

Voluntary and Community Sector Committee - 19 January 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Voluntary and Community Sector Committee held at the Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 19 January 2015 at 6.00 pm.

Present: Councillors: Paul Convery, Andy Hull and Richard Watts

Also present: Councillors: Mouna Hamitouche MBE and Jean-Roger Kaseki (observers)

Councillor Richard Watts in the Chair

Councillor Watts advised the meeting that Councillor Rakhia Ismail had resigned as the Executive Member for Community Development and therefore would no longer serve on the Voluntary and Community Sector Committee. He thanked Councillor Ismail for her valuable work for and with the voluntary and community sector over the past twenty months.

24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item 1)

None.

25 DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item 2)

Councillor Convery substituted for Councillor Hull for agenda item B3 (Support to local voluntary organisations: discretionary rate relief awards and procurement strategy for Islington Community Chest).

26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 3)

Councillor Hull declared an interest in agenda item B3 (Support to local voluntary organisations: discretionary rate relief awards and procurement strategy for Islington Community Chest) as a trustee of B2B Create.

Councillor Hamitouche declared an interest in agenda item B3 (Support to local voluntary organisations: discretionary rate relief awards and procurement strategy for Islington Community Chest) as a member of the Algerian British Connection.

Councillor Kaseki declared an interest as a member of The Laundry.

27 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 17 NOVEMBER AND 12 DECEMBER 2014 (Item 4)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meetings held on 17 November and 12 December 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

28 LOCAL INITIATIVES FUND AWARDS (Item B1)

A revised Appendix A was laid round.

The report was introduced by Councillor Hull, Executive Member for Finance and Performance. He requested that, with regard to the project for an edible garden at

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Ambler Primary School in Highbury West Ward, funding be awarded as soon as possible after Councillor Greening's agreement to sponsor the project (as one of the Ward councillors), rather than awaiting approval at the next Committee meeting in March 2015.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the new proposals submitted by Ward Councillors and detailed in revised Appendix A of the report of the Executive Member for Community Development, be approved in principle, subject to the Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy and Community Partnerships) being satisfied that the necessary checks have been made and any other issues resolved.

(b) That, with regard to the project for an edible garden at Ambler Primary School in Highbury West Ward, funding be awarded as soon as possible after Councillor Greening's agreement to sponsor the project (as one of the Ward councillors), rather than awaiting approval at the next Committee meeting in March 2015

(c) That the amendments to the Ward budgets resulting from project funding being returned, also detailed in the budget summary in Appendix A, be noted.

Reasons for decision

To assist in developing and sustaining a healthy voluntary and community sector in Islington.

Other options considered

None.

Conflicts of interest/Any dispensations granted

None.

29

LONDON BOROUGH GRANTS COMMITTEE: LEVY 2015/16 (Item 2)

The report was introduced by Councillor Hull, Executive Member for Finance and Performance.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the London Boroughs' Grants Committee proposed annual budget of £10.5m in 2015-16 be noted.

(b) That Islington's estimated contribution of £231k in 2015-16, an increase of 0.9% on Islington's 2014/15 contribution, be approved.

Reason for decision

The Council's subscription contributed towards the funding of many London-wide organisations, providing a range of services, which benefited Islington residents.

Other options considered

None.

Conflicts of interest/note of dispensations granted

None.

30 **SUPPORT TO LOCAL VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS: DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF AWARDS AND PROCUREMENT STRATEGY FOR ISLINGTON COMMUNITY CHEST (Item 3)**

The report was introduced by Councillor Watts, Leader of the Council and Chair of the Executive.

The report was amended on submission as follows:

Recommendation 2.1: add “including the addition of the City of London Academy”

RESOLVED:

(a) That discretionary rate relief awards be approved to the organisations listed at Appendix A of the report of the Executive Member for Community Development, including the City of London Academy, for five years, from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2020.

(b) That applications from organisations that become eligible for discretionary rate relief after these awards have been made be considered by the Voluntary and Community Sector Committee twice a year, in January and July.

(c) That it be noted that the current arrangements for Islington Community Chest were working well and, on that basis, Cripplegate Foundation be invited to submit a proposal for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee for future support and development of the programme. The proposal to comprise a three year Council contribution of £200,000 per year, from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2018, subject to the Council’s final approval of the Budget in February 2015.

(d) That the current grant award of £5,000 per year from the VCS Grants Fund to the organisation B2B Create be extended for twelve months to 31 March 2016.

Reason for decision

To introduce cost effective ways of supporting local organisations and to sustain a healthy voluntary sector capable of achieving the best outcomes for residents.

Other options considered

None.

Conflicts of interest/note of dispensations granted

None.

31 **COMMUNITY FESTIVALS FUND: PROPOSALS FOR REVIEW (Item 4)**

The report was introduced by Councillor Hull, Executive Member for Finance and Performance.

The report was amended on submission as follows:

Replace recommendation 2.3 in the report of the Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing with the following:

“To agree to the eligibility criteria that applicants seeking Community Festivals Fund support must secure external funding for their event and not be reliant on funding from other council sources; and that smaller community events primarily of benefit to local neighbourhoods or specific ward areas will no longer be eligible to apply to the Community Festivals Fund but will be directed to apply to the Local Initiatives Fund.”

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RESOLVED:

- (a) That the revised funding criteria for the Community Festivals Fund to be used from 2015/2016 and detailed in Appendix One of the report of the Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing be approved.
- (b) That the minimum level of funding provided by the Community Festivals Fund be raised to an individual festival to £1,500 and the maximum to £4,000, for those festivals that meet the Fund's new strategic ambitions and provide Borough-wide benefit.
- (c) That the eligibility criteria that applicants seeking Community Festivals Fund support must secure external funding for their event and not be reliant on funding from other Council sources be approved and that smaller community events, primarily of benefit to local neighbourhoods or specific Ward areas, be no longer eligible to apply to the Community Festivals Fund and be directed to apply to the Local Initiatives Fund.

Reason for decision

To streamline the Council's funding processes and prioritise key strategic festivals to support equalities and community cohesion.

Other options considered

None.

Conflicts of interest/note of dispensations granted

None

The meeting ended at 6.16 pm

CHAIR