

Main Grants 2017-18 report

Name of organisation	LRMN (Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network)
Date of meeting	22 September 2016
Names and positions of attendees	Diana Fawcett, Chair Rosario Guimba-Stewart, Chief Executive Winston Castello, community Enterprise Manager, LBL

Group Name:	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
Total funding received 2015-16	£65,940	N/A	£21,980	£21,980	£21,980					
Total funding to be received 2016-17	£87,920	£21,980	£21,980	£21,980	£21,980					
Outcomes										
<p>Strong and Cohesive Communities Improved community cohesion, tolerance and understanding between communities Improved confidence, self-esteem, integration in the community and employment opportunities amongst refugees and migrants. Improved image of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants</p> <p>Access to Advice</p> <p>Improved immigration status and improved understanding of immigration options</p>										
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 borough-wide activity and 2 community activities in Evelyn and New Cross participated by host and refugee and migrant communities	3	1	1	1	3	100%	3	0		0% First event planned for Q2
At least 20 students attending ESOL classes per year	20	20	-	-	20	100%	20	30		150%
At least 3 days a week ESOL classes delivered	3 DPW	YES	YES	yes	Achieved	Achieved	Classes 3 days per week	Achieved		Achieved
4 success stories published in local papers using both traditional and digital forms.	4	1	1	2	4	100%	4	1		Achieved
25 hours advice(casework) per week, see up to 20 clients a week (new and existing), take on cases and liaise with different government department and other orgs, prepare witness statements, draft applications, lodge appeals, represent at tribunals, provide up to 20 telephone advice/week	810	212	342	462	1016	125%	1000	550		55%

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?

LRMN achieved all its agreed output targets. In discussion with LRMN, it was confirmed that the principal part of their activities funded by Lewisham Council relates to their advice services. However, the organisation also has outputs for ESOL learners. It was confirmed that the ESOL classes are staffed by volunteers and the organisation further agreed to monitor progression routes for individuals. They stated that, of the 20 learners on programme in 15/16, 13 were new joiners.

Other key areas of work include the level of case work offered, with the organisation offering 25 hours case work support per week for up to 20 service users.

Standards achieved during the year include passing the AQS and OISC audits.

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

The organisation's wider outcomes include improved community cohesion and tolerance and better understanding between local communities, to which the organisation aims to contribute.

For their individual clients, they aim to develop confidence and self-esteem, and to assist individuals to better integrate in local communities, as well as providing employment opportunities for refugees and migrants.

LRMN provided a number of case studies, including one for a 30 year old Sri Lankan woman who arrived in the UK in January 2014 having been previously arrested by the Sri Lankan army and separated from her family. Although her initial asylum application was refused, she appealed with the assistance of LRMN following a referral by her GP. LRMN provided her with a range of support, including enabling her to become involved in local networks. They further assisted her to trace her family via the Red Cross Tracing Unit.

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?

Although the organisation achieved all its outcomes, it will be working with Council Officers to better monitor its ESOL classes.

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

LRMN is the only LBL funded provider of immigration advice in the borough and experiences great demand for the services it provides.

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.

LRMN was successful in obtaining £10k funding from the Big Lottery which it intends to use to hire a consultant to review, assess and make recommendations for the organisation's sustainability. An HR consultant provided by the Cranfield Trust is working pro bono to evaluate LRMN jobs and ensure they are competitive.

LRMN also received an Excellence Award from the London Legal Support Trust, resulting in a grant of £10,000.

What alternative funding streams are you already pursuing?

The organisation has been extremely successful at attracting additional funds over the past five years, with significant grant income from the Big Lottery for a women's project and immigration welfare work, the City Bridge Trust, the Henry Smith Charity and Trust for London. The organisation's forecast income for 2015/16 is in excess of £400,000 and the organisation holds significant reserves.

LRMN has recently intensified its fundraising activities with trusts and foundations. It is also engaging in direct fundraising, e.g. via the Legal Walk, pub quizzes etc.

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

LRMN is working with the CCG and Lewisham Council Social Care Commissioning Group to become involved in delivering commissioned services. The organisation is engaging with the planned Lewisham Syrian Refugee Resettlement project.

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?

LRMN's staff and trustees will consider the potential for mergers at an awayday in November. The prospect has been discussed with LMLAS. The organisation is open to discussing potential mergers and collaborations with other advice organisations as well as with organisations supporting refugees and migrants.

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?

LRMN is part of the review of advice services in Lewisham and has discussed with the Advice Lewisham network the potential for sharing back office costs, e.g. IT support, financial support etc.

It also has access to local community centres for the delivery of classes including ESOL and literacy.

What support might you need to move these suggestions forward?

The organisation would like to work with Lewisham officers to broker potential partnership developments.

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 decided that the most likely approach is that a staff restructure would be required.

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

LRMN has modelled the restructure and consulted with staff and trustees on concerns relating to any cut.

A modelled cut in the Director's hours has been identified as resulting in issues including:

- reduced fundraising and marketing activity as well as reduced strategic and partnership development, including interaction with Lewisham Council
- impact on staff management and motivation

A modelled cut in the Immigration Worker's hours has been identified as resulting in service users being directly affected in terms of:

- reduced ability to access mainstream services, training, employment as a result of a lack of immigration status
- reduced service user wellbeing
- increased potential for exploitation in terms of, eg, housing, employment, legal advice

- more acute access by service users to health and public services
- adverse effect on children and families and increased isolation and social exclusion
- increased attempts to access services provided by already over-stretched law centres

Conclusion

Any other comments / areas discussed

The organisation is keen to work with Lewisham officers to identify opportunities to support migrant communities.

Conclusion and recommendation

LRMN is participating in the advice review. **A pro rata cut in grant is recommended.** This recommendation is conditional on the full involvement of LRMN 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:

The target group for this organisation is non-white British. 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.