lewisham partnership and its work in re-designing advice services across the borough. In addition to the general advice offered to clients, LMLAS has also supported individuals in advice and support to access local services, including helping those in distress to access food banks. The organisation's work in developing volunteers has also been positive in enabling service users to progress into employment. The highest proportion of language-related support has gone to speakers of Tamil and Albanian, as well as significant numbers of Somali and Turkish speakers. LMLAS is able to access a wide range of language support via its own staff and volunteers - Arabic (2 dialects – Middle Eastern & Moroccan), Kurdish (Iraqi & Syrian), Pashtu, Farsi, Sylheti, Albanian, Turkish, Tamil, Somali, Romanian, Urdu, French, Italian, Polish.

The organisation believes that the work it is undertaking is significantly contributing to increasing the security of service users and reducing poverty.

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?

N/A

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

LMLAS is the only grant funded organisation offering advice services to users in their mother tongue. The organisation provides support in eight different languages, including French, Arabic, Turkish and Tamil. The organisation is currently developing its partnership with LRMN, working on immigration-related matters.

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 will be moving to the Leamore Advice Hub which will lead to improved partnership working and potential savings on back office costs.

What alternative funding streams are you already pursuing?

LMLAS has developed a strategy to attract funding from different sources. They have lodged the following bids:

- A bid for a three year contract with the Big Lottery Fund – outcome awaited
- Comic Relief bid - unsuccessful (no Lewisham organisations were successful)
- Financial Capability bids submitted in partnership with CAB & ECO were unsuccessful.
- Bid to the Gannett Foundation in partnership with Advice Lewisham for computers – outcome awaited
- The organisation has also developed a number of small bids to businesses – these have received positive responses but on condition that there is success with other bids.
- LMLAS is currently preparing a bid to City Bridge, and will then continue to source other funders.

The organisation currently works with AFRIL, for which they receive an income for delivering information sessions. In addition, LMLAS is seeking to be a deliverer of services as part of the Syrian Refugee Initiative and is seeking funding from City Bridge to support its delivery.

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

LMLAS would like to work closely with the Council to explore potential opportunities which may arise from the development of the Leemore Hub.

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?

LMLAS has expressed an interest in working closely with a number of other organisations, including LRMN, 170 Community Project, Evelyn 190 and AFRIL.

LMLAS works with LRMN to host an immigration surgery. The intention is to make this a weekly activity. They supply an adviser to 170 Community Project to lead a Turkish session once a week on their premises. They also supply two advisers for two sessions a week to AFRIL, who pay them for this service. They have agreed to take work experience students on 16 hour placements from Lewisham & Southwark College advice & guidance course for which they are paid £200 per student.

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?

No group currently identified but the organisation is open to collaborating with groups that share similar objectives and values. This will be facilitated by the organisation's move to the Leemore Centre.

What support might you need to move these suggestions forward?

The organisation would like to work with Council officers to ensure that the Leemore Centre is a success and to ensure that LMLAS's identity and expertise in working with speakers of other languages is recognised.

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?

The organisation has analysed the potential impact of a 25% cut and feels that the impact would involve reducing the current nine language sessions pro rata by two or three.

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

The organisation has considered different models but these would be dependent on the results of current funding bids.

Conclusion

Any other comments / areas discussed

With regard to mergers, LMLAS believes there are significant new opportunities when they operate as part of the advice hub.

The organisation is further developing its links with Lewisham and Southwark Colleges, particularly providing placements for students on interpreting courses.

Conclusion and recommendation

The organisation is a participant in the advice review and will play a critical role in terms of providing advice to speakers of languages other than English. **A pro rata cut is recommended.** This recommendation is conditional on the full involvement of LMLAS in the review and the organisation's commitment to jointly plan and deliver advice provision across the borough.

Equalities groups disproportionately impacted by recommendations			
Ethnicity:	X	Pregnancy / Maternity:	
Gender:	X	Marriage & Civil Partnerships:	
Age:		Sexual orientation:	
Disability:		Gender reassignment:	
Religion / Belief:			
Commentary and potential mitigations:			
<p>The target group for this organisation is speakers of English as a second language. A reduction in funding would have a disproportionately adverse effect on this group. Over two thirds of users are female, a group which would also be adversely affected by a cut in services. The impact of this will be mitigated by the planned advice service changes which will provide better planning for service users and improved referral arrangements between the existing advice providers.</p>			