

**GRANT APPLICATION 2016/17 – ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATION**

<b>Priority Corporate Outcomes</b>	To support families and individuals that need help, such as to maintain their independence and lead active lives To increase resilience amongst people with disabilities and complex needs and help them to achieve their potential To reduce unemployment and support vulnerable and hard to reach people into work	
<b>Organisation</b>	<b>CARITAS ST JOSEPH'S CENTRE</b>	ref 360/S/LGD
<b>Address</b>	St Joseph's Grove, NW4	

**Corporate policy, aims and objectives**

The council is committed to helping people to be independent and live active lives, recognizing that some people need more support than others to achieve this. The transformation of adult health and social care set out in the Care Act 2014 and Department of Health publications 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say' and 'A Vision for Social Care, Capable Communities and Active Citizens' places growing emphasis on preventative services; delivering targeted information and advice; and ensuring people have the right support at the right time.

The Commissioning Plan for Adults & Communities, 2015-20, focuses on the development of preventative services; the removal of inequalities; and the wider well-being agenda. It reflects the national learning disabilities priority of moving away from specialist service provision to facilitating access to mainstream services with a focus on addressing inequalities. The aim is to support adults with learning disabilities to have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else to live a full life and realise their ambitions, using a wide range of resources; different approaches; and increasing the use of social networks.

**Activities / proposal**

Caritas St Joseph's Centre (CSJC) is a locally managed project of Caritas Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster, a registered charity which seeks to provide pastoral care and support to vulnerable and marginalised people through a range of local schemes.

Set up in 1977, CSJC provides learning opportunities and therapies for adults with learning disabilities to help them fulfil their potential. Accredited by Oxford, Cambridge & RSA Examinations, it runs 35 vocational, leisure and therapeutic courses in a safe and sensitive environment, which throughout 2015 were fully subscribed. Of 215 clients, many with autism, 125 lived in Barnet. The council is one of several sources of referrals. The courses range from ceramics, cooking and horticulture to singing and music-making. The centre also offers supporting facilities such as a sensory room and social activities where people of all abilities can mix, reducing social isolation that is common amongst people with learning disabilities.

This application seeks help to launch a social enterprise, 'A Place to Grow', created from a now dissolved small local carpentry business set up (in 2012) by the family of a young man with autism at their home to provide meaningful employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities, which was gifted to CSJC in 2015 when the demand for places outstripped what they could offer. The business produced garden furniture from recycled timber, sold through a retail outlet and exhibitions at garden shows. All necessary action has been taken to enable CSJC to take on and expand the activity as a social enterprise.

It has started to operate the enterprise on one morning a week in a workshop created in

renovated basement space at the centre with five participants, inherited from the former business. The aim is to scale it up to five full days a week and to increase capacity to 25, offering training in the production of bespoke garden chairs, planter boxes and garden furniture and exposure to all aspects of the enterprise, including customer service, marketing and sales, in an environment tailored to the needs of people with learning disabilities. For people with severe disabilities and little chance of finding paid employment, it will create an environment where they can make a valued contribution to their community and receive recognition. For others, it will offer a genuine work situation; the opportunity to gain transferable workplace skills; and help to develop leadership skills and independence.

The time spent by participants with the enterprise will vary according to their ability. The expectation is that the majority will progress into other work opportunities within twelve months, creating scope for a largely new cohort of students each year. The 2016/17 work plan anticipates retaining, employing and paying five students.

Living with a disability is a recognised barrier to employment and financial independence. Research by the National Autistic Society reveals that only 15% of people on the autistic spectrum are in full-time employment despite 79% who are in receipt of work-related benefits wanting to work. Helping and supporting people with a learning disability into a job that matches their capabilities, interests and ambitions is acknowledged to be the most effective solution to sustainable employment. Good jobs, aligned with in-work support, can also act to prevent the acquisition of further impairments.

Adults & Communities and the Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group value the work of CSJC and its flexible approach to addressing the needs of people with learning disabilities, operating, as it does, a modular system which enables those in receipt of personal budgets, for example, to make good use of them. 'A Place to Grow' is endorsed as complementary to the developing strategy of increasing local training and employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities and autism. The application is supported, subject to SCJC strengthening its links with 'Bright Futures', a service commissioned from Barnet Mencap to support the client group, including into employment.

### **Cost and financial need**

In 2014, CSJC incurred expenditure of £500,295, of which 70% was on staffing. The centre has a full-time salaried manager and 30 or more tutors and learning support assistants engaged on a sessional basis. The diocese subsidises overheads, including the rental liability on the premises occupied, which it owns, and utility costs. The balance of recurrent annual expenditure is mainly on materials and equipment linked to the delivery of activities; publicity; and administration. CSJC's courses are self-financing through the imposition of charges (in many cases defrayed through direct payments) which constitute 70% of income. The balance mainly comprises the proceeds of local fundraising, including grants, which support specific elements of the service provision; additional summer holiday activities; and developments, most recently the creation of a sensory roof-top garden.

At 31/3/2014, CSJC had net current liabilities of £50,413, a deficit that was made good in 2015, the accounts for which have yet to be published pending the completion of an audit.

Three-year projections for operating and developing the new social enterprise show expenditure of £50,585 in year one rising to £69,119 in year three. It is expected to be scaled up to full capacity within nine months. £30,399 (79%) of revenue costs of £38,335 in year one are the costs of a part-time manager, a part-time tutor and a part-time learning support assistant, plus central managerial supervision. The budget includes the procurement of

materials; advertising / marketing; and administration. There will be a charge (of £28 for a full day) for all trainees. Income in year one is shown to be generated in roughly equal measure from student fees / trading and charitable grants.

The business plan identifies that marketing and sales are crucial to the success of the enterprise, reducing the dependence on income from fundraising. A marketing and communications strategy, combining complementary on-line, print, media and advertising options, focuses on the need to create a range of distinctive products to gain foothold within a competitive marketplace and on developing reach and sales within the Westminster Diocese before the general marketplace is tackled. The business plan projects that the enterprise will be self-supporting through income from sales and fees by year three.

The request is for a one-off grant of £10,000 to buy tools and equipment for the workshop costing £10,213 on the basis of the cheaper of two sets of quotations submitted, capital expenditure, which, with workbenches, totals £12,250 and forms part of the year one budget, to facilitate scaling up and expansion of the operation. The requirements include a dust extractor (£2,610) and carpentry equipment such as a lathe, a table saw, a band saw and sanders.

The council is investing up to £363,000 a year in the 'Bright Futures' service commissioned from Barnet Mencap, including payment by results and innovation funding.

#### Grant recommendation, type and conditions

£10,000 (from Edward Harvist Charity)

Start-up grant

One-off grant

#### Special conditions:

Payment of the award should be made subject to (a) agreement of a strategy for collaboration with the 'Bright Futures' service in discussion with Barnet Mencap and Adults & Communities and (b) the receipt of an undertaking to provide quarterly progress reports linking implementation to key milestones in the work plan and an evaluation of the project in twelve months' time.

#### Target grant outcomes

To develop the personal and workplace skills of adults with learning disabilities, increasing their independence and capacity to participate in the community, and to support them into employment.

**Date:** August 2016