

Chris Westwood Charity for Children with Physical Disabilities.

Update Report – First Quarter 2019

Background:

We completed 2018 with grants made during the year reaching £109,438.01, which was a reduction on the £137,186.81 completed in 2017, and a welcome respite to allow us to at least start to rebuild our reserves. However, we were aware of a number of potential applications in preparation which subsequently emerged as full applications in January, so once again, timing was a factor in the overall total for the year. When several of these significant applications arrived in January, we were again off to a very brisk start, and with reserves at only £18,099.70 at the start of the year, we knew that 2019 was going to be yet another challenge.

Fundraising would be critical, but we were pleased to reflect that we now had an increased number of smaller groups collecting for us, which would be a significant help.

Progress in 2019:

At the end of Q1 we have completed 27 grants at a total cost of £29,685.26. Funding has been the main problem, and despite some fundraising coming in, we completely exhausted our reserves in late March.

By the eleventh grant of the year, completed in February, we reached the milestone of **£750,000** raised and granted since we started. While we have grown at around 40%/year from our small starting base just over 15 years ago, the extent of the recent rapid increase in requests for help can be seen by the fact that it took 12 years for us to grow to a point where we had completed approx £350,000 in grants, and in only just over 3 years we have completed a further £400,000 in grants. If we are able to fund just the current level of demand, without any further growth, we would expect to reach the £1 Million mark before the end of 2020, a figure we had no concept of when we started. Having grown to our current size, the fundraising requirements are now so large, that they pose real problems to attain.

This rate of activity is at the limit of our current fundraising, although we are constantly trying to develop our funding income, and while on the one hand we have to accept that there is only so much that we can do, we see so many sad cases being brought to us that we at least have to try to respond. This is the main reason we comment regularly on the need to continue to try to increase our regular stable income.

Careful management of grants, with co-funding where possible still led us to a position where, by late March, we have had to start a short waiting list. We are in the position that the Gift Aid claim for the year will be submitted shortly after 6th April, and based on previous experience, should be completed by HMRC in about 8 days. We expect that to exceed £5,000. With other additional funding expected in early April, we should be able to clear practically all of the waiting list which currently totals less than £7,500.00 (assuming that once examined in detail, we agree to fund those applications). We then have one significant application which will require further consideration.

Our Income Position:

We have a number of known sources of income due at various points during the year. Our regular donors

bring in over £407.00/month at the moment, and with Gift Aid due on that where applicable, this is a useful source of stable funding, although if any of our supporters could encourage others to join, it would be a great help. Regular small amounts do make a difference, and we are particularly keen to increase the size of this group again, as we sadly lost one of our keen supporters and donors late last year.

We have a number of groups collecting for us, and our share of the Stourbridge Golf Club Captain's charity collection, over his two year term of office, should be received at the end of the year. We also have donations promised from two charitable foundations, but our main problem remains short term cash flow, and the challenge of then meeting the requests for help throughout the year.

We have just heard from the Dudley News that their *Forging a Future Awards* are due to take place on 28th November, and that they collect for a nominated charity at the event. This year we have been fortunate enough to be chosen, and we have provided further details about our work, as requested. The collection should provide useful funding at the end of the year, and the contact arose because the Stourbridge News are about to publish a story about our work, and the fact that we have reached the £750,000 completed grants milestone.

One other useful source of income, which could be developed a lot further, is from the commission payments from Give as You Live. The Chairman has been using an in store card from Give as You Live for Waitrose (cost £2.50 to set up) since February 2018, and this has already raised £82.50, in commission payments at no cost to him other than the original £2.50 for the top up card. Cards can be obtained for most store groups, are actually quicker to use at the checkout than a credit card, can be preloaded with whatever amount you wish, and each time they are loaded (the Chairman usually adds £100 at a time) yield a no cost payment of a fixed percentage (1.5% in the case of Waitrose) to the nominated charity. This funding is freely available, and if we could encourage more users, the corresponding commission generated could be very much greater.

Further commission payments from Give as You Live can be earned for your nominated charity when purchasing items online (eg. from Amazon), and once set up is easy to use. Full details and a link to Give as You Live are on our website, and greater use would yield more funding for the Charity. Any charity can be nominated to receive the benefit, and your choice changed whenever you wish. Obviously we would prefer to be the selected charity, but these funds are available for the Charity sector, so at least a charity can benefit if the system is used.

Grants Made in Q1 2019:

Age Yrs	Grant £	Details
3.5	1478.30	Born ten weeks premature, and brain damaged at birth. He has a diagnosis of cerebral palsy, and has significant difficulties with mobility. Proposal was for a special exercise trike to try to help his strength, mobility and coordination. We agreed to fund the full cost.
	387.60	Severe learning difficulties and ASD, exhibiting challenging behaviour. We helped in late 2018 with a strong chair and soft wall cladding. She is responding well and one small additional item was requested, which we approved.
3	1358.45	Born prematurely and presents with development delay and walking difficulties, now diagnosed as cerebral palsy mainly affecting his legs. His Paediatric Physiotherapist recommended a special exercise trike to help to exercise his leg muscles and build strength, and after a detailed assessment by the supplier, we agreed to fully fund.
	1981.00	Request from Victoria Special School to help with funding an outdoor exercise gym for the senior school (14-19). 90% of the 220 pupils (130 in senior school) are wheelchair bound, and they requested an outdoor gym facility, which will help with exercise as well as encouraging them to work together. With a total project cost of £10,000, we agreed to fund one of the three items of gym equipment required and some of the installation costs.
4	1107.15	She has a diagnosis of quadriplegic cerebral palsy and presents with severe movement difficulties. She is fully dependent for all changes of position, and already has a subluxed hip (<i>partial dislocation</i>) requiring surgery. Proposal was for a P Pod bean seat to hold and support her in the correct postural position, in a comfortable chair into which she could be securely strapped, to protect her from further dislocations. We agreed to fully fund.

20	1000.00	Cerebral palsy, profound and multiple learning difficulties, and extensive medical needs. He is fully wheelchair bound, and we have helped previously in 2015 with funding an Acheeva bed. A powered wheelchair is now required, and a Sunrise medical Q700 Stand Up chair at £20,383.15 was proposed. With £11,000 already raised. We agreed to fund a further £1,000.00.
3.5	£97.00 + £131.50	She was born 3 months prematureley, and has a diagnosis of cerebral palsy, hydrocephalus, and chronic lung disease. The family has recently been given a special needs buggy, but no accessories (as usual). Request is for a cover and a special seat liner. We previously helped her in 2017, and this will further assist the family.
10.7	294.00	She has a diagnosis of cerebral palsy spastic quadriplegia, and is a full time wheel chair user. She requires suitable support and needs a correctly designed special needs buggy for her requirements. We agreed to fund a Maclaren Major Elite buggy for her.
	1707.00	Request from Pens Meadow Special School for a Prone Stander for use by two children with Leukodystrophy (<i>a disease of the white matter of the brain</i>). This is a regularly used item and we agreed to fully fund.
12	510.00	Microcephaly, severe epilepsy, global development delay and severe learning difficulties. Her existing buggy was broken and she urgently required a larger stronger unit. After further discussion and assessment by a regular supplier, a suitable buggy was specified, which, due to family circumstances, we agreed to fully fund.
5	3825.00	Severe autism and sight problems. Due to his condition he requires full time care, and at school he is taught on a 1:1 basis, segregated form the other children due to his problems. With the family desperate for some respite, the proposal was to provide a safety sleeper to settle him down at night, which was trialled successfully. We agreed to fully fund at a reduced cost following our agreed discount structure with the supplier.
3.75	1411.75	Born prematurely, she has a diagnosis of cerebral palsy spastic diplegia, with limited lower leg movement, having only just managed to be able to sit unaided on the floor. Her Paediatric Physiotherapist recommended a special exercise trike to try to build up her leg muscle strength, and her core strength, to help her to start walking. With the family able to make a small contribution, we funded the balance required.
	955.00	Small Wonders Stay & Play provides a pre-school community facility in the Wolverhampton area for currently 210 children with a waiting list. A number have special needs, and we were asked to help to provide additional sensory room equipment, which we agreed to fund after a discount was agreed with the supplier.
	378.50	Grant to Worcesterchire Health & Care NHS Trust to help with the purchase of small items of hygiene equipment to help a number of children.
6	1656.16	She has a diagnosis of cerebral palsy with complex medical issues relating to feeding. We helped her in 2016 with a Special Tomato comfy seat which she has outgrown, and which has been passed on to another family. Urgent help was needed for a secure and comfy Ppod Bean seat. With no other funding available, we agreed to fully fund.
6	2065.00	She has a diagnosis of Infantile Batten Disease (<i>this is a rare fatal inherited disorder, which results in seizures, regression of gross motor and cognition skills, and vision loss</i>). The prognosis is poor as there is no cure. She had outgrown her car seat, which had been passed on to her younger brother, and required a new seat urgently. With her serious condition, a very special seat was required, which even with the discount from our regular supplier was significantly more expensive than usual. With no other funding available, we agreed to fully fund.
3	1283.00	Born prematurely, he suffered a brain bleed, and has a diagnosis of diplegic cerebral palsy, hydrocephalus, epilepsy, nystagmus, chronic lung disease and sensory processing difficulties. His Paediatric Physiotherapist recommended a special exercise trike to help to build his core and leg muscle strength to try to help his mobility, and we agreed to fully fund.
12	537.49	She has an eye condition called bilateral optic nerve hypoplasia (<i>under developed optic nerves</i>) has no light perception in one eye and reduced vision in the other. We helped her two years ago with computer equipment which is is daily use and has helped her to progress academically. We received a request for further equipment to help her with her studies, and we agreed to fully fund.
12	2133.51	He has a diagnosis of Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, and has recently deteriorated, now using a wheelchair full time at school. He required a hydotilt chair to support him in the correct postural position, and to provide some comfortable seating, as he currently has no suitable seating when at home. We agreed to fully fund.
2.25	493.00	He has a diagnosis of Chromosome 22q11 duplication, which presents as microcephaly, global development delay, vision problems, and hypotonia. He is unable to sit unsupported, and is being provided with a special buggy by Wheelchair Services. A fully supportive special car seat was required to hold him in the correct position, which we agreed to fully fund.
6	632.00	He has a diagnosis of Down's Syndrome, chronic lung disease, a residual VSD following heart surgery, learning disabilities, and he can only walk for short distances. We were asked to fund a fully supportive special car seat to hold him safely and securely for transport, as he escapes from his current seat. He was fully assessed at RDAC, and we agreed to fully fund the seat required.
3.7	533.00	She has a severe learning disability, sensory problems and is being assessed for autism. The proposal was for a special seat to help with her sensory skills, and enable her to engage more in activities. We agreed to fully fund.
7	1000.00	Cerebral palsy, epilepsy, minimal head control, abnormal arm movements, and problems with taking food. Currently peg fed, and with other problems, an Acheeva bed was required to help with his daily needs. With a cost of £5,270.00 we needed to co-fund and pledged £1,000.00 pending the balance of funding being raised.
3.5	318.45	He has a diagnosis of microcephaly and epi;epsey, significant global development delay, and hearing and visual impairment. Dudley Vision Impairment Service recommended a number of small items to help him to develop with his limited sight, and we agreed to fully fund.
4.5	1,185.65	He has a diagnosis of cerebral palsy spastic diplegia and a Chiari malformation (<i>brain abnormality</i>). He has walking difficulties, uses leg splints, a walker and a standing frame, and will shortly start using a wheelchair which he will need when he begins school. His Paediatric Physiotherapist recommended a special exercise trike to help to build his leg and trunk muscle strength, and to improve his coordination. With the family having raised £200.00, we agreed to fund the balance required for the purchase tp proceed.

1.3	516.00	She has a diagnosis of Cerebral palsy spastic quadriplegia, is unable to sit unaided, has mobility problems, is tube fed, and she has vision problems. The proposal was to fund a special activity mat which has a facility to securely hold and fully support her, which would help her development. We agreed to fully fund.
10.5	709.75	He has a diagnosis of Idiopathic Juvenile Osteoporosis which has presented as vertebral compression fractures. He has low strength in his lower limbs and a special exercise trike was proposed to help to build his leg strength. The cost with our discount structure was £1,424.75, and with another charity contributing £715.00, a balance of £709.75 was required which we agreed to fund.
Total	£29,685.26	

Recent Changes:

On the 1st August 2018 legislation regarding revised Trustee Eligibility and Disqualification rules came into force. The Trustees have all completed a new Charity Commission Declaration of Eligibility form, which has now been published, and they are fully aware of the new rules.

Future Progress:

We have managed to continue to operate with no administration costs, and it is our intention to ensure that we maintain this strategy.

We have also continued to develop our website (which is operated at no cost to the Charity), where you can find copies of our recent reports – please visit the *Reports Current* webpage, the website address being: www.chriswestwoodcharity.co.uk

If you would like to contact us regarding this report, please email us at chriswestwood@waitrose.com.

We now look forward to a challenging second quarter, but with your help we are optimistic that we shall be able to cope once again.

Chris Westwood.