Kingston Town Neighbourhood Committee  
3 June 2015  
Neighbourhood Grants to Voluntary Organisations

Report by Capability Lead for Communities

Purpose  
To consider applications for Neighbourhood Grants  
Recommendations

To RESOLVE the allocation of grants as follows:

1. **Kingston Arts** (formerly Kingston Arts Council) £750  
2. **Kingston Environment Centre** £750  
3. **North Kingston Choir** £750

Key Points

A. The total budget allocated for grant making to Neighbourhood Committees in 2015/16 is £29,500.

B. The Kingston Town Neighbourhood Committee has a grants budget of £9,000 for 2015/16.

C. The resources allocated for Neighbourhood Grants should be used solely for the purposes of grant making.

Context

1. Subject to the criteria listed below, the Committee can decide to award grant aid where an activity is of direct benefit to the residents of the Neighbourhood in terms of social welfare, sports, art, play and leisure activities, youth provision or environmental improvement, particularly where it meets priorities set out in the Neighbourhood Community Plan.

2. The criteria for Neighbourhood grants are as follows:
   
   - Kingston Town Neighbourhood encourages applications that contribute towards the priorities identified by the Neighbourhood or in its future Neighbourhood Community Plan.
   
   - The Committee is keen to prioritise applications for new activities, but will consider repeat applications where the organisation can demonstrate that their...
project delivers significant community benefit and can provide evidence of efforts to fundraise and/or apply for grants from elsewhere.

- Organisations should provide evidence of their fundraising/match funding plans as part of their application to ensure the best value for money possible for any Neighbourhood Grant contribution.

- Organisations that are linked to larger, national organisations should indicate, as part of their application, the annual accounts of the national organisation and explain why these cannot be used to fund local projects.

- Organisations should normally identify their exit strategy as part of any application to demonstrate their sustainability and not rely on continued grant funding from the Council.

- Where the event or other activity takes place in Kingston Town Centre, including the Rose Theatre, or Kingston Town Neighbourhood but is substantially for residents throughout the Borough and visitors, the grant application may also be submitted to the other Neighbourhood Committees for shared or proportionate funding.

- Where an organisation has applied for, or is in receipt of an RBK Corporate Grant they would be unlikely to be given a high priority for a Neighbourhood Grant.

- Cross-Neighbourhood applications will be considered, but only where a significant proportion of beneficiaries are resident in the Kingston Town Neighbourhood. Other Neighbourhoods may be approached to support their residents benefiting from the same project.

- The Neighbourhood Committee decision on all grant applications is final.

- The voluntary organisation making the application must have a constitution and a system for accounting for income and expenditure.

- The maximum grant for each group or organisation is £750.

1) Kingston Arts (formerly Kingston Arts Council) Grant request: £750

3. Kingston Arts is a registered charity formed in 1967 to promote, support and nurture local talent and deliver all arts for all ages across the Borough. It is not affiliated to a larger organisation but works alongside Kingston Council and with other local groups such as Surbiton Arts Group, Surbiton Camera Club and Surbiton and District Caledonian Society and with individuals to develop their artistic projects and initiatives, represent, publicise and enhance the activities of the voluntary and professional arts sector in the Borough and, with partners, present high-profile arts activities. Kingston Arts also runs networking events for affiliates and the local arts community.

4. Kingston Arts has approximately 1,000 members/users, individuals and groups, with membership spread across the Borough.
5. Kingston Arts has no paid staff, approximately 20 volunteers, 12 committee members, an Honorary Vice President and Councillor Ken Smith is their President. The Management Committee meets a minimum of six times per year.

6. The grant request is for £750 to assist in the payment of the ongoing administrative and staffing costs at Kingston Arts administrative premises in Surrey House, Eden Street. These being a fixed monthly cost of £35 towards the general office space upkeep and cleaning (£420 annually). The remaining £330 would be used to pay for stationery and consumables and, according to the demands of the events calendar, a receptionist for the 3rd floor lobby reception (for health and safety reasons) when Surrey House is used for hosting of specific events (Arts Salons, Galas, Festival of the Voice activities). The office space at Surrey House supports Kingston Arts work across the Borough.

7. Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2014 show an income of £8,818.04 against expenditure of £14,684.12, leaving a deficit of £5,866.08 and a year end balance of £4,317.23. Income consisted of an £8,500 grant from Kingston Council, £310.42 membership subscriptions and £7.62 bank interest. Expenditure consisted mainly of £10,100 for Festival of the Voice, £1,406.41 general expenses, £1,219.77 fixed asset PA provision for events and £635.10 website design and administration. The organisation has approximately £2,500 in reserves which is held for Festival of the Voice 2015.

8. The projected budget for this activity shows expenditure of £750 on premises hire/rent (£420), equipment purchase/hire (£230) and volunteer expenses (£100). No income is projected outside of this grant application.

9. Kingston Arts is in receipt of a 3 year RBK Community Investment Grant of £8,500 per year covering 2013/14 to 2015/16 towards running Arts Salons and events, staff costs and publicity. The group have also received a 2014/15 £750 Neighbourhood grant from Surbiton Neighbourhood towards the cost of ‘meet the artists’ events at the Court Farm cafe.

**Officer’s Report**

10. Kingston Arts, together with its diverse list of affiliates, offers a wide range of local arts and cultural activities in a variety of venues across the Borough which fits in with the Community Plan for community facilities, activities and developing community spirit.

11. Kingston Arts have been using the space at Surrey House as an administrative base and also for public events. A minimum of 11 Kingston Arts member groups and/or individuals are using the space on a daily basis in addition to ad-hoc use by drama, dance and arts groups and lunchtime activities open to all. RBK’s Arts Officer is supportive of this application, as the establishment of a permanent office base in the town centre has enabled the group to massively expand their programme of activities to support local artists and arts organisations.

12. As the requested funding will ensure the sustainability of Kingston Art’s base in the town centre and its provision of open activities for residents of Kingston Town neighbourhood, a grant of £750 is recommended towards the running costs of the office space at Surrey house. It is also recommended that Kingston Arts collect
data on attendance at events taking place at the venue to assist them with future funding applications.

13. Grants are expected to be used within one year of the award and a monitoring form returned confirming how the grant has been used.

**RECOMMENDATION:** A grant of £750

### 2) Kingston Environment Centre
**Grant request:** £750

14. Kingston Environment Centre (KEC), formed in 2012, is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. It is in the process of applying for registered charity status. Currently run on a voluntary basis from Kingston Environment Centre (previously Fountain Youth Centre) in New Malden, the broad aims of Kingston Environment Centre are to support the development of a sustainable Kingston. Kingston Environment Centre has 52 registered members and approximately 1,000 users per annum. Kingston Environment Centre has 2 part-time members of staff, 7 committee members who meet monthly, and between 15 and 30 regular direct supporters. If you include other projects at the Centre this increases to approximately 300 other volunteers.

15. The grant request is for £750 towards the cost of a polytunnel (£500) and work benches (£250) for the Hogsmill Community Garden. The projected budget for this activity shows income of £200 against expenditure of £2,500. Income is expected mainly from in-kind donations (£100), member’s fees (£50) and donations (£50). Expenditure is expected mainly on equipment (£2,000), volunteer’s expenses (£250) and publicity (£100).

16. Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2014 show an income of £16,376 against expenditure of £16,520 resulting in a deficit of £144 and a balance of £8,098 (£949 of which are restricted funds for Fruitful Kingston and £7,149 unrestricted funds held to enable Kingston Environment Centre to react to unexpected eventualities). Main income consisted of grant money from RBK (£15,000), membership fees (£550) and The Challenge (£550) whilst main expenditure items were rent and rates (£4,351), funding for Kingston Green Radio (£1,661), welfare (1,646), accountancy (£1,325) and equipment/repairs (£1,226).

17. The group have applied for a 2015-16 Emerging Needs and New Initiatives Grant for £3,000 towards the Hogsmill Community Garden, and also a further Emerging Needs and New Initiatives grant application for £1,800 towards the installation of a security gate at Tolworth Medieval Manor. They have not previously been awarded a Neighbourhood grant.

**Officers’ Report**

18. The Hogsmill Community Garden is located on the banks of the Hogsmill River next to Kingston University’s Knights Park campus. Under the umbrella of Kingston Environment Centre, a five year renewable lease has been granted by the Environment Agency for this plot of waste ground in Kingston. The land had been unused for many years and had become a fly tip. KEC’s vision for the derelict site
is to create a garden for the whole community where all ages can be inspired to reconnect with nature.

19. The funding will allow KEC to purchase a poly tunnel and set up an indoor propagation area where they intend to grow a wide range of plants and wildflowers to attract pollinating insects. The tunnel will have a multi-purpose function; as a shelter and to run workshops in propagation and structures for the garden along with enabling the growing season to be extended.

20. Although KEC are struggling to recruit volunteers for the Hogsmill Community Garden, the requested funding will enable some progress on the site to be made with the current volunteer force. Therefore, a grant of £750 is recommended towards the material costs with the additional recommendation that KEC forge links with other local groups, particularly the University, to recruit volunteers to work on the site.

21. Grants are expected to be used within one year of the award and a monitoring form returned confirming how the grant has been used.

**RECOMMENDATION: A grant of £750**

3) North Kingston Choir

22. North Kingston Choir is a not for profit constituted member’s organisation formed in 2013. They are an informal and relaxed adult community choir with an emphasis on fun music-making singing mainly modern and uplifting music. The choir rehearse on Mondays during term-time from 8 - 9.30pm at Tiffin Girls' School. Since its inception, the choir has fundraised for a number of local and national charities / organisations (DEC Philippines Appeal, Kingston Hospital, Momentum, Down’s Syndrome Association, Marie Curie and Love Kingston). The choir is run by a management committee of 8 which meets every 6 weeks. They have no paid staff or volunteers and 39 members aged 25-65. The choir is supported by fees of £30 per term. They do not have a concessions rate although our Constitution does provide for prospective or current members who face financial hardship to apply for a reduction in fees, which is considered on a case-by-case basis by the Committee. All but 12 of the members are from Kingston Town neighbourhood.

23. A grant of £750 is requested towards the cost of one-off equipment items to assist the choir with its future charity fundraising concerts. The equipment which application relates to will allow the choir to perform with their live band at outside events, without the need for electricity or compromising on sound quality. We have fully researched the equipment options available, and consider that those listed below will best suit the performance requirements. The full equipment list applied for is:

- Battery powered stereo amplifier  £398
- Amplifier carrying case / protector  £49
- 12 pack rechargeable batteries  £22.99
- Battery charger  £16.99
24. Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2014 show income of £2,615 against expenditure of £2,512 leaving a surplus of £103. Income came entirely from membership fees and expenditure related mainly to rehearsal / concert room hire (£1,548), backing musicians fees (£375), sheet music (£210), website and logo (£136), concert expenses (£61) and temporary music director (£60). The balance sheet shows a total balance of £185 at year end.

25. The projected budget for 2015 shows an income of £3,600 against expenditure of £3,549. Income is expected exclusively from membership fees and expenditure is expected mainly on room hire for rehearsals (£1,151), room hire for concerts (£675), purchase of music (£680), concert musicians (£420), workshops (£290) and admin materials (£120).

26. North Kingston Choir have not previously applied to RBK for funding.

**Officers’ Report**

27. This fully costed request for equipment will enable the choir to perform at outdoor venues at future events. In its first year, the choir’s concerts raised over £1,100 for national and local charities (through ticket sale proceeds, refreshments and donations at concerts), and they have also performed at many other local events. In March 2015 the choir was selected by Kingston’s Mayor and the Love Kingston team to win an award for the most public awareness raised for Love Kingston day on 14 February.

28. Due the choir’s fundraising activity and provision of community-based musical activity, a grant of £750 is recommended towards the cost of sound equipment and banner.

29. Grants are expected to be used within one year of the award and a monitoring form returned confirming how the grant has been used.

**RECOMMENDATION: A grant of £750**

**Statutory powers for grant making**

The Head of Legal Services advises that a local authority is able to act only if empowered to do so by statute. This includes, in specific circumstances, the making of grants to voluntary groups. The statutory power under which a particular grant may be awarded will vary according to the type of activity which the grant will support. It is a requirement for every Council that grants made under Social Services legislation be exercised either by the statutory committee responsible for Social Services functions or by the Strategic Director. Therefore, any grants deemed to be in this category will be considered by the Neighbourhood Committee and passed to the Director of Adult Social Care Services so that the Strategic Director’s delegated powers can be exercised.
30. Applications 1 and 2 may be authorised under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, which gives local authorities the power to incur expenditure in the interests of their area which is not otherwise authorised, including contributing to the funds of charitable bodies in furtherance of their work in the UK, or to bodies providing any public service in the UK other than for the purposes of gain. Application 3 may be authorised under Section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972, relating to the provision of entertainment, which gives local authorities the power to contribute towards the expenses of anything necessary or expedient for the provision of entertainment of any nature, and for the development and improvement of the Council’s understanding and practice of the arts.

Financial implications

31. There is currently £9,000 in the Committee’s Neighbourhood Grants budget. If the recommendations in this report are supported then there will be £6,750 remaining for 15/16.

Environmental implications

32. There are no significant environmental implications arising from Application 1 or 3. Application 2 is expected to make a positive contribution to biodiversity.

Background Papers: held by Jill Darling, Team Leader, Voluntary and Community Sector (author of report), Strategic Business tel: 020 8547 5124, email: jill.darling@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

• Applications and supporting documents from the individual organisations.