



Report of: Executive Member for Community Development

Meeting of:	Date	Agenda item	Ward(s)
Voluntary and Community Sector Committee	14 th November 2016		All

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SUBJECT: Islington Council's Community Chest: Round Two Grant Awards 2016/17

1 Synopsis

- 1.1 Small voluntary and community organisations play an important role in Islington, helping to build community resilience and supporting residents who are experiencing poverty and isolation. Islington Council's Community Chest (ICCC), one of the borough's most popular grant programmes, has proved to be a very effective way of funding grassroots activity and developing the capacity of local groups.
- 1.2 This report sets out the organisations approved by Islington Council's Community Chest's Panel for a second tranche of funding for 2015/16.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 To note the funding decisions made by Islington Council's Community Chest Panel in relation to the second round of ICCC grant funding for 2016/ 17, as set out in Appendix A.

3 Background

- 3.1 ICCC is a partnership between Islington Council and Cripplegate Foundation. It is a small grants programme that funds grassroots activity and brings additional capacity building, networking and development support to local voluntary and community organisations. By providing resources for local groups ICCC helps to build community resilience and to tackle poverty and isolation.

- 3.2 ICCC is available to local organisations with a turnover of no more than £100,000 per year – in most cases less than £50,000 per year. Organisations can apply for one grant of up to £5,000 per year. The priority is to support applications from the most deprived areas of the borough with a focus on:
- Educating people and improving their skills and employability
 - Improving people’s mental and/or physical health
 - Improving the local environment and making communities safer
 - Reduce isolation and increasing people’s involvement in the community
- 3.3 Community Chest programmes in Islington have been successfully managed by Cripplegate Foundation for many years. Under current grant funding arrangements, agreed by VCS Committee in March 2015, the council provides funding of £200,000 per year and Cripplegate Foundation adds £50,000 per year (from which £36,000 per year is deducted to cover the costs of administering and developing the programme). In addition Cripplegate Foundation has committed up to £2,500 a year towards the costs of holding an annual celebration event to promote the achievements and impact of activity supported through ICCC.
- 3.4 Applications to the ICCC are considered by the Islington Council Community Chest Panel, (ICCCP) which meets three times a year. The ICCCP is Chaired by the Executive Member for Community Development and consists of two nominated ward Councillors, representatives from Cripplegate Foundation and representatives from the Voluntary and Community Sector, nominated by the Islington Community Network.
- 3.5 The ICCCP also considers issues of wider relevance to the local voluntary and community sector and reviews priorities annually to ensure that the programme continues to meet the needs of Islington’s most vulnerable and isolated residents. In addition panellists track application trends and identify any gaps in the programme that should be addressed.
- 3.6 As of July 2016, VCS Committee agreed that ICCCP will be responsible for approving organisations’ grant awards and required to provide a report to Committee.

4 Round Two Grant Awards 2016/ 17

- 4.1 The second round of ICCC for 2016/ 17 opened for applications in August 2016. It was widely advertised to local groups through voluntary sector networks and forums, tenants and residents’ associations, and on the Islington Council and Cripplegate Foundation websites. Information sessions were arranged for organisations interested in applying to the programme.
- 4.2 £71,334 was available for Round Two, and a further £14,400 was carried forward from Round One making a total of £84,236 available for the ICCC panel to allocate.
- 4.3 24 applications for funding were received for this round, including one application deferred from the previous round. Of the 24 applications, two were withdrawn. One application was withdrawn as it was requesting retrospective funding, making it ineligible for consideration. The second application was withdrawn following deliberation by the ICCCP, which concluded that the application did not align with the priorities of ICCC. 39% of the 23 applications considered were from first-time applicants. Face-to-face meetings were held with the remaining 23 applicants.
- 4.4 The ICCCP met on Tuesday 25th October 2016 to consider applications and, approved awards totalling £79,236 to 17 organisations. A list of organisations recommended for funding and the proposed grant award for each organisation is set out in Appendix A.
- 4.5 24% of organisations (4 out of 17) recommended for funding have not previously received ICCC funding.

5 Implications

5.1 Financial implications:

5.1.1 The council's grant funding of £200,000 per year referred to in this report will be met from existing budgets allocated to ICCC in the Chief Executive's Department.

5.2 Legal Implications:

5.2.1 The council has power to provide grants for the voluntary and community sector under the General Power of Competence set out in Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. The provision of grants for the voluntary and community sector as described in this report is not subject to any other statutory provision. In providing these grants the council must ensure that it complies with its duty to secure best value (Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999).

5.3 Environmental Implications:

5.3.1 One of the priorities of ICCC is 'improving the local environment and making communities safer'. Funding proposals in this report support grassroots community activity which will have a positive impact on the local environment.

5.4 Resident Impact Assessment:

5.4.1 The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

5.4.2 ICCC provides resources for small community organisations, many of which are volunteer-led and wouldn't meet the criteria for funding under other programmes. It enables some of Islington's poorest residents to access community-based services and activities including through newly established groups who offer the potential for adding to existing provision locally or who can reach communities that may not otherwise be supported. Analysis of previous grants demonstrates ICCC's success at meeting the needs of groups with protected characteristics, for example people from black and minority ethnic and refugee backgrounds, young people and older people, women, and people with disabilities.

6 Conclusion

6.1 ICCC helps to nurture and sustain an innovative and resilient voluntary and community sector in Islington, in particular providing resources for smaller organisations that find it hard to access funding from other programmes. ICCC is an effective way of developing grass roots activity across the borough and building capacity in local organisations to support residents who are experiencing poverty and isolation.

6.2 The amendment to the Council's current grant agreement with Cripplegate Foundation to transfer full responsibility to ICCCP has helped to streamline the decision making process and reduce delays in notifying VCS organisations of the outcome of their applications. The Council's interest is protected by having the Executive Member for Community Development as Chairperson of the ICCCP. The VCS Committee will continue to receive reports to note decisions made by ICCCP in respect of awards through the programme. However, the Council has reserved the right to adjust this arrangement if deemed necessary.

Appendices

Appendix A – Approved Grant Awards for ICCC: Round Two 2016/ 17

Background papers: none

Final report clearance:

Signed by:



Cllr Kaya Comer-Schwartz
Executive Member for Community Development

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