



**ISLINGTON**

# **Annual Report of the Executive Member for Economic and Community Development**

## **Update on the Voluntary & Community Sector**

**Cllr Asima Shaikh**

**Policy & Performance Scrutiny Committee**

**May 2016**

## Voluntary & Community Sector Development Team

New Voluntary and Community Sector Development Team established:

- Greater emphasis on developing outcome driven, effective partnerships with the VCS - whether we fund them or not.
- Responsibility to help build capacity in the sector, promoting its reach, engagement and long-term sustainability.
- Seeking to support the sector to attract investment into the borough for programmes of activity that respond to the needs of local residents and promote resilience in local communities.
- A new way of working with staff clustered around thematic and demographic priorities
- Stronger links with other corporate departments to influence the way that the whole Council works with the VCS and our portfolio of council funded VCS organisations.



## Islington VCS Strategy 2016-2020

- Developed in response to consultation with the sector and key stakeholders
- Responds to Council priorities
- Focuses on outcomes for residents
- Recognises the importance of an independent and financially resilient sector
- Places greater emphasis on strategic partnership working between the council and the VCS
- Focus on resources and infrastructure for the sector: financial, physical space and capacity building
- Adopts a whole-council approach



## Our Vision

**We're determined to make Islington fairer:** to create a place where everyone, whatever their background has the same opportunity to reach their potential and enjoy a good quality of life

**We need Islington's VCS to work independently and in partnership with mainstream services to...**

Address and prevent complex social issues.

Support residents to be resilient and independent.

Promote cohesion and champion the needs of Islington's diverse communities.

Support neighbourhoods to develop and grow.

Be dynamic and responsive to local need in creative ways.

Provide and signpost residents to high quality advice and guidance

**We will support Islington's voluntary and community sector through...**

**Funding:** Small-grants, Partnership grants programmes, Training and Development, Discretionary Rate Relief.

**Contracting:** Commissioning organisations to deliver services and ensuring social value is included in our approach to commissioning.

**Premises:** developing a borough-wide premises strategy that maximises the use of our buildings.

**Working strategically with key partners** to provide leadership and build the capacity of the sector, promote volunteering, support fundraising, establish networks, and maximise our collective impact in neighbourhoods.

## Advice Review

- § Extensive Review of Islington's Advice offer in terms of cost, quality and resident experience
- § A model developed with key stakeholders with resident journey at the centre
- § A whole-council approach: £1.5 million – bringing together funding from Chief Exec's, Housing and Adult Social Services, CCG and aligning monitoring processes.
- § A pro-active focus on prevention and early intervention
- § An ongoing dialogue with potential for additional funding to respond to changing need.
- § A systems approach that will require partnership across key partners.



# Partnership Grants Programme 2016-2020

## Grant fund of £2.67 million secured for VCS Grants (including Advice)

- § VCS Grants fund of £1.163 million protected
- § Joint working with Housing and Adult Social Services to align £241,000 of funding into the VCS Grants programme for Advice
- § Partnership established with Islington CCG – to secure an additional £100,000 for delivery of an integrated approach to advice in Islington.
- § Creates the foundations for future VCS engagement with the emerging Prevention Alliance at both a strategic and delivery level
- § New Grant Funding agreements will begin in September 2016



# Partnership Grants Programme 2016-2020



## 1. Delivery Partners

For organisations working directly with residents to deliver activities and services that improve outcomes and help make Islington a place where everyone, whatever their background, can enjoy a good quality of life. **Grants up to £20,000 (Fund £320,000 - £400,000)**

## 2. Strategic Partners - Borough-wide

For organisations that deliver high quality leadership and support for the sector, maximise the VCS's influence and increase its capacity to be efficient, resilient sustainable and responsive to the changing needs of our communities. **Grants up to £40,000 (Fund £170,000 - £210,000)**

## 3. Strategic Partners – Neighbourhood Partners

For organisations that provide leadership roles at a neighbourhood-level and work in partnership with voluntary and community organisation to develop and coordinate a high-quality offer of services and activities for residents. **Grants up to £60,000 (Fund £475,000 - £525,000)**

## 4. Strategic Partners – Volunteering

For organisations that can provide a borough-wide volunteering brokerage service; promoting a culture of volunteering and supporting voluntary and community organisations to develop systems for recruiting and managing volunteers effectively. **Grants up to £40,000 (Fund £40,000)**

## 5. Strategic Partners – Advice

For organisations that can provide high-quality generalist and specialist advice and support services, from outreach activities through to specialist litigation. **6 strands up to £550,000 each**



# Partnership Grants Programme 2016-2020



Strand	No. of Applications	Total Requested	Available (Range/Max)
Borough-wide	11	£438,725.38	£170,000 - £210,000
Delivery	53	£959,318.63	£320,000 - £400,000
Neighbourhood	14	£814,000	£475,000 - £525,000
Volunteering	2	£80,000	£30,000 - £40,000
Advice (Strand 1 - Access & Outreach)	2	£250,000	£200,000
Advice (Strand 2 - Primary Access Channel)	4	£132,812	£50,000
Advice (Strand 3 - Triage)	4	£185,000	£100,000
Advice (Strand 4 - Generalist)	3	£742,134	£350,000
Advice (Strand 5 - Targeted Specialist)	3	£388,784.98	£250,000
Advice (Strand 6 - Specialist)	1	£550,000	£550,000
Advice Sub-Total	(8 organisations / consortia)	£2,248,730.98	
Total Applications	97	£4,560,774.99	



## Community Chest 2015-2016

- 102 community groups applied to Islington Council's Community Chest in 2015-16
- 57 community groups (56% of applicants) were awarded funding, totaling grants of just over £222,000
- 14 (25%) of the 57 funded groups were new to Islington Council's Community Chest
- 18 (32%) of the 57 funded groups have received 5 or more grants



## Ward Partnerships

- Ward Partnerships are informal arrangements to support local democracy in Islington which bring together ward councillors, service providers and communities to identify and tackle local issues
  - They do not have delegated powers or budgets, but can influence
  - 15 Ward Partnerships – one for each ward (Finsbury covers two wards: Bunhill and Clerkenwell)
  - Agendas are mostly driven by events and developments relevant to the local neighbourhood – though some discuss boroughwide issues
  - Most common topics are Planning, Community Safety, Trees, Road improvements (particularly Old Street, Highbury Corner, Archway gyratories)
  - Frequency of meetings depends on the need and appetite within each ward – some meet every 4-6 weeks, others once or twice a year, some also run community events
  - They are supported by volunteers from across the council – each partnership has a coordinator to manage the meetings and a link officer to provide more senior / strategic support
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# Ward Partnerships



**Examples** of topics covered by ward partnerships in 2015-16 include:

- **Canonbury:** discussed youth employment and apprenticeships at their June meeting
- **Finsbury** (Bunhill & Clerkenwell): invited Emily Thornberry MP to their meeting in September to discuss the Welfare Reform Bill
- **Finsbury Park** had feedback from Help On Your Doorstep in November on residents supported through their Connect door-knocking project and common issues (HOYD runs the Connect project in a number of social housing estates across Islington, including the Andover Estate)
- **Highbury East:** the Highbury Corner bridge works have been the key focus of discussion over the past year, together with redevelopment of Highbury Pool and a new pavilion at Highbury Fields
- **Highbury West:** held a discussion on the use of high frequency devices which were sold a few years ago and used by residents to deter animals (e.g. foxes) and by the Emirates stadium as part of their voice tannoy system. These could have negative impacts on health, and the World Health Organisation advises that they should be banned



## Ward Partnerships



- **Hillrise** and **Junction** held a joint meeting in September to discuss the Archway gyratory and Archway town centre redevelopments
- **Mildmay** focused on Crime and Anti-social behaviour at their meeting in October with representatives from the Safer Neighbourhood Team and the Community Safety Team attending to discuss how to tackle local issues
- **St George's** held community consultation days in July and September to identify future priorities for the ward partnership
- **St Peter's** had a presentation from the Canal & River Trust on the use of towpaths, including the Regent's Canal towpath which runs through the ward. Transport for London also presented details of the proposed site of the Angel Crossrail station
- **Tollington** holds 2 community events a year to consult on resident priorities. In 2015-16 local people listed childcare and activities for children and families, adult learning courses for ESOL and employment skills, and support for mental health issues as their priorities



## Local Initiatives Fund

- Budget of £240,000 per financial year: £15,000 per ward with £5,000 notionally apportioned to each Ward Councillor
- 174 local projects were awarded funding from Islington Council's Local Initiatives Fund in 2015-16
- 125 groups were funded in 2015-16
- 32 (26%) of the 125 funded groups were new to Islington Council's Local Initiatives Fund
- 30 (24%) of the 125 funded groups were awarded funding for more than one project



## Future Focus and Key Challenges

- Strengthening leadership within the VCS and raising the profile and aspirations of the sector
- Strengthening collaborations with other corporate departments to embed an agreed approach to the allocation of premises and resources to the sector
- Strengthening the VCS's strategic engagement in initiatives such as the Prevention Alliance, Community Cohesion and Community Development Agendas
- Developing collaborative bids to lever funding to ensure that the needs of residents are met and the sector is properly resourced to deliver activities that deliver tangible outcomes
- Strengthening the Council's commitment and consistency to Social Value in commissioning
- Reviewing support arrangements for ward partnerships – there are a number of vacancies and challenges in recruiting and retaining staff volunteers due to pressures of work and family commitments