

Policy and Finance Committee

2 July 2015

Grants to Voluntary Organisations: Emerging Needs and New Initiatives Grants 2015/16 and Community Investment Fund Update

Report by Executive Head of Organisational Development and Strategic Business

Purpose

To set out proposals for the allocation of grant support to voluntary organisations under the Emerging Needs and New Initiatives Grant strand for 2015/16 and to regularise a previous year's grant award from the Community Investment Fund

Recommendations of the Lead Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Voluntary Services and the Lead Member for Policy

To **RESOLVE** that -

1. Emerging Needs and New Initiatives Grant aid be offered to the voluntary organisations for 2015/16 as set out in Annexes 1 and 2
2. the award to Surrey Tamil School be agreed; and
3. the arrangements for the allocation of Small Grants be noted.

Key Points

- A. Despite cuts elsewhere in the Council, the Administration agreed to retain Emerging Needs and New Initiatives Grants and Small Grants for 2015/16, to emphasise their support for the local Voluntary and Community Sector.
- B. Emerging Needs and New Initiatives Grants are annual grants for one-off projects or pump-priming/development activity which can include a contribution to overheads. Organisations would be expected to have considered how their project contributes to priorities in the Kingston Plan, to Service Area priorities or to priorities they have identified themselves. In addition they need to have thought about how the activities might be sustained or have developed an appropriate exit strategy.
- C. Focusing on Emerging Needs and New Initiatives is intended to encourage organisations to think about developing activities to meet new and changing circumstances. Applications for repeat funding will not be encouraged, although there could be exceptions made for events or activities that occur on a regular basis.
- D. This is the final year of the Emerging Needs and New Initiatives Grant strand as it currently stands. In the light of decisions to be taken in relation to the Grants to Commissioning initiative being brought to this same Committee, work will need to be undertaken to identify what grant strands might be appropriate for the future against this potentially changing background.
- E. It was agreed by the Administration that a budget of £50,000 would be available for the Emerging Needs and Small Grants strands in total (Small Grants are agreed under Strategic Directors' delegated authority.)

- F. The Community Investment Funds awards 2014/15 identified a misunderstanding on the 2013/14 funding awards which it was agreed should be rectified to honour the view that a three year commitment had been made.

Context

1. The Administration has emphasised its support for the local voluntary and community sector and proposals are being brought to this Committee relating to the way funding might go to the voluntary sector in future to be implemented from the financial year 2016/17.
2. It was agreed that the Emerging Needs and New Initiatives and Small Grant programmes should be launched at the end of December 2014 with a closing date of 27 February 2015 for funding in 2015/16.
3. Applications were invited using the guidelines and application forms that were agreed following the Grants Review in 2012, updated to take account of changes in the Kingston Plan and Service Area priorities.

Budget and applications

4. It was agreed by the Administration that a budget of £50,000 would be available for the Emerging Needs and Small Grants strands in total for 2015/16. (Small Grants are agreed under Strategic Directors' delegated authority).
5. Forty four applications have been received for the Emerging Needs Grants (with one organisation submitting two applications). The total request was for £118,983.
6. Eighteen applications have been received for Small Grants, totalling £13,772, one of whom had also applied to Emerging Needs. In the past, approximately £10,000 has been set aside for Small Grants. These are decided under Strategic Directors' delegated authority.
7. The extent of over-subscription has made decision making difficult and reduced awards or no awards have had to be made in a number of cases.
8. A table summary of applications for Emerging Needs and New Initiatives is included at **Annex 1** and more detail of the applications, which the Policy and Finance Committee is asked to approve, are provided in **Annex 2**.
9. This is the final year of the Emerging Needs and New Initiatives Grant strand as it currently stands. In the light of decisions to be taken in relation to the Grants to Commissioning initiative being brought to this same meeting, work will need to be undertaken to identify what grant strands might be appropriate for the future against this potentially changing background.

Community Investment Fund (CIF)

10. In 2013/14 Surrey Tamil School applied for a CIF Grant and understood that it had been awarded three year funding at £4,000 per annum. However, it had been informed that the 2013/14 funding would be for one year only, pending a review of all funding to community language schools. When the School re-applied in 2014/15 it only received £2,500 again as an annual award. The Surrey Tamil School sought a review of the original decision and the agreement it had signed.

11. There is no evidence to suggest the decision was mis-administered. However, in light of the school planning its three year programme based on its understanding of three year commitment by the Council, it is felt this position should be regularised so that the School is not disadvantaged.
12. The Surrey Tamil School would receive the remainder of its three year funding £5,500 in 2015/16 following which the School's grant would come to a natural end and it will need to apply for any future funding under the commissioning process.
13. The Surrey Tamil School is the only organisation that has sought a review of a grant decision and therefore it is not anticipated that other claims will be submitted following this decision given the time that has elapsed since the original decision.

Timescale

14. When decisions have been made on the allocation of grants to individual voluntary organisations, the voluntary organisations will be informed. The grant payments will be made as soon as possible after receipt of signed terms and conditions.

Resource implications

15. Despite cuts elsewhere in the Council, the Administration agreed to retain the Emerging Needs and New Initiatives Grants and Small Grants for 2015/16 with an overall allocation of £50,000. This is within the overall baseline budget agreed at the Policy and Finance Committee on 12 February 2015 for grant aid to voluntary organisations in 2015/16.
16. The CIF award to Surrey Tamil School is available within the base budget in addition to the 2015/16 allocation identified in the above paragraph.

Risk assessment

17. Assessment of the grant applications has been made against the criteria which has been in place for two years and has been publicised on the website.

Equality Impact Assessment Implications

18. The Voluntary Sector Grants programme has ensured that the distribution of its available funds has been undertaken in a fair and appropriate way. In this process due consideration has been given to the public sector equality duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations for the benefit of communities in the borough. The recommendations that have been made by officers in awarding the grants to organisations have been carried out carefully to benefit as many people as possible.

Environmental Implications

19. There are potential environmental benefits from encouraging voluntary organisations to adopt environmental good practice. The grant application process requires applicants to set out their approach to good environmental practice including their approach to recycling and transport options as well as the use of equipment and lighting. In addition, there are some applications that focus on environmental issues and activity.

Legal Implications

20. Grant aid for the grants contained in this report may be authorised under the following Local Government Acts:
21. Section 65 of the Health Services and Public Health Act 1968 which empowers the local authority to make grants to voluntary organisations in the Health and Social Services field who are providing a service which a local authority must or may provide or who are promoting or publicising such a service or similar one, or giving advice on how such a service or similar one can best be provided. In the case of Kingston CABS, a percentage of its activities are broader than those covered by the above authority, therefore, part of the grant is authorised under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, which gives the local authority power to incur expenditure in the interests of their area which is not otherwise authorised.
22. Section 19 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 gives local authorities power to provide premises for the use of clubs or societies having athletic, social or recreational objectives; to make recreational facilities available free or at reduced charges to such people as they think fit and to make grants or loans to help voluntary bodies provide recreational facilities of a kind which the local authorities have power to provide. This covers recreational facilities inside and outside of the local authority.
23. 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.

Background papers – held by author of the report - Jill Darling - Team Leader Voluntary and Community Sector

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- Applications and background information