

GRANT APPLICATION 2015/16 – ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATION: APPENDIX B

Priority Corporate Outcomes	To create better life chances for young people To offer personalised support to enable young people who are most at risk of not achieving their potential to close the gap with their peers; make a positive transition into adulthood; and prevent later difficulties					
Organisation	LEARNING THROUGH HORSES	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; background-color: #d3d3d3; text-align: center;">ref</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>243/C/CTY</td></tr> </table>	ref			243/C/CTY
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Address	The Edge Stables, Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware					
Relevant policy, aims and objectives						
<p>The Corporate Plan and the Children and Young People Plan, 2013/16, reflect a focus on improving outcomes for Barnet's younger population, creating the conditions for children and young people to develop skills and acquire knowledge to achieve their full potential and lead successful adult lives, with support targeted at 16 to 24 year-olds who are not in education, employment or training ('NEET') and those who have disabilities or complex needs. Strategic objectives of the Youth & Family Support Service include commissioning, supporting and enabling the voluntary sector to develop a wide range of provision, building capacity for vulnerable young people to engage in positive extra-curricular activities and increasing access to regular sport and physical activity as part of leading a healthy lifestyle.</p>						
Activities / proposal						
<p>Learning Through Horses (LTH) is a registered charity formed in September 2014 which runs a range of personal development programmes using horses to engage vulnerable or disadvantaged young people and adults in learning life skills. LTH does not teach clients to ride. Instead, participants learn about horse behaviour and non-violent horse training techniques, commonly known as 'horse whispering'.</p> <p>The charity's main programme, 'Employability and Horsemanship Skills', is a ten-week personal development programme for unemployed young people and adults, which enables clients to achieve an accredited qualification, the Prince's Trust Employability & Personal Development Award. The course provides an opportunity for clients to develop vital skills required for success in education and employment, and for building relationships with others. Clients who complete the course will have a solid foundation of horsemanship skills which opens doors to employment opportunities in the equestrian and animal husbandry industries, as well as a qualification which evidences that they have transferable personal skills for other industries. Participants who are interested in pursuing a career in the equine industry are helped to find work experience in stables in and around London.</p> <p>LHT also offers short bespoke programmes which focus on specific personal development goals, again working with horses, which are especially sensitive to body language and challenge people's behaviour in non-threatening ways, serving to diffuse aggressive reactions. The challenge with each activity is to create a relationship with the horse and communicate effectively in order to achieve the training task. Many tasks require students to work together as a team and provide an insight into the benefits of positive communication and behaviour and the importance of perseverance and resilience when working with animals.</p> <p>The focus is on 16 to 24 year-olds who are NEET or are considered to be at risk of such. Clients of all ages commonly have a history of abuse and neglect; mental health issues; drug or alcohol addiction; and autism or other learning difficulties. Younger clients invariably come from</p>						

deprived communities; have difficult family lives; are in care or have previously been in the care system; are excluded, or are facing exclusion, from mainstream education; and are exposed to gang culture.

LHT hires from facilities at privately-owned stables, with five horses, sub-let to another equine charity delivering equine-assisted psychotherapy to children and adults with psychological difficulties, with which it works collaboratively. It has four part-time qualified members of staff and engages instructors and volunteers on a sessional basis. Each course has a capacity of eight students. Clients are referred by organizations and agencies working with vulnerable young people and adults, including pupil referral units; special and mainstream schools; and drug and alcohol support services. It has had 43 clients to date, all but three of whom have been young people.

Following a successful trial, LHT has been working since December 2014 with nine severely autistic students at Ambitious College, a specialist Barnet-based college, with which the charity has a contract to deliver weekly sessions linked to the college's curriculum through to July 2015. Other clients include groups of young people referred by Wandsworth Integrated Drug & Alcohol Services and St Augustine's CE High School in Kilburn. Feedback from students signifies a high level of achievement of personal development goals.

This application seeks help towards meeting core costs in year one linked to promotion and development of the charity's work specifically in Barnet.

It is endorsed by the Youth & Family Support Service, which commends the professional way in which the charity is run; the unique and specialist nature of its courses; and the value of its work with young people who are at NEET; at risk; and often hard to reach. LHT fulfills an identified need amongst young people in Barnet for more skills-focused work with horses, demonstrated by the volume of requests to take part in a recent one-day taster session, and has been commissioned by the service to deliver a three-month package of work with 16 to 19 year-olds referred through the Keeping Young People Safe (KYPS) Programme.

Cost and financial need

LHT has presented a budget of £55,852 for delivery of its courses over twelve months, based on full take-up of current capacity (6 x 3-hour sessions a week). 71% of expenditure (£39,850) is on core and sessional staff costs and the reimbursement volunteers' out-of-pocket expenses. The hire of facilities costs £6,750. Overheads (including insurance, equipment, IT, marketing and accounting), which make up the balance of the budget, equate to £9,252. The cost of delivering one ten-week Employability and Horsemanship Skills course is shown as £4,296. Income is predominantly through negotiated contracts with referring agencies, currently £24,680, the largest of which is with Ambitious College. The income deficit shown is £31,172, but with a number of potential new contracts under discussion.

The KYPS contract with the Youth & Family Support Service for delivery of personal development support for eight highly vulnerable young people over ten weeks is in the sum of £2,500. A dialogue is under way with LHT concerning the scope for delivering holiday activities for young people under the Positive Activities Programme.

The request is for a grant of £8,500 towards (a) meeting the proportion of overheads in year one that are not defrayed from existing contracts; (b) promotional work to expand the number of clients from Barnet; and (c) increasing the charity's fundraising capacity, both in support of sustainability and to enable subsidised rates to be offered to selected clients who are only partially funded by their referring agency.

LHT anticipates achieving sustainability during the course of its second year and onwards through a combination of earned income, as business grows, and funding, drawing on the services of a part-time fundraiser to generate support from charitable trusts and potential sponsors.

The recommendation acknowledges how the charity is inspiring interest, and fulfilling unmet needs, and the evidence that exists of how it is supporting the acquisition and development of vital life skills amongst vulnerable young people.

Grant recommendation, type and conditions

£8,500 (from Edward Harvist Charity)

Start-up grant

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One-off grant

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Special conditions:

Payment of the award should be made subject to (a) agreement of a business plan to develop and target the charity's work amongst vulnerable young people living in Barnet, to include milestones for monitoring purposes; (b) agreement of a protocol for subsidising selected clients; (c) the receipt of a sustainability strategy; and (d) the receipt of quarterly progress reports and an undertaking to provide an evaluation after twelve months.

Target grant outcomes

To enhance and expand opportunities for vulnerable young people to engage in positive activities in support of their development; the acquisition of life skills; and the pursuit of a healthy lifestyle.

Date: June 2015