



AGENDA FOR THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE

Members of the Voluntary and Community Sector Committee are summoned to a meeting which will be held at the Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on **9 November 2015 at 6:00pm.**

John Lynch
Head of Democratic Services

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Despatched : 28 October 2015

Membership 2015/16

Councillor Richard Watts (Chair)
Councillor Andy Hull
Councillor Asima Shaikh

Substitute Members

Councillor Janet Burgess MBE
Councillor Joe Caluori
Councillor Paul Convery
Councillor James Murray
Councillor Claudia Webbe

Observers

Councillor Theresa Debono
Councillor Rakhia Ismail
Councillor Jean-Roger Kaseki
(1 vacancy)

Quorum: is 2 Councillors



A. Formal matters	Page
1. Apologies for absence	
2. Declaration of substitute members	
3. Declarations of interest	

If you have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest* in an item of business:

- if it is not yet on the council's register, you must declare both the existence and details of it at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent;
 - you may choose to declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest that is already in the register in the interests of openness and transparency.
- In both the above cases, you must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item.

If you have a personal interest in an item of business and you intend to speak or vote on the item you must declare both the existence and details of it at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent but you may participate in the discussion and vote on the item.

*(a) Employment, etc - Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.

(b) Sponsorship - Any payment or other financial benefit in respect of your expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of your election; including from a trade union.

(c) Contracts - Any current contract for goods, services or works, between you or your partner (or a body in which one of you has a beneficial interest) and the council.

(d) Land - Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.

(e) Licences- Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.

(f) Corporate tenancies - Any tenancy between the council and a body in which you or your partner have a beneficial interest.

(g) Securities - Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

This applies to all members present at the meeting.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting	1 - 14
B. Matters for decision	Page
1. The Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy 2016 - 2020 and the extension of grant awards from the VCS Grants Fund and the Advice Fund to 31 June 2016	15 - 50

C. Urgent non-exempt matters

Any non-exempt items which the Chair agrees should be considered urgently by reason of special circumstances. The reasons for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.

D. Exclusion of press and public

To consider whether, in view of the nature of the remaining items on the agenda, any of them are likely to involve the disclosure of exempt or confidential information within the terms of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and, if so, whether to exclude the press and public during discussion thereof.

E. Confidential/exempt items for information (if any)

F. Urgent Exempt Matters

Any exempt items which the Chair agrees should be considered urgently by reason of special circumstances. The reasons for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes

The next meeting of the Voluntary and Community Sector Committee will be on
15 December 2015

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London Borough of Islington

Voluntary and Community Sector Committee - 22 September 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Voluntary and Community Sector Committee held at the Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 22 September 2015 at 6.00 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** Richard Watts and Asima Shaikh

Councillor Richard Watts in the Chair

52 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item A1)**

Received from Councillors Andy Hull, Rakhia Ismail and Theresa Debono.

53 **DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item A2)**

None

54 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item A3)**

None.

55 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Item A4)**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

56 **LOCAL INITIATIVES FUND (Item A1)**

A member of the public drew attention to the proposal in St George's Ward for "Healthy Generations", stating that the payment was also to cover the hire of the Hall.

RESOLVED:

1. That, with the exception of the proposal by Councillor Debono for tents for Calais asylum seekers (organisation to be confirmed), the proposals submitted by Ward councillors for Local Initiatives Funding detailed in revised Appendix A (attached to these minutes) of the report of the Executive Member for Economic and Community Development, be approved in principle, subject to the Assistant Chief Executive (Governance and Human Resources) being satisfied that the necessary checks have been made and any other issues resolved.
2. That with regard to the proposal by Councillor Debono for tents for Calais asylum seekers (organisation to be confirmed), officers to seek legal advice to ensure that payment of funds is not ultra vires. Subject to the legal advice, any subsequent payment to be regarded as a one-off payment.

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.

The meeting ended at 6.10 pm

CHAIR

NEW PROPOSALS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE IN SEPTEMBER 2015

Ward	Councillor	Organisation	Project Summary	Timescale	Areas / Residents to Benefit	Number of Residents to Benefit	Budget Proposal Amount (£)	Project Total (£)	Match Funding Details	Governance and Human Resources Comments
Barnsbury	Jilani Chowdhury / Mouna Hamitouche / James Murray	Friends of Barnard Park	Pop-up events in Barnard Park over three Sundays in May and June 2016 in partnership with the Adventure Playground. Funding to pay for entertainment, publicity, equipment and activities.	29 May to 12 June 2016	Local residents	750+ (dependent on weather)	1,500	2,500	£500 Friends of Barnard Park, £500 through fundraising tbc	
Bunhill / Clerkenwell	Troy Gallagher / Robert Khan / Claudia Webbe / Raphael Andrews	Finsbury and Clerkenwell Volunteers	Befriending and outreach services, including a telephone club, lunch club, shopping trips and assisted transport. Funding to contribute towards the salary of a volunteer organiser.	1 Oct 2015 to 31 March 2016	Older people, many of whom are housebound	135	2,500	6,600	£4,100 from reserves and other funding applications tbc	
Caledonian	Paul Convery / Una O'Halloran / Rupert Perry	Healthy Generations (formerly Music for People)	Musician fees and volunteer expenses for four Dave Elvis concerts/ dances at West Library at Bridgeman Road.	Oct 2015 to Feb 2016	Older people and older people with special needs from local care homes	25 per month	400	400	Not applicable	
Clerkenwell	James Court / Raphael Andrews / Alice Donovan	Peel Institute	Christmas meal and party for frail isolated older people who attend the Peel Club for over 55s. Escorted transport will be provided and small gifts will be given to attendees. Funding to pay for a cook, food, drink and a professional entertainer.	14 Dec 2015	Older people	70	1,010	1,650	£640 Peel Institute	
Finsbury Park	Michael O'Sullivan	Isledon Village Community Project	IVCP annual community BBQ for estate residents. Funding to pay for a children's entertainer and catering accessories.	BBQ on 5 Sept 2015	Local residents	200 to 250	200	1,500	£1,000 Family Mosaic, £300 tbc from Origins, Accurro, Chequers	

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Ward	Councillor	Organisation	Project Summary	Timescale	Areas / Residents to Benefit	Number of Residents to Benefit	Budget Proposal Amount (£)	Project Total (£)	Match Funding Details	Governance and Human Resources Comments
Highbury West	Theresa Debono / Richard Greening / Andy Hull	Ambler School	To transform a garden at Ambler School into an edible playground. Funding to pay for new greenhouse, story telling area, hut, benches and fox-proofing for the new garden.	Equipment to be added to garden around December 2015	Staff, pupils and parents / carers as well as local groups who use the garden	1,500+	3,000	32,460	£24,000 LBI Schools Funding, £5,460 Highbury West LIF awarded in Jan 2015	
Highbury West	Theresa Debono / Richard Greening / Andy Hull	Healthy Generations (formerly Music for People)	Musician fees, volunteer expenses and travel and subsistence for four special occasion concerts at the Stress Project, e.g. Christmas, Easter, etc.	Oct 2015 to Sept 2016	Older people and mental health service users	200	400	400	Not applicable	
Highbury West	Theresa Debono	Tents for Calais asylum seekers (organisation to be confirmed)	Initiative to deliver urgently needed waterproof tents to Calais asylum seekers. Funding to pay for 15 tents, shuttle to Calais, breakdown cover and petrol.	1 Sept to 3 Oct 2015	Calais asylum seekers who receive the tents	30	1,000	1,000	Not applicable	
Hillrise	Micheline Ngongo / David Poyser / Marian Spall	Caxton House Community Centre	Funding to pay for tutor costs for 50 weekly sessions of chair based exercise classes (gentle exercise) and 50 weekly sessions of family zumba gold classes.	Sept 2015 to Aug 2016	Open to all, though gentle exercise mainly aimed at over 55s	1,730	3,000	9,398	£6,398 Caxton House (£5,730 room hire, £668 for publicity, stationery and refreshments)	
Hillrise	Micheline Ngongo / David Poyser	Hills Community Trust	Contribution to a course in handicrafts (knitting, crocheting, glass and ceramics, painting and pottery). Funding to contribute towards room hire, ceramic materials and craft materials.	Jan to Sept 2016	Open to all	100+	1,500	1,500	Not applicable	
Junction / St Georges	All councillors in Junction and St George's wards	LBI Public Lighting	Festive lighting on five street trees and four festive lamp columns in Campdale Road and Tufnell Park Road for six weeks.	1 Dec 2015 to 4 Jan 2016	Local residents, businesses and visitors to the area	Unknown	3,463.87	3,463.87	Not applicable	

NEW PROPOSALS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE IN SEPTEMBER 2015

Ward	Councillor	Organisation	Project Summary	Timescale	Areas / Residents to Benefit	Number of Residents to Benefit	Budget Proposal Amount (£)	Project Total (£)	Match Funding Details	Governance and Human Resources Comments
Junction / Mildmay / Tollington	All councillors in Junction, Mildmay and Tollington wards	LBI Governance and Human Resources	Christmas Party for older people held in the Islington Assembly Hall. Funding to contribute towards a hot Christmas lunch.	9 December 2015	Older people aged 70 and over	Up to 100	1,500	4,000	£500 LIF from another ward tbc, ongoing fundraising	
Mildmay	Joe Caluori / Jenny Kay / Olly Parker	The Asian Elderly Luncheon and Social Club	Food and drink for celebrations of Eid, Diwali, Christmas and New Year.	Eid and Diwali (7 Nov 2015) and Christmas (19 Dec 2015)	Mostly older people from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka	30	500	500	Not applicable	
St Georges	Kat Fletcher / Satnam Gill / Nick Ward	Healthy Generations (formerly Music for People)	Funding to pay for instructor's fees for 44 computer classes at Hilldrop Community Centre in partnership with the Islington Pensioners Forum.	Oct 2015 to Sept 2016	Older people	19+	1,540	1,540	Not applicable	
St Marys	Gary Poole	LBI Heritage Services	Oral history and documentary film project looking at the history of Milner Square from the 1930s to 1970s. Funding to pay for venue for film launch, photo exhibition material, photographer and costs of facilitator who will train volunteers to run reminiscence therapy sessions.	Launch and exhibition on 8 Sept, reminiscence sessions in Nov	Over 50s especially from Age UK, Islington Veterans Assoc and Islington Pensioners Forum	25 working on the project, 1,000 over 50s	1,200	9,200	£8,000 Heritage Lottery Services	
St Marys	Nurullah Turan	Healthy Generations (formerly Music for People)	Musician fees, volunteer expenses and travel and subsistence costs for six sing a long concerts for St Mary's Stroke Club and two special event concerts and 12 exercise classes for Islington Pensioners Forum.	Oct 2015 to Sept 2016	Older people	20 at Stroke Club, 10 per exercise class, 70+ at concerts	1,220	1,220	Not applicable	

NEW PROPOSALS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE IN SEPTEMBER 2015

Ward	Councillor	Organisation	Project Summary	Timescale	Areas / Residents to Benefit	Number of Residents to Benefit	Budget Proposal Amount (£)	Project Total (£)	Match Funding Details	Governance and Human Resources Comments
St Marys	Angela Picknell / Gary Poole	The Margins Project	Weekly Cold Weather Night Shelter run in conjunction with CARIS Islington for 13 weeks providing accommodation, shelter and advice on resettlement and health issues. Funding to pay for volunteers' travel expenses, food for the 13 weeks and a contribution to the salary of the project manager.	7 Jan to 31 Mar 2016	People who are homeless	88	2,767	2,767	Not applicable	
St Peters	Alice Perry / Gary Doolan / Martin Klute	Healthy Generations (formerly Music for People)	Musician fees, volunteer expenses and travel and subsistence for six sing-a-long and movement sessions for residents of Bridgeside Lodge Care Centre.	Oct 2015 to April 2016	Older people with dementia	47	600	600	Not applicable	
Tollington	Jean Kaseki	Healthy Generations (formerly Music for People)	Musician fees, volunteer expenses and travel and subsistence costs for four sing-a-long, dance and movement sessions at Hanley Crouch Community Centre and Islington Arts and Media School (for their Christmas party).	October 2015 to Sept 2016	Older people and those with special needs and mental health issues	Up to 130	400	400	Not applicable	
Tollington	Jean Kaseki	Community Kitchens Project (Manor Gardens Welfare Trust)	A one day Level 1 Food Safety course in Catering course at Hanley Crouch Community Centre for the members of their youth club. Funding for trainers, learning resources, venue and other associated costs.	Jan to Mar 2016	Young people	10 to 12	500	1,000	£500 BBC Children in Need	
Tollington	Jean Kaseki	CARIS Islington	Funding to contribute towards staff costs for the Children and Young People's Bereavement Service and Cold Weather Shelter.	1 Jan to 31 Mar 2016	Islington residents who are bereaved or in poverty	350	500	30,461	Remainder from group's reserves, donations, trust applications and churches	
Tollington	Flora Williamson / Richard Watts	Hanley Crouch Community Association	Fun day community event at Islington Arts and Media School with a focus on the views of residents on council priorities. Funding to pay for hall hire, entertainment, staff, publicity and refreshments.	3 Oct 2015	Tollington ward residents	200	1,500	1,700	£200 local businesses	

ADDITIONAL SUMMER ACTIVITIES APPROVED BY ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES)

Ward	Councillor	Organisation	Project Summary	Timescale	Areas / Residents to Benefit	Number of Residents to Benefit	Budget Proposal Amount (£)	Project Total (£)	Match Funding Details	Governance and Human Resources Comments
Bunhill	Troy Gallagher / Robert Khan / Claudia Webbe	Whitecross TRA	Party to celebrate the achievements of the local community. Funding to pay for a DJ, roadie and publicity.	Friday 18 September	Local residents	120 to 150	500	1,000	£500 from the landlady of the White Lion pub	

PROJECT CHANGES TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE IN SEPTEMBER 2015

Ward	Councillor	Organisation	Project Summary	Timescale	Areas / Residents to Benefit	Number of Residents to Benefit	Budget Proposal Amount (£)	Project Total (£)	Match Funding Details	Governance and Human Resources Comments
Page 7 Barnsbury	Jilani Chowdhury / James Murray	Friends of Joseph Grimaldi Park	Funding for the purchase and installation of a storage container in Grimaldi Park. The container will be used to store sports and gardening equipment, tents, folding tables and chairs, etc.	Oct 2015 to Jan 2016	Park users	Unable to quantify	2,693.65	4,090	£1,400 LBI Greenspace (£900 for concrete pad, £500 for installation)	Grant originally awarded in March 2015 for the Joseph Grimaldi Park festival.
Caledonian / Tollington	Paul Convery / Una O'Halloran / Rupert Perry / Jean Kaseki / Richard Watts	Islington Private Tenants	Information for Islington private renters to include promotion of organisation, signposting to local services and raising awareness of recent legal changes. Funding to pay for leaflets, posters, information material, advertising costs and contribution to office costs.	Oct 2015 to March 2016	Private renters in Tollington and Caledonian wards	500 (based on numbers accessing info on website)	1,204.12	1,204.12	Not applicable	Grant originally awarded in Nov 2013 for ten events for private renters.
Highbury West	Theresa Debono / Richard Greening / Andy Hull	Islington Foodbank	Two portakabins and sound screens to facilitate the group's sudden move to Highbury Roundhouse from Pentonville Road (York House).	July 2015 to March 2016	Islington residents	3,000	2,500	4,500	Details to follow	Grant originally awarded in March 2015 for salary of part time project manager.
Junction	Kaya Comer-Schwartz	Archway Town Centre Group	A one day Archway town centre festival in partnership with Islington Council featuring stalls, music and children's activities. Funding to contribute towards children's entertainment and the associated workshops.	19 Sept 2015	Local residents, town centre visitors and businesses	200	221.43	2,721	£200 ATCG, £500 LBI (printing), £900 LIF awarded in July 2015, further fundraising tbc	Grant originally awarded in Sept 2014 for Cleaner Safer Archway Week.

Total LIF funding requested and balance remaining

Total Local Initiatives Fund budget allocation 2015-16:	£240,000
Total allocations to be made from previous years' budgets:	£16,130
Amount allocated by VCS Committee to date:	£61,030
Amount allocated through delegated approval to date:	£500
Balance remaining:	£194,599
New proposals for September VCS Committee:	£30,201
Total amount remaining to allocate in 2015-16:	£164,399

2015-16 Balance remaining by ward:	
Ward	Balance:
Barnsbury	£4,936
Bunhill	£10,413
Caledonian	£13,800
Canonbury	£13,030
Clerkenwell	£12,243
Finsbury Park	£10,367
Highbury East	£14,755
Highbury West	£9,494
Hillrise	£7,710
Holloway	£3,519
Junction	£10,954
Mildmay	£18,377
St George's	£5,974
St Mary's	£9,043
St Peter's	£9,952
Tollington	£9,829

£164,399**Notes:**

Includes £775 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £695 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £2,053 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £1,000 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £1,495 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £1,035 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £1,000 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £500 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £786 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £5,177 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £50 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £1,513 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £50 from previous LIF allocations



Report of: **Executive Member for Economic and Community Development**

Meeting of:	Date	Agenda item	Ward(s)
Voluntary and Community Sector Committee	9 th November 2015		All

Delete as appropriate		Non-exempt
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SUBJECT: The VCS Strategy 2016-2020 and the extension of Grant Awards from the VCS Grants Fund and the Advice Fund to 31 June 2016

1 Synopsis

- 1.1 This report presents the new Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy (2016-2020) which has been developed in response to a broad programme of consultation with the Voluntary and Community Sector, Corporate Departments, other public sector bodies and potential future investment partners and in the context of the growing financial challenge faced by the Council and the VCS.
- 1.2 The strategy recognises the considerable contribution that the VCS makes to supporting local residents and re-emphasises the council's ongoing commitment to providing core grant funding to the VCS to deliver a range of activities and services to improve outcomes for local residents. The challenging financial context over the next four years will mean that both the council and the VCS will need to do things differently and work more collaboratively if we are to maintain a resilient and sustainable sector better placed to work to continue to serve the needs of local residents.
- 1.3 The Strategy provides the framework for the Council's VCS Core Grants Programme which currently provides grant support to more than 40 organisations working in Islington. The current VCS grant agreements are scheduled to end on 31st March 2016. The Government's Spending Review for 2015 will not be published until 25th November 2015 and as a result, the Council will not be in a position to publish a VCS funding prospectus detailing available resources until the end of December 2015.
- 1.4 Officers estimate that completing the next grant funding programme submission and decision making processes will take a minimum of three months. The council is committed to giving a minimum of three months' written notice to VCS organisations if their funding is reduced or withdrawn. There is therefore a need to extend current grant awards from the VCS Grants Fund and the Advice Fund for a minimum of three months to 31 June 2016 and potentially up to a maximum of 6 months until 31st September 2016 in order to complete the necessary processes.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To agree the VCS Strategy attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 2.2 To agree to extend current grant awards from the VCS Grants Fund and the Advice Fund for a minimum of three months to 31 June 2016 and potentially up to a maximum of 6 months until 31st September 2016. A list of awards is attached as appendix 2 to this report.

3 Background

- 3.1 The voluntary sector lies at the heart of the council's ambition for a fairer Islington. There are currently more than 2,200 VCS organisations currently operating in Islington providing a range of activities and services for local residents. The sector plays an important role in providing a voice for the voiceless, mobilising community action, promoting community cohesions and tackling the causes and effects of poverty, inequality, and social and economic exclusion.
- 3.2 Our confidence in the VCS is visible through our contracting arrangements and grant funding. During 2014/15, the sector secured council grants and contracts to the value of approximately £41 million, delivering a range of services, many of which the council has a statutory duty to provide. Since 2011.48 organisations have received direct grant funding of £2.3 Million per annum from the VCS Grants Fund and the Advice Fund enabling them to support and improve the quality of life for thousands of residents. The overall VCS grants fund of £3.5 Million also includes grant funding provision for Direct Rate Relief, Local Initiatives Fund, Community Festivals Fund and the VCS Rescue Fund.

4 The Financial Context

- 4.1 Unprecedented cuts in public spending imposed by central government present enormous challenges to maintaining essential services and responding to new demands. Between 2010/11 and 2015/16 the Council will have cut its spending by £150million. Further savings of £90 million are projected to be required over the next four years if the Council is to balance its budget.
- 4.2 At a time when central government is cutting funding for public services and cutting welfare benefits for those out of work and in work, we need strong and independent voluntary and community organisations more than ever. Reduced resources mean that we will have to find new ways of meeting our priorities. We want to work with innovative organisations that are well run, provide value for money and deliver positive outcomes for residents.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 To help the council develop its thinking around future support for local voluntary organisations, the then Third Sector Partnership team ran an eight week consultation from mid-June to mid-August 2014. The focus of the consultation was the Islington Community Fund which has six grants programmes. More than 40 organisations sent in individual responses to the consultation. We also received written feedback from workshops facilitated by Voluntary Action Islington which were attended by 30 representatives of local organisations.

5.2 A series of round table meetings with Key VCS organisations and Members and Officers have continued to inform the development of the strategy over the following months. The draft strategy has been circulated to key VCS partners and presented to the VCS Community Network Group for comment. In addition the draft strategy has been circulated to other key corporate departments and discussed in detail at the Council's Third Sector Strategic Forum.

6 The VCS Strategy Summary

- 6.1 The Council remains committed to continuing to support for the VCS, including maintaining our grants programmes, harnessing external funding opportunities and
- 6.2 The VCS Strategy calls on Islington's voluntary and community sector to use its independence and ability to be responsive to identify opportunities to improve quality of life for Islington residents, by:
- Addressing and preventing deeper complex social issues and long-term challenges that affect our residents
 - Supporting residents to be independent and resilient
 - Promoting community cohesion and champion equality
 - Supporting neighbourhoods and communities to grow
 - Providing or sign-post residents to appropriate, high quality advice and guidance
- 6.3 The strategy sets out a series of commitments from the Council in relation to funding, commissioning and procurement, premises and working strategically with key partners.
- 6.4 Delivering Islington's VCS strategy will require a cross Council approach. The Council's Third Sector Strategic Forum will serve as the primary mechanism for ensuring that the Council adopts a consistent and coordinated approach to its engagement with the VCS. The Council's new Voluntary and Community Sector Development Team will be tasked with coordinating the Third Sector Strategic Forum and the delivery of the strategy's recommendations.

Extending the current Grant Programme

- 6.5 The current grant programme award agreements are scheduled to end on 31st March 2016. The Government's Spending Review for 2015 will not be published until 25th November 2015. At this stage it is anticipated that the Council's Settlement will not be formalised until mid-December 2015. Consequently, the Council will not be in a position to publish a VCS funding prospectus detailing available resources until the end of December 2015.
- 6.6 Officers estimate that completing the next grant funding programme submission and decision making processes will take a minimum of three months. The council is committed to giving a minimum of three months' written notice to VCS organisations if their funding is reduced or withdrawn.
- 6.7 As a result, the Council will need to extend current grant awards from the VCS Grants Fund and the Advice Fund for a minimum of three months to 31 June 2016 and potentially up to a maximum of 6 months until 31st September 2015 in order to have sufficient time to complete the process and provide enough notice to VCS organisations currently funded by the Council's VCS Grants Fund and the Advice Fund
- 6.8 .Officers will of course endeavour to complete the process in the minimum timescale. The

amount of funding allocated to each organisation will be based pro-rata. Payment of grant awards will continue to be conditional on meeting agreed outcomes which officers will negotiate with each organisation using existing performance frameworks.

7 Implications

7.1 Financial implications:

- 7.1.1 Extending current grant awards from the VCS Grants Fund and the Advice Fund for three months to 31 June 2016 has been factored in to the council's budget setting arrangements for 2015-16 and is affordable.

8 Legal Implications:

- 8.1 The council has power to provide grants to voluntary and community sector organisations under the general power of competence set out in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.
- 8.2 The provision of these grants is likely to be associated with state aid. The council can provide state aid in relation to 'services of general economic interest' (SGEI) as detailed in Article 106(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and Schedule 3 paragraph 4 of the Competition Act 1998.
- 8.3 Aid of up to €500,000 (approximately £407,675) may be provided to an organisation for SGEI so long as that organisation has not received de minimis aid from any other source in the last three fiscal years which would result in the total de minimis aid to that organisation exceeding the €500,000 (Commission Regulation No 360/2012, the "de minimis Regulation").
- 8.4 In the event that an organization has received other de minimis aid that takes it over the threshold of £407,675, there is an alternative regime for SGEI exemption for high value compensation that may be used. This was established by Commission Decision (2012/12/EU, the "Decision") that came into force on 31 January 2012. Should this be necessary the detailed rules on calculation of cost and record keeping and reporting set out in the Decision will need to be complied with.
- 8.5 In extending the existing grant agreements as proposed in the report the total value of grant provided to each organization over the extended period needs to be calculated in order to ensure compliance with the SGEI requirements as appropriate.
- 8.6 The council must also ensure that it complies with its duty to secure best value (Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999).

9 Environmental Implications

- 9.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this report

10 Resident Impact Assessment:

- 10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was completed in 2011 to assess the impact of Islington Community Fund on different groups of residents. The impact was found to be positive. A copy of the EIA was published as an appendix to the Islington Community Fund report to Executive Committee on 17 March 2011. The VCS strategy builds on this existing programme of work.

11 Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

11.1 The council has undertaken a comprehensive programme of consultation with the VCS and corporate, public sector and investment partners in order to develop the VCS strategy. The VCS strategy sets out the council's approach to working with and supporting the VCS over the next four years in the context of the current financial challenges faced by the council and the VCS, the Council's corporate priorities and the growing needs of local residents.

11.2 The spending Review will not be published until 25th November 2015. Agreeing to extend these grant awards now will provide the voluntary sector with greater financial certainty in the near term and will enable the trustees of local organisations to plan ahead and agree their budgets for 2016.

Background Papers

Appendix:

Appendix 1 VCS Strategy 2016 – 2020

Appendix 2 VCS Grants Fund and Advice Fund: List of Grant Awards

Final report clearance:

Signed by:



28th October 2015

Executive Member for Economic and Community Development

Received
by:

Head of Democratic Services

Date

Report Author: Pete Courtie Head of Partnerships, Place and Culture

Tel 020 7527 3021

Email Peter.courtie@islington.gov.uk

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Towards a Fairer Islington

Voluntary & Community Sector Strategy

2016-2020

Foreword

Islington's voluntary and community sector (VCS) lies at the heart of our ambition for a fairer Islington. It is able to reach and develop relationships of trust with residents and communities which statutory services are not always able to do. Some of our most vulnerable residents will first turn to the VCS for support. The sector therefore plays an important role in providing a voice for the voiceless, mobilising community action and tackling the causes and effects of poverty, inequality, and social and economic exclusion.

Islington's VCS organisations have a long tradition of finding new approaches and developing innovative solutions to a range of social issues. They have been at the forefront of major social movements and helped change the face of both local and national policy. Building on this history, we want to maintain a vibrant, dynamic and independent sector, that is able to respond directly to the evolving interests and changing needs of the neighbourhoods and communities we collectively serve.

The VCS also has an important role in achieving community cohesion and other outcomes that we are seeking. This includes helping us deliver our public sector equality duty and the specific equality objectives that we have set. Islington enjoys good community cohesion, and is a good place to live, study and work for most people. However, we know that can do more to address the third equality duty - fostering good relations between people from different groups.

This means improving relationships between communities and within communities. It is not just about the relationship between different ethnic groups. It is also about the relationships between young people and older people, disabled people and people who are not disabled, people who have lived here a long time and new arrivals, people from different neighbourhoods or wards, straight communities and gay communities, affluent and poor and so on. In particular, we want young people from different communities to grow up with a sense of common belonging, which also means helping them explore and access positive life opportunities.

At a time when central government is cutting funding for public services and cutting welfare benefits for those out of work and in work, we need strong and independent voluntary and community organisations more than ever. As well as providing day-to-day services to residents, we know that the sector can use its independence and creativity to challenge social injustices. Islington Council is therefore committed to continuing substantial support for the VCS, including maintaining our grants programmes and harnessing external funding opportunities.

This strategy sets out the role we see for voluntary and community sector organisations in the borough in helping us to meet our priorities. It outlines the approach that we will take in our work with the sector and makes a series of commitments that seek to maximise our collective resources in an increasingly constrained financial context.

Councillor Asima Shaikh
Executive Member for Economic and Community Development

The Context for Our Strategy

The VCS in Islington

Islington has more than 2,200 independent voluntary and community organisations established for charitable, social, community or environmental benefit, rather than for profit. They vary in size, work in diverse fields and specialisms, and support a wide range of local beneficiaries (see Appendix A). We recognise that many organisations whose presence help to make Islington a vibrant place to live and work, receive no direct financial support from the Council.

Key parts of Islington's voluntary and community sector have consistently demonstrated their ability to deliver high quality services and compete for funding.

Current funding and support for the VCS

Our confidence in the VCS is visible through our contracting arrangements and grant funding. During 2014/15, the sector secured Council grants and contracts to the value of £41.15 million, delivering a range of services, many of which the Council has a statutory duty to provide (See Appendix B). Since 2011, 48 organisations have received direct grant funding of £2.3 million per annum from the VCS Grants Fund and the Advice Fund, enabling them to support and improve the quality of life for thousands of residents. The overall VCS grants fund of £3.5 million also includes grant funding provision for Direct Rate Relief, Local Initiatives Fund, Community Festivals Fund and the VCS Rescue Fund.

We also support the sector through in-kind arrangements, such as the provision of premises at below market rents, the transfer of buildings on long lease, the use of mandatory and discretionary rate relief, or by working directly with organisations to develop and deliver new services.

A harsher financial climate

The Council has faced, and will continue to face unprecedented cuts, which have forced us to reduce our spending dramatically. Between 2010 and 2016 our central government funding will have been cut by half. This includes savings of £38 million in 2015-16. Over the next four years we expect to have to save a further £90 million. Within this context, we need to meet our statutory obligations, maintain essential services and respond to increasing and changing needs of residents.

We remain determined to continue making a real difference in the areas that matter most to local people, and the voluntary sector is a key partner in this endeavour. However, budget reductions on this level will inevitably result in reductions to key Council grants and procurement opportunities. We hope that the VCS can adapt to a harsher financial climate by reducing costs, becoming more efficient and diversifying income sources.

Our Strategy

Our Strategy

We see the VCS as key strategic and operational partners in delivering our vision and priorities for a fairer Islington.

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.

Mobilise community action and 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: Including small-grants and partnership grants programmes, discretionary rate relief, and a bespoke training and capacity building fund.

Contracting: Directly commissioning organisations to deliver services, and ensuring that our approach to commissioning favours organisations that deliver social value.

Premises: Developing a borough-wide premises strategy that maximises the use of our buildings, and enables organisations to use these for income generation.

Working strategically with key partners: Including the VCS and Council departments to provide leadership and build the capacity of the sector, promote volunteering, support fundraising, establish networks, maximise our collective impact in neighbourhoods, and ensure a coordinate whole-Council approach to the VCS

Our vision and priorities

Islington's Council's Corporate Plan ("Towards a Fairer Islington") sets out the Council's vision and priorities for the next four years, what we will do to achieve them, and how we will measure our success.

Our Vision for the borough is to make Islington fairer and to create a place where everyone, whatever their background, has the opportunity to reach their potential and enjoy a good quality of life. Our priorities over the next four years are to:

1. Building more Council housing and supporting private renters

2. Help residents who are out of work to find the right job
3. Help residents cope with the rising cost of living
4. Make Islington a place where our residents have a good quality of life
5. Provide residents with good services on a tight budget

Supporting a Dynamic VCS

We want to support Islington's voluntary and community sector to maintain and renew its long-standing history of being dynamic, vibrant and independent. We want the sector to use its independence and ability to be responsive, and to identify opportunities to improve quality of life for Islington residents in a rapidly changing environment.

At the same time we need the voluntary and community sector to be connected with mainstream services, supporting residents to access the range of opportunities in the borough that promote independence and resilience including help with finding the right job. In order to fulfil our ambitions for Islington, we need the voluntary and community sector to:

- **Address and prevent deeper complex social issues and long term challenges that affect our residents.** We need the sector to provide innovative solutions and high quality services (both preventative and ameliorative) that improve outcomes for people affected complex social issues such as, mental health, domestic violence, long-term health conditions and substance misuse. We need the sector to continue, and develop its work with particular population groups such as young people, carers, elderly residents and people with disabilities in these areas.
- **Support residents to be independent and resilient.** We recognise that the social issues affecting the quality of life for Islington residents are often the consequence of structural issues such as the social isolation of older people, or experiences of disaffection and alienation amongst the young. In order to ensure that Islington is a place of opportunity for all of its residents we will need to work with organisations that support individuals to be independent and resilient and to access the range of opportunities available in the borough, for example through building capacities and skills for independent living, securing financial stability or sign-posting to preventative services. We need this work to improve outcomes for vulnerable residents. Where appropriate, we need the sector to support residents to find the right job.
- **Promote community cohesion and champion equality.** We want to ensure that Islington is a place where people have a sense of common belonging and feel safe, regardless of background or life stage. We need the sector to respond to the needs of Islington's diverse communities by championing equality, promoting positive relations and cohesion across, between and within different communities, combatting hate crime, and ensuring participation and access to services for all sections of the community.
- **Mobilise community action and support neighbourhoods to develop and grow.** We want to support organisations that enable local communities and neighbourhoods to develop and grow. Across the borough, we want to mobilise community action, and to ensure that community resources, skills, knowledge and spaces are used to their full potential. At a neighbourhood level, we want the voluntary and community sector to work with us to ensure that residents are able to access animated community

spaces and a coherent offer of high quality activities, services and opportunities that meet local needs.

- **Provide or sign-post residents to appropriate, high-quality advice and guidance when residents are faced with difficulties.** We want to ensure that residents are able to access high quality advice, guidance and legal support when faced with difficulties. We recognise that many residents will first turn to local voluntary and community sector organisations for support. We therefore need the sector to combine its capacity to reach some of our most vulnerable residents with the ability to link residents to professional advice services and mainstream provision.

The support we will give the VCS

There are four ways in which we will support Islington's voluntary and community sector to be key partners in delivering our vision of a fairer Islington, the details of which are set out later in this document.

- **Funding:** including partnership grants and small grants programmes, a bespoke training and capacity building fund, and discretionary rate relief.
- **Commissioning and procurement:** directly commissioning organisations to deliver services, and ensuring that our approach to commissioning favours organisations that deliver social value.
- **Premises:** developing a borough-wide premises strategy that maximises the use of our buildings, and enables organisations to share premises, reduce costs and maximise income generation.
- **Working strategically with key partners** to build the capacity of the sector, promote volunteering, support fundraising, establish networks, maximise our collective impact in neighbourhoods, and ensure a coordinated whole-Council approach to the VCS

The sorts of organisations we will we support

To ensure that Islington's voluntary and community sector can support local residents and communities, we want to support a range of organisations, including:

- **Smaller organisations** that provide activities and deliver services at a neighbourhood level or to particular population groups.
- **Community anchors and neighbourhood centres** that are able to coordinate, and curate a coherent offer of local services in response to the needs of the local community.
- **Thematic networks**, which represent and articulate the needs of disadvantaged and excluded communities, and that ensure that services respond to the specific needs of different population groups.
- **Organisations that lead, challenge, and support** the sector as a whole, and that can work in partnership with the Council to champion change, resilience and innovation in the sector. We need voluntary and community sector organisations that are able to provide strong and visible leadership to the wider sector, to inspire organisations to continuously improve, to share best practice, and advocate on

behalf of the sector. This could be through organisational development services to local groups, supporting organisations to attract and recruit volunteers, bringing external investment into the borough; or establishing networks to facilitate joint funding applications.

Our Approach

Our Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy responds to the needs that we have identified, the views expressed by local organisations in our consultation (Appendix C), and the Council's priorities for the borough over the coming years.

Our primary focus is on improving outcomes for residents. We're determined to make Islington fairer and to ensure that everyone, whatever their background has the same opportunity to reach their potential and enjoy a good quality of life. We want to work with organisations that can help us achieve this aim.

We want to support local organisations to operate in a different and fast changing environment. And so, our strategy is firmly focussed on helping local organisations to become more independent, financially resilient and better equipped to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

We recognise the important role of core funding and small grants for the voluntary and community sector. Funding and grants of this nature provide a foundation from which organisations can grow and develop responsive initiatives. We also know that over the next few years there are particular areas where Council spending will remain significant. We want to ensure that voluntary and community sector organisations that deliver high quality services and social value are well placed to be our providers of first choice.

Despite these commitments, we recognise that the Council's relationship with the voluntary and community sector cannot simply be based on funding. Both the Council and the voluntary and community sector will have to adapt, be flexible, identify efficiencies and collaborate in order to identify opportunities for mutual benefit.

Our approach therefore focuses on continuing to build and develop strong, outcome driven partnerships between the whole Council and the VCS. These partnerships will need to leverage the financial resources, physical space, and expertise that our voluntary and community sector organisations require to be independent, financially resilient and responsive to local need.

With the primary aim of improving outcomes for residents, we will look to use our resources to work with the sector to establish the infrastructure it needs to deliver high quality services and be resilient. We want to see a better connected sector, with more collaboration and sharing of resources between organisations and groups who share similar goals or who are serving the same communities. We want this infrastructure to support organisations whether we directly fund them or not.

The **Islington Compact** sets out how local statutory and voluntary sector organisations have agreed to work together to improve the quality of life for residents and will be refreshed over the lifespan of the strategy.

Delivering the Strategy

Delivering Islington's VCS strategy will require a cross Council approach, including commitment from a wide range of service directorates. We are committed to working across the organisation to ensure that the whole Council's approach to the voluntary and community sector is coherent, and that our energies and resources are maximised.

The Voluntary and Community Sector Committee oversees the Council's engagement with the Islington community and voluntary sector and to ensure value for money and fairness in the allocation of Council resources to the sector.

The Council's Third Sector Strategic Forum will serve as the primary officer mechanism to ensure that the Council adopts a consistent and coordinated approach to its engagement with the VCS.

The Council's Voluntary and Community Sector Development Team will be tasked with coordinating the Third Sector Strategic Forum. The team will be responsible for establishing an annual work plan, with clear milestones and reporting mechanisms to deliver the VCS strategy.

Playing a role as advocate and challenger, the team will develop stronger links with key corporate departments and services, and with Islington's voluntary and community sector. The Team will establish a work plan with our key partners to achieve the aspirations set out in this strategy, which will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Funding

Our consultation highlighted funding as the key concern of Islington's voluntary and community sector. We want the VCS to be able to focus on the delivery of its core services. Wherever possible we will try and draw together funding programmes to simplify and streamline application processes, and establish appropriate and proportionate monitoring processes

In recognition of the value of grants to local organisations and the potential for these to lever additional resources into Islington, we will look for opportunities to develop our grant and commissioning arrangements.

The Islington Community Fund

The Council is committed to continuing grant funding, we will maintain the Islington Community Fund, which will include a small grants programme, and continue our partnerships grants programme which will contain a responsive organisational development and training fund.

1) Small Grants Programmes

We will continue to support a range of local voluntary and community organisations through our small grants programme. These grants programmes are designed to support smaller organisations to add value to their programmes or to run one-off projects or activities often at a neighbourhood level and will include:

- **The Community Chest programme:** Small one-off grants for local organisations
- **The Local Initiatives Fund:** To support ward-specific projects and initiatives
- **The Community Festivals Fund:** For borough-wide events that support the Council's wider priorities around equalities, community cohesion and place-shaping.

2) Partnership Grants Programmes

We will offer financial support to a range of local voluntary and community organisations and consortia of organisations through four-year funding agreements. These will be run on a two plus two year basis in order to allow us to have greater flexibility, create new opportunities throughout the four year funding cycle where resources allow, and respond to changing needs of the community and the sector. These grants will be available for organisations that are well run; provide effective services; have the potential to develop and where there is a strategic need for what they do and where they operate.

Our Partnership Grants Programme will be available for small organisations that deliver core services through to those that provide leadership and support to the sector as a whole. There will be three strands to our Partnership Grants Programme, including:

- **A Delivery Partnership Programme:** For organisations that work directly with residents to improve outcomes in line with the priorities identified above.
- **A Strategic Partnership Programme:** For organisations that provide leadership, establish networks and build the capacity of the VCS
- **An Advice and Guidance Partnership Programme:** For organisations that deliver high quality, specialist advice, guidance and legal support.

We want to ensure that the voluntary and community sector organisations are able to respond and adapt to challenging circumstances over the coming years. In addition to funding leadership organisations we will establish a small **organisational development and training fund** and work with a framework of providers to allow organisations to request or deliver specialist bespoke support according to need. For example specialist support with fundraising, management, preparation for commissioning, governance, or marketing and communications.

Discretionary Rate Relief

We will continue to provide discretionary rate relief to organisations with premises in the borough that provide local benefit. All registered charities will continue to receive mandatory rate relief from the Council which covers 80% of their rates. We will also give discretionary rate relief for locally focussed voluntary and community sector organisations to either cover the remaining 20% (or all of their rates if they don't qualify for mandatory rate relief).

Commissioning

Council and other Public Sector Commissioning and Procurement

We want more local organisations that deliver high quality services and social value, whether large or small, individual applicants or consortia, to attain greater financial resilience by securing contracts from the Council and other statutory organisations such as the Clinical Commissioning Group.

The financial context in which we will be operating is likely to result in the funding available through Council contracts; collectively we will need to bid for external opportunities and leverage resources into the borough. To do this we need to make sure that the sector is equipped to compete with professional external voluntary and private sector providers. We also want voluntary and community organisations to be able to participate in public sector commissioning processes, helping to shape the terms of procurement processes in order to ensure that our tenders reflect the social value contribution the sector can make. To do this we will:

- Work in partnership across the Council and with other public bodies to establish joint commissioning arrangements.
- Review our existing commissioning arrangements, monitor the proportion of contracts we award to Islington-based voluntary and community sector organisations and identify opportunities where local VCS organisations could deliver in terms of quality and social value.
- Review current procurement and commissioning systems to make them simpler and easier to navigate and bid for
- To work with our larger VCS organisation and encourage them to support consortium bids which unlock opportunities for smaller VCS organisations.
- Produce a user guide for the local voluntary sector to explain the process and ways in which it can benefit.
- Strengthen the value of community benefit and social value in our assessment of tenders.
- Provide advance notice to the sector of upcoming opportunities to tender.
- Build the capacity of organisations and offer brokerage services to help them access these funds, including helping them to cost and demonstrate the impact of their work.

Premises

The high cost of premises makes Islington an expensive borough for the voluntary sector to operate in. Smaller organisations, particularly those in buildings owned by private landlords, are finding it increasingly difficult to meet costs and the sector needs help to find and access good quality accommodation at reasonable rents. Rising costs in

Islington are placing many organisations in an uncertain position and fuelling the demand for affordable premises.

We want to help the sector to cut costs, share resources and access suitable accommodation. We will develop a Council premises strategy which will take account of the needs of the sector and will:

- Improve the consistency and transparency of Council leases of Council owned premises occupied by voluntary organisations and make clear what outcomes we would expect to see for in-kind support of this nature.
- Make sure that the Council's property portfolio is allocated efficiently and seek to accommodate more organisations – particularly in underused buildings.
- Explore ways in which non-residential premises on housing estates can be used to benefit local voluntary and community organisations.
- To explore, where appropriate, how planning gain can be used to enable the VCS to access affordable, quality premises.
- Identify and promote co-location opportunities for VCS organisations to further develop neighbourhood and thematic clusters of interest, and to help organisations to cut costs by sharing associated common services such as IT, resources, administration, or to support bulk purchasing.
- Broker voluntary sector access to public premises.

Working Strategically with Key Partners

Delivering Islington's VCS strategy will require a whole-Council approach, including commitment from a wide range of service directorates. Within the financial context in which we are operating, it is imperative that the decisions made by the Council in relation to funding, contracts, premises and capacity development are coherent and consistent. There are numerous opportunities such as the pooling of funding and cross-departmental partnerships. The Third Sector Strategic Forum will serve as the primary arena to raise changes that will impact on organisations in the voluntary and community sector.

The Council's complex relationship with the sector will primarily be managed by the new Voluntary and Community Sector Development Team. This team will be tasked with advancing the actions outlined in the VCS strategy.

In addition, this team will work with the key leadership and networking partnership organisations to ensure that our work, and the sector itself, creates an enabling environment for organisations working with local residents. This enabling environment will include opportunities for capacity building, volunteering, fundraising support, networking and neighbourhood working.

Capacity Building

Through our Partnerships Grant Programme, we will support local voluntary and community sector organisations to deliver high quality capacity building and training

opportunities for organisations in the borough. We will work with our strategic partners including Cripplegate and local businesses, particularly through the Big Alliance to:

- Establish a borough-wide offer of relevant and responsive support in areas of need, such as fundraising, governance, organisational strategy and development, business planning, managing volunteers, quality standards, monitoring and evaluation.
- Assess the range of capacity building and training opportunities available to organisations in the borough and where there are gaps provide grants for organisations to develop bespoke opportunities.

Volunteering

Volunteers are the backbone for many organisations and some groups rely entirely on unpaid help. Although the sector leads by example, working with volunteers is resource intensive. This presents a challenge for small groups without staff able to take on the task of recruiting, inducting and preparing volunteers for placements. We will work with our partners to:

- Ensure that infrastructure is in place to recruit and prepare volunteers.
- Ensure access to support for small groups to deal with the necessary regulations and policies for volunteers.
- Support organisations to offer placements, identify suitable candidates and manage volunteers.
- Work with other funders to find ways to increase the capacity of core funded organisations to use volunteers, particularly through resources that they can share.
- Maximise the benefits of volunteering from local businesses to help organisations develop – particularly professional services such as finance, business planning, marketing and developing commercial services or trading arms.

Fundraising Support

We will work more strategically with other local, national and international funders such as Cripplegate Foundation, Islington Giving, London Councils, the Big Lottery, and others, in order to help local organisation bring additional resources into the borough. This will require us to actively pursue opportunities, broker relationships and support consortia of voluntary organisations to unlock funding.

Where we can, we will join bids for projects that meet our priorities. Where we can't, for example when programmes are primarily targeted at the voluntary sector, we may endorse the application and provide information and expertise to help organisations write successful applications.

We will work with our partners to:

- Establish one-to-one support and sharing of fundraising expertise across organisations.

- Identifying trusts and external grant funding and helping organisations to take advantage of these.
- Support fundraising and bid-writing – particularly joint voluntary sector/Council bids (e.g. the major ESF employment programmes).
- Develop and maintain stronger relationships with key funders to attract and direct investment into the borough.
- Identify private sector funding and maximise the benefit from corporate social responsibility programmes of leading firms located in the borough, linking in with the Big Alliance initiative.
- Promote and support the development of appropriate business models such as social enterprise models, community interest companies and trading subsidiaries for charities.

Networks

We see formal and informal networks of organisations, organised around thematic priorities (such as unemployment, health, volunteering, or cohesion) or demographic interest groups as an effective way to advance common issues, gain efficiencies and form partnerships for collaboration and joint-funding applications.

We will work with partnership grant funded organisations to ensure that they establish open, inclusive and effective networks that deliver value to their members

Neighbourhood-based approaches

Across Islington too many community spaces are not utilised to their full potential. There is an opportunity to join-up the resources that different Council departments invest in local neighbourhoods to ensure that they deliver a coherent and relevant neighbourhood offer.

Based on an analysis of indices of deprivation and the prevalence of long-term health conditions at Super Output Area level, six key geographical areas will be targeted in the first instance for Place Based Community Development Plans: the Bemerton Estate, New River Green, the Andover and Six Acres, Crouch Hall Estate, Elthorne Estate and Mayville Estate. As part of this we will work with our partners to:

- Identify and evaluate the quality of the local community offer in relation to spend and need.
- Identify gaps and find innovative ways to work with local VCS organisations to address these.
- Develop a programme of action jointly with Housing and other Council departments to improve the coherence and quality of services and opportunities offered at neighbourhood community centres.

Appendix A: A picture of the VCS in Islington

Background

The size, diversity, emergent, and sometimes transient nature of civil society organisations operating within Islington, presents challenges to those interested in establishing an accurate and complete picture of the borough's voluntary and community sector.

The picture presented below brings together information from a number of sources including: Voluntary Action Islington, Octopus Network, London Voluntary Sector Council and London Borough Islington in order to provide a starting point for the Council's VCS strategy.

How many VCS organisations operate in the borough?

Islington's voluntary and community sector is very diverse and includes organisations of all types and sizes. The local scene is further complicated by the presence of charities with a national or international focus headquartered here but that don't deliver local services.

In 2014 more than 2,244 charitable organisations were operating in the borough.¹ 1,169 were registered charities while other types of non-profit making organisations, including community interest companies, made up the rest. However, this data doesn't include information on the many small unregistered community groups in the borough. Neither does it accurately reflect the number of active registered voluntary organisations.

In the same year it was estimated that 400 to 450 active locally focussed organisations were actively operating in the borough.² If we also include small groups, such as tenants and residents associations and organisations that have engaged with or received some type of support from the Council – including rate relief and small grants – approximately 700 is a reasonably accurate reflection of the number of local organisations that our strategy needs to address. However, it must also be recognised that up to 20 groups at any one time will be in the process of starting-up.

What types of organisation exist?

Table 2 shows a segmentation of the voluntary and community sector in Islington on the basis of size measured in terms of their income. The activities and needs of large voluntary organisations are very different from those of small community-based organisations. It is therefore important to gain an understanding of the sector in order to know how best to, not only provide support, but also to identify effective partnership opportunities.

The majority of VCS organisations in Islington are grass roots or small organisations. Approximately 40% of the VCS organisations operating in the borough are grass roots

¹Source: London Voluntary Services Council Survey 2014

² Source: Voluntary Action Islington 2014

organisations with no paid staff and an income of less than £10,000. 30% are small organisations with at least one member of staff and registered charity status and an income of between £10,000 and £50,000. This situation demonstrates the importance of ensuring opportunities such as small grants programmes for local organisations there who by sheer number have an extensive reach into local communities.

Approximately 9% of VCS organisations, many of whom have an Islington focus, have an income of between £250,000 and £1 million plus (Tiers 4 &5). These organisations can be considered as strategic actors within the sector, both in terms of delivery and infrastructure.

Table 2: Islington VCS Organisations Categorisation by Size³

Type of organisation	Income	Number (approx.)	Examples
Tier 1: Grass roots run by volunteers. New and emerging groups. No paid staff, largely unregistered and unlikely to own premises.	Under £10,000	300	Scouts and Guides; friends of parks groups; community festivals; tenants and residents associations, estate based community groups.
Tier 2: Usually with at least one member of staff and registered charity status.	£10,000 to £50,000	250	Small BME organisations; community arts, networks and forums, older people's groups.
Tier 3: Small/medium Islington focussed with at least one co-ordinator plus other staff. Registered charity and/or company status.	£50,000 to £250,000	115	Community centres, mid-sized BME organisations.
Tier 4: Medium, mainly Islington focussed.	£250,000 to £1 million	40	Mental health, specialist advice groups, larger nurseries.
Tier 5: Large established local and regional charities.	£1 million and over.	30	Large community hubs, social care and large children's services providers.
Tier 6: National and regional charities. Not Islington focussed. Largely located in south of the borough.	£10 million plus	Under 30	NSPCC, Shelter, Amnesty International.

What do these organisations do?

These 700 organisations are engaged in a range of activities and many organisations are involved in cross-cutting work that covers a range of areas, so it is difficult to classify it within distinct sectors of activity. The table below shows the **primary** focus for local organisations that we have been able to map.

Table 1: Voluntary and Community Organisations: Primary Thematic Focus

Type/activity focus	Number	Type	Number
TRAs and TMOs	85	Housing/homelessness	13
Arts and culture	79	Disability	12
BME/refugees	72	Women	11
Children	66	Education/training	10
Young people	53	Employment	7
Environmental	41	Networks	6
Faith	33	Adult social care	5
Health	32	Business support	4
Sport and leisure	25	Volunteering	4
Neighbourhood Regeneration	22	VCS Infrastructure	2
Community Centres (general)	21	Other	61
Older people	17	TOTAL	676

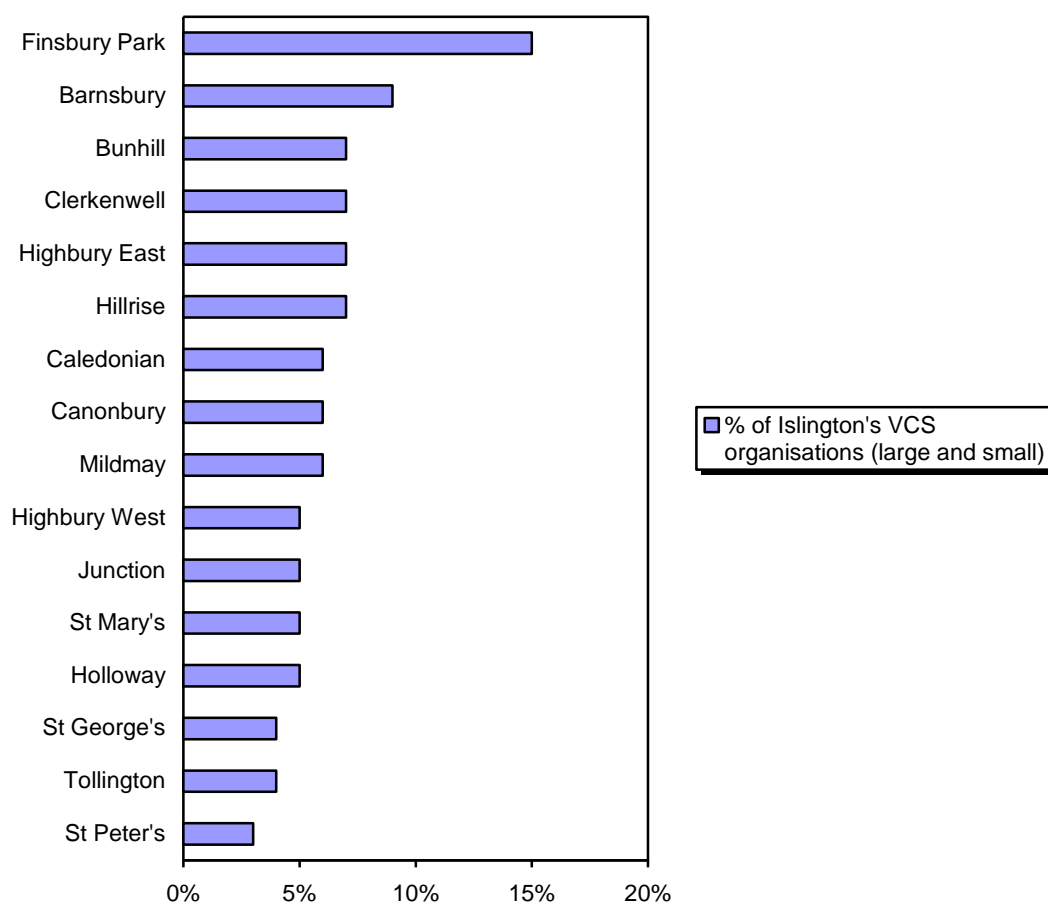
Where are Islington's VCS organisations located?

Islington is a small borough and the services and activities delivered by local voluntary organisations appear reasonably spread throughout, although we estimate that Finsbury Park ward has the highest number (15% of groups, but most are very small).

Small groups are often found in wards in the north of the borough as it has a number of important community centres and voluntary sector hubs that provide a base for other organisations. The numbers of organisations found in the north of the borough may also reflect the nature of the communities in this part of the borough. For example, Finsbury Park ward is the most deprived ward in Islington and also has the largest black and minority ethnic population in Islington. The vast majority of organisations in this ward reflect the needs of these communities.

Islington has a long and proud history of hosting major national and international charities and voluntary organisations. These organisations tend to be located in the south due to its central London location.

Figure 1: VCS Location by Ward (approximate)



What are Community Centres and Hubs?

There are a range of community centres in the borough – some that are Council funded, some that are located on housing estates, and some that are independently financed and run.

These community venues offer a range of services both directly and indirectly to communities at the neighbourhood level, for example, early years provision, after schools clubs, youth clubs, over 55s clubs that provide lunch and tackle older people's social isolation. They bring together a wide cross section of Islington's diverse local communities and play a key role in supporting the Council's community cohesion agenda's.

Much of the activity delivered in our community centres is developed and delivered in partnership with a range of Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations operating in Islington. The centres play a key role in supporting the work of the wider VCS and connecting local residents to the boroughs wider VCS offer. Community centres have a key role to play in supporting smaller grass roots organisations, providing not only accommodation for activities but providing informal advice and support.

Between 2011 and 2015, the Council provided funding for 12 Community Hubs supported by Octopus Community Network through its core grants programme.

Figure 2: Islington VCS Hubs and Community Centres⁴



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Appendix B: Summary of Council VCS expenditure – contracts and grants

In 2014/15 we spent £41 million with the voluntary sector. The largest commissioner is Adult Social Care, followed by Children's Services. Voluntary and community sector organisations are also commissioned to deliver contracts in the areas of Community Safety and Environment and Regeneration.

Council Voluntary Sector Contracts and Grants

Service Area	Total
Adult Social Services (Including public health)	£26.35 million.
Children's Services	£7.51 million
Chief Executive's VCS Grants	£2.3 million
Public Health	£1.98 million
London Council's Grants	£1.57 million
Community Safety	£548,400
Environment and Regeneration	£448,093
Discretionary Rate Relief	£450,000
Local Initiatives Fund*	£240,000
Rescue Fund	£250,000
Community Chest	£200,000
Finance and Housing	£189,196

Appendix C: Summary of VCS Consultation on the Council's Support to Local Voluntary Organisations

A consultation on the Council's support to local voluntary organisations, focused on grant programmes in Islington Community Fund, was held from 19 June 2014 to 15 August 2014.

During this eight week period we received 41 responses including notes from a workshop facilitated by Voluntary Action Islington which was attended by 30 representatives of local organisations.

Around 70% of responses were from organisations currently receiving financial support from the VCS Grants Fund or the Advice Fund programmes.

A full version analysis of the VCS consultation is available on the Council Webpages. Below is a summary of the key issues raised by respondents.

Supporting the Local Voluntary and Community Sector

Partnership Working

A strong partnership between the Council and the voluntary sector was seen as key to meeting the needs of local residents in the difficult times that lie ahead. There should be regular dialogue with key representative bodies and greater VCS involvement in setting priorities, designing procurements and agreeing outcomes.

Some respondents felt that, over time, the VCS should aim for increased independence with a less dependent relationship and more of a partnership of equals with the Council.

Others suggested that there should be more emphasis on collaboration, for example in sharing information and attracting additional resources to the borough and argued that the Council has a leadership role in coordinating funding opportunities and bringing organisations together, a 'catalyst for creativity'.

Funding

Funding Landscape

Respondents understood the financial uncertainty facing the Council beyond 2015/16 and felt that introducing 2 + 2 agreements is a fair approach in the circumstances. There should be a clear and transparent process, compliant with the Compact, for the current review of funding and any subsequent reviews from 2017.

Several people highlighted the value in continuing to support organisations that have built up relationships and trust with residents, arguing that this can't just be transferred from one agency to another. However this shouldn't mean sticking with historical patterns that no longer meet the needs of our communities.

Mixed views were expressed about social enterprises and trading models. Some felt these had a lot of potential to support innovation and generate new income streams. Others were more cautious, perceiving the opportunities for income generation as modest, and in most cases not as a viable replacement for grants and contracts.

Core Grants Funding

There was a strong feeling that the Council should continue to give grants and a view that commissioning often focuses on the wrong areas. There was unanimous support for retaining an Islington Community Fund. It is seen as a successful approach which provides longer term funding for organisations delivering strategic priorities as well as smaller grants for groups responding to very local or specific community needs.

Users should be the most important consideration and the Council should support effective local grass roots organisations with a good track record in serving residents. Many felt that larger organisations tended to get Council funding at the expense of smaller groups. The Council should consider top-slicing its large contracts to allow small groups to benefit.

The Council should have fair and open funding programmes and should check what organisations actually do when awarding grants.

Small Grant Programmes

There was overwhelming agreement that current small grant programmes should continue. Islington Community Chest generated more comment and support than Local Initiatives Fund (LIF). Some respondents argued that LIF should be more transparent, with one suggesting a Dragons Den type approach involving ward partnerships. Opportunities for Islington Giving fundraising to complement small grants programmes should be explored. The two programmes could be better aligned to avoid the risk of duplicating funding awards when resources are scarce.

Fund Priorities

The Council's commitment to addressing the key areas of concern to local residents – jobs, housing and rising cost of living – is strongly endorsed by the voluntary sector. Many other priorities were mentioned including health and wellbeing, community safety and cohesion, and provision for children and young people and for older people.

Feedback indicated very high levels of support for continuing with current grant programmes: core funding to strategically important local organisations (VCS Grants Fund); independent advice provision (Advice Fund); discretionary rate relief; and small grants (Community Chest and Local Initiatives Fund).

Joint Working and Funding

The Council should hold the ring and play a bigger role in bringing organisations together and creating partnerships. Brokering relationships and putting organisations in touch with each other for mutual benefit is also important.

Forcing groups to collaborate is not possible (the VCS is independent), but they could strongly be encouraged. Similarly, good organisations could widen their remit (if in line with their mission) to work with others.

The Council needs to involve the VCS at a strategic level, rather than simply inviting it to apply for funding. This would encourage organisations to develop consortia and partnership bids. Joint funding of organisation from larger pots would also help smaller groups to work together (or with larger organisations).

The Council should also organise events, seminars and provide information to promote understanding and help groups to focus on the most pressing equalities issues.

Monitoring of Performance

Various comments were made about how the Council monitors performance. Outcomes were preferred to rigid targets – using a key performance framework and allowing flexibility for changing priorities. Monitoring should be proportionate and should celebrate strong performance as well as pointing out weaknesses. Some organisations would like more dialogue about priorities and more face-to-face-meetings with grants officers.

Council systems and monitoring were viewed as unnecessarily bureaucratic involving too much paperwork and onerous reporting requirements, particularly for small grants where administration cost exceed the value of the grant. Monitoring should be proportionate and the Council should have clearer, simpler systems - and use plain English.

Premises

Affordability and Availability

Islington is a very expensive borough for the voluntary sector to operate in and the most popular answer by far was support from the Council to provide affordable premises and discounted or peppercorn rents. Smaller organisations, particularly those in buildings owned by private landlords, are finding it increasingly difficult to meet their premises costs.

There was strong support for making better use of premises, both the Council's own space and that owned by the voluntary sector. Schools and faith properties were cited as examples of buildings with spare capacity outside their normal hours of operation. Many agencies are looking for more flexible space and new community locations to deliver their outreach services.

Community Cohesion, Engagement and Advocacy

Communities must have opportunities to feedback their views and the Council has a role in creating and supporting this - but it should remain flexible on what it funds. What is important is that activities increase inclusion and reduce marginalisation, including for a wider community beyond the protected characteristics such as Irish, white working class residents and people living within the same neighbourhood.

Forums and Organisations

The importance of forums and networks (and that the Council should core fund them) was stressed, although this shouldn't necessarily extend to funding a separate forum for each of the nine protected characteristics. They should all be community led however. There were also calls for forums to have stronger links with local policy makers.

Support Needs of the Sector

All responses highlighted the importance of continuing to fund support for the sector. The most requested services were fundraising, training, information, premises, marketing and communications, networking, and HR. Many people commented on the difficulties their organisations are facing and the challenges of becoming more resilient. They would like more help with managing finance, 'business' planning, building partnerships and consortia, and developing new income streams. Training in social enterprise, trading and mutual support were also mentioned. The support needs of organisations are directly related to their size and scale.

Support Needs by Organisational Size

Type	Support Required
<p>Tier 1: Under £10,000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Setting up – charity registration, organisational etc. ▪ Using volunteers – eg DBS checks. ▪ Practical development – finance management, trustees, developing policies etc. ▪ Fundraising inc. small grants applications. ▪ Finding premises. ▪ Information and intelligence, ▪ Developing links. ▪ Accessing capacity building sources.
<p>Tier 2 £10k - £50k</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fundraising to diversify income. ▪ Communications and marketing. ▪ Finance and administration. ▪ Staff development. ▪ Governance and trustee training. ▪ Volunteer support and supervision. ▪ Business planning. ▪ Developing new activities. ▪ Links with similar organisations. ▪ Suitable and affordable premises.

<p>Tier 3 £50k - £250k</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business planning – inc. measuring impact and cost of services. ▪ Management and staff s development. ▪ Developing better links with statutory sector as well as VCS. ▪ Information and intelligence. ▪ Securing flexible funding. ▪ Developing new services. ▪ Improved access to ▪ Income generation/trading (inc. private sector links). ▪ Fit for purpose premises. ▪ Consortia/joint working/mergers. ▪ Service specific support eg. adult/children’s social care and accessing public sector procurement opportunities. ▪ Volunteer training, support and supervision. ▪ IT development.
<p>Tier 4 £250k - £1m.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Links to contracts and commissioning opportunities. ▪ Developing income generation inc. trading. ▪ Increasing use of volunteers. ▪ Professional trustees. ▪ Innovation. ▪ IT development.
<p>Tier 5 £1m +</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ability to compete against external VCS organisations and private sector for LBI contracts. ▪ Professional trustees. ▪ Innovation.
<p>Tier 6 Over £10m</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Links with Islington’s VCS and Council – eg expertise and employment opportunities for residents.

A common theme was that organisations find it difficult to know what support is available and to access it at the right time. Smaller groups in particular are looking for more 1:1 advice and help with filling in fundraising applications, and more opportunities to network and share information with each other. They would like affordable space to be available for groups to share – desk space with meeting space and event space attached – close to where their communities are based

Neighbourhood Services

The concept of community based provision was widely supported and preferred to services centralised in Council buildings. Residents with the greatest needs are considered more likely to access support close to where they live. Voluntary sector providers rooted in neighbourhoods have an important role to play in putting people in touch with a broad range of services as well as enabling them to be engaged in what is going on in their local community.

A wide range of services were suggested for neighbourhood delivery. Those thought to be most valued by residents are:

- Advice and information, especially around the impacts of welfare reform, including family support. Effective signposting and referral to other sources of help.
- Youth and play activities – before and after school, at weekends and in school holidays
- Activities for older people to prevent isolation and tackle health problems
- Employment support services
- Support for vulnerable adults including mental health
- Volunteering opportunities

Volunteering

All respondents stressed the importance of volunteers to their organisations and that the Council should support volunteering in the borough. Some argued that volunteering is the core ethos of the local voluntary sector and that the Council should only support groups with a good track record of using volunteers.

Appendix 1		
of Grant Awards		
Organisation	Grant award per year (£)	Value of Three Months Extension of Grant Award (£)
Islington CAB	300,000	75,000
Islington Law Centre	500,000	125,000
Islington People's Rights	165,000	41,250
Help On Your Doorstep	200,000	50,000
All Change Arts	20,000	5,000
Almeida Theatre Company	10,000	2,500
Islington Arts Factory	15,000	3,750
Rowan Arts (ceased trading)	15,000	
Algerian British Connection	10,000	2,500
Arab Advice Bureau	25,000	6,250
B2B Create	5,000	1,250
Eritrean Community in the UK	20,000	5,000
Finsbury Park Mosque	20,000	5,000
Holloway Mosque	10,000	2,500
IMECE Turkish Speaking Women's Group	20,000	5,000
Islington Bangladesh Association	25,000	6,250
Islington Chinese Association	15,000	3,750
Islington Link-Up	10,000	2,500
Islington Somali Community	25,000	6,250
Kurdish & Middle Eastern Women Organisation	10,000	2,500
Light Project International	15,000	3,750
Muslim Welfare House	20,000	5,000
Somali Speakers Association	15,000	3,750
Tollington Parish (St. Mark's Church)	20,000	5,000
Turkish Education Group	10,000	2,500
Disability Action in Islington	40,000	10,000
Caxton House Community Centre	30,000	7,500
Finsbury Park Community Hub (Andover CC)	60,000	15,000
Hanley Crouch Community Association	60,000	15,000
Highbury Roundhouse	50,000	12,500
Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust (Elizabeth House)	30,000	7,500
Hilldrop Area Community Association	25,000	6,250
Hornsey Lane Estate Community Association	25,000	6,250
Mildmay Community Partnership	60,000	15,000
Peel Institute	40,000	10,000

St Luke's Parochial Trust	60,000	15,000
Whittington Park Community Association	60,000	15,000
Bemerton Villages Management Organisation	15,000	3,750
Creative Islington	40,000	10,000
Every Voice (Islington BME Forum)	20,000	5,000
Islington Faiths Forum	25,000	6,250
Islington Pensioners Forum	5,000	1,250
Islington Refugee Forum	20,000	5,000
Voluntary Action Islington	40,000	10,000
Islington Community Network (Hosted by VAI)	20,000	5,000
Octopus Community Network	20,000	5,000
Here To (Isledon Partnership)	55,000	13,750
TOTAL	2,300,000	571,250

Theme	Ward based in
Advice	St. Mary's
Advice	St. Peter's
Advice	Finsbury Park
Advice	Various
Arts	St Peter's
Arts	St Mary's
Arts	Holloway
Arts	Holloway
Cohesion/BME	Caledonian
Cohesion/BME	Highbury West
Cohesion/BME	Holloway
Cohesion/BME	Finsbury Park
Cohesion/BME	Highbury West
Cohesion/BME	Highbury West
Cohesion/BME	Mildmay
Cohesion/BME	Caledonian
Cohesion/BME	Tollington
Cohesion/BME	Finsbury Park
Cohesion/BME	Finsbury Park
Cohesion/BME	Hillrise
Cohesion/BME	Caledonian
Cohesion/BME	Finsbury Park
Cohesion/BME	Barnsbury
Cohesion/BME	Finsbury Park
Cohesion/BME	Mildmay
Disability	St Mary's
Hub	Hillrise
Hub	Finsbury Park
Hub	Tollington
Hub	Highbury East
Hub	Highbury West
Hub	St George's
Hub	Hillrise
Hub	Mildmay
Hub	Clerkenwell

Hub	Bunhill
Hub	Junction
Hub	Caledonian
Network	Holloway
Network	Caledonian
Network	Bunhill
Network	St. Mary's
Network	Caledonian
VCS Support	Caledonian
VCS Support	Caledonian
VCS Support	Hillrise
Volunteering	Finsbury Park



Report of: Executive Member for Economic and Community Development

Meeting of:	Date	Agenda item	Ward(s)
Voluntary and Community Sector Committee	9 th November 2015		All

Delete as appropriate		Non-exempt
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SUBJECT: LOCAL INITIATIVES FUND

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 The Local Initiatives Fund is a flexible devolved budget for councillors to use to address issues and priorities in their wards. It is an important element of the council's community provision and helps to meet the needs of local residents. In 2015/16 each ward has an allocation of £15,000 to spend on local schemes. Councillors consider project ideas for their ward and make recommendations to the Voluntary and Community Sector Committee. This report asks the committee to approve the proposals submitted by ward councillors for this financial year.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To consider the new proposals and changes to previous proposals submitted by ward councillors as set out in Appendix A and to agree these proposals in principle subject to the Assistant Chief Executive (Governance and Human Resources) being satisfied that the necessary checks have been made and any other issues resolved.
- 2.2 In the lead up to the Christmas period, it is expected that applications will be received from community groups to fund Christmas parties or related events. It is therefore recommended that authority be delegated to the Assistant Chief Executive (Governance and Human Resources) to agree the allocation of up to £1,000 each for such proposals received prior to the next meeting. Agreement would be subject to the Assistant Chief Executive being satisfied the necessary paperwork has been approved, that the necessary checks have been made and other issues resolved. The Executive Member for Community Development would be informed of all events agreed under delegated authority.
- 2.3 To note the amendments to ward budgets resulting from project funding being returned, as listed in the budget summary on the last page of Appendix A.

3. Background

- 3.1 In March 2011 the council agreed to strengthen the role of ward councillors by building on existing 'neighbourhood arrangements' for some wards and establishing a mechanism for a more focussed ward based approach throughout the borough. From 1 April 2011 new ward partnership arrangements were introduced in place of the previous area committees.

- 3.2 Simultaneously a report relating to the Islington Community Fund was agreed by Executive. This included a proposal to create a Local Initiatives Fund with each ward having an allocation of £20,000 per year to spend on local projects.
- 3.3 In February 2015, the Executive agreed that the Local Initiatives Fund budget be reduced to £15,000 per ward (£240,000 total).
- 3.4 The Local Initiatives Fund enables councillors to respond directly to priorities in their ward that lie outside of current mainstream funding programmes and might not otherwise receive funding. It helps them to address the needs of local residents and suggest improvements to local services/facilities or new schemes that will enhance the area.
- 3.5 At Executive in March 2011 it was agreed that a Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Committee of the Executive should be set up to oversee the council's engagement with the voluntary and community sector and to ensure value for money and fairness in the allocation of council resources to the sector.
- 3.6 The VCS Committee's terms of reference include 'To be responsible for the allocation of the Islington Community Fund including...allocating the Local Initiatives Fund having regard to the recommendations of the relevant ward members/relevant ward partnership or neighbourhood group and on the basis that the funding will be allocated equally among the 16 wards making up the council's area'.
- 3.7 The committee agreed that each ward councillor should be given a notional allocation of the Local Initiatives Fund (i.e. divided equally between the councillors elected for each ward). In 2015/16 £15,000 is available to each ward; therefore the notional allocation for each councillor is £5,000. In September 2014 the VCS Committee agreed to introduce a minimum award of £250 per project.
- 3.8 The Democratic Services team in the Chief Executive's department is responsible for managing the Local Initiatives Fund in liaison with ward councillors and members of the VCS Committee. The team ensures that funds are used appropriately and for the purpose for which they are allocated.
- 3.9 The fourth tranche of proposals submitted by ward councillors for this financial year is set out in Appendix A. It is recommended that these proposals are agreed in principle subject to the Assistant Chief Executive (Governance and Human Resources) being satisfied that the necessary checks have been made and any other issues resolved.
- 3.10 Occasionally projects do not proceed as planned and funding is returned to ward budgets. These amendments are listed in the budget summary on the last page of Appendix A.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial implications:

The proposals referred to in this report will be met from budget allocations for the Local Initiatives Fund.

4.2 Legal Implications:

The general power of competence pursuant to Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 which came into force on 6 April 2012 provides the council with very broad powers 'to do anything that individuals generally may do'. This covers the power to give grants to voluntary and community sector organisations as proposed in this report and includes anything which it considers is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the whole or part of its area or all or any of the persons resident or present in that area. The provision of resources through the Local Initiatives Fund is likely to promote the social and economic well being of Islington's residents.

The council is under a fiduciary duty to ensure that its resources are used appropriately. Where the money is allocated to outside bodies, the requirements of the procurement rules may apply. In any event it will be important to maintain current practice of ensuring that the money will be used for the purposes for which it is allocated and that individual members are made aware of the responsibility they bear in making recommendations in relation to specific groups.

4.3 Environmental Implications:

When considering proposals the VCS Committee will take relevant environmental implications into account.

4.4 Resident Impact Assessment:

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 and when considering proposals the VCS Committee will take relevant equalities implications into account. The Local Initiatives Fund provides resources for local projects which directly meet the needs of local residents, many of whom are from groups with protected characteristics. It enables some of Islington's poorest communities to access community-based services and activities and allows provision to be developed locally which can reach groups of residents that may not otherwise be supported.

5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

- 5.1 The Local Initiatives Fund is an effective way of addressing local priorities and provides a mechanism for ward councillors to support small projects which might otherwise not be funded. Proposals submitted for approval represent a wide range of activity and will deliver significant benefit to local communities.

Appendices

Appendix A – Local Initiatives Fund Proposals

Background papers: none

Final report clearance:

Signed by:

Executive Member for Economic and Community Development

4 November 2015

Received by:

Head of Democratic Services

4 November 2015

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NEW PROPOSALS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE IN NOVEMBER 2015

Ward	Councillor	Organisation	Project Summary	Timescale	Areas / Residents to Benefit	Number of Residents to Benefit	Budget Proposal Amount (£)	Project Total (£)	Match Funding Details	Governance and Human Resources Comments
Barnsbury / Caledonian / Clerkenwell / Holloway / Tollington	All councillors of Barnsbury, Caledonian, Clerkenwell and Holloway wards / Jean Kaseki / Flora Williamson	Islington Bangladesh Association	Forty week long project which aims to help older people develop healthy eating habits and improve their physical fitness. Funding to contribute towards food for luncheon club, sessional staff, a cook, exercise tutor and other associated costs.	2 Nov 2015 to 31 Oct 2016	Older people aged 50+	50 to 60 per week	8,380	13,312	£3,112 Postcode Lottery Trust tbc, £1,200 participants' contribution tbc	The amount requested is £9,000.
Page 49 Barnsbury / Canonbury / Clerkenwell / Finsbury Park / Highbury West / Hillrise / Junction / St Georges / St Marys / St Peters / Tollington	All councillors of Barnsbury, Clerkenwell, St Georges, St Marys, St Peters and Tollington wards / Clare Jeapes / Asima Shaikh / Andy Hull / Micheline Ngongo / Kaya Comer-Schwartz / Tim Nicholls	Chabad-Lubavitch of Islington	Islington Menorah Lighting on Islington Green which celebrates the eight day long Jewish cultural festival of Chanukah. Funding to contribute towards staff costs, entertainment, equipment, food, publicity and other associated running costs.	6 to 14 Dec 2015	Local residents	500	5,333.33	7,616.17	£500 Highbury East LIF awarded in March 2015, £2,300 donations tbc	The amount requested is £500 per ward (total of £7,500).

NEW PROPOSALS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE IN NOVEMBER 2015

Ward	Councillor	Organisation	Project Summary	Timescale	Areas / Residents to Benefit	Number of Residents to Benefit	Budget Proposal Amount (£)	Project Total (£)	Match Funding Details	Governance and Human Resources Comments
Finsbury Park / Highbury East / Highbury West / Hillrise / Holloway / Junction / Mildmay / St Georges / Tollington	All councillors of Highbury East, Hillrise, Holloway and St Georges wards / Gary Heather / Asima Shaikh / Richard Greening / Andy Hull / Joe Caluori / Olly Parker / Janet Burgess / Jean Kaseki / Flora Williamson	Friendship Network (Manor Gardens Welfare Trust)	Christmas hampers for housebound older people. Funding to pay for hampers and their delivery.	14 to 24 Dec 2015	Isolated and older people in each ward	135 (15 per ward)	3,740	6,480	£2,700 volunteer time (in kind)	The amount requested is £3,780 (£420 per ward).
Finsbury Park / Highbury West	Gary Heather / Asima Shaikh / Andy Hull	LBI Town Centre Development Team	Finsbury Park Festive Fair. Funding to contribute towards a variety of entertainment, equipment for the lights switch on, workshops and volunteers expenses.	25 November 2015	Local businesses, local residents and other visitors to the Town Centre	2,500	1,500	7,485	£2,150 sponsorship from local businesses, £2,335 further sponsorship tbc	The amount requested is £3,000.
Highbury East / Highbury West	Aysegul Erdogan / Osh Gantly / Caroline Russell / Theresa Debono / Richard Greening / Andy Hull	LBI Public Lighting (Highbury Barn and Blackstock Road festive lighting)	Installation, maintenance and energy for festive lighting on 11 lamp columns in Highbury Park (Barn) and 6 columns in Blackstock Road for six weeks.	1 Dec 2015 to 4 Jan 2016	Local residents, businesses and visitors to the area	Unable to quantify	4,240.83	4,240.83	Not applicable	
Highbury East / Mildmay	Aysegul Erdogan / Osh Gantly / Caroline Russell / Joe Caluori / Jenny Kay / Olly Parker	Highbury Quadrant Primary School	Improvement to one of the play areas in the school which will be led by parents. Funding to pay for a triangular wigwam and climbing cleats for a wall.	Work to be carried out in October half term	School pupils	412	2,290	9,440	£3,503 raised so far, fundraising ongoing	

NEW PROPOSALS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE IN NOVEMBER 2015

Ward	Councillor	Organisation	Project Summary	Timescale	Areas / Residents to Benefit	Number of Residents to Benefit	Budget Proposal Amount (£)	Project Total (£)	Match Funding Details	Governance and Human Resources Comments
Highbury West	Theresa Debono / Richard Greening / Andy Hull	Friends of Gillespie School	Funding to contribute towards the salary of a scientist in residence for the Gillespie School Lab_13 (project aimed at boosting science learning at primary school level).	Jan to Dec 2016	Several local schools	1,000	2,000	20,000	£6,200 from school families, £3,000 tbc from a sponsored event, further fundraising ongoing	
Highbury West	Theresa Debono / Andy Hull	Stephens Ink Community Association	Ten week jewellery making course where students will also learn how to find materials and exhibit their work. Funding to pay for tutor, tools, equipment and photocopying.	Feb to May 2016	Local women who wish to work from home	10	2,000.49	2,000.49	Not applicable	
Hillrise	Micheline Ngongo / David Poyser / Marian Spall	Caxton House Community Centre	1940s Style Tea Party held in partnership with Hornsey Lane Estate Community Association. Funding to pay for caterers, mini bus and driver (for those with mobility issues), publicity and decorations.	7 January 2016	Older residents aged 55+	80	1,800	2,250	£200 Caxton House (hall hire in kind), £250 Darby & Joan caterers (free cakes)	
Hillrise	Micheline Ngongo / David Poyser	Hornsey Lane Estate Community Association	Funding for three Christmas parties at Hornsey Lane Estate Community Centre - one for older people, one for the nursery and one for the after school club. Funding to pay for food, drink, a hamper and entertainment.	Children - 17 and 18 Dec, older people - 19 Dec	Older people aged 60+, children aged 18 months to 11 years	213	700	1,200	£220 raised from Halloween party, £280 from raffle and open day tbc	
Hillrise / Junction	Micheline Ngongo / David Poyser / Marian Spall / Janet Burgess / Kaya Comer-Schwartz / Tim Nicholls	LBI Town Centre Development Team (on behalf of Archway Town Centre Management Group)	Archway Festive Fair. Funding to contribute towards a variety of entertainment, equipment for the lights switch on, workshops and volunteers expenses.	27 November 2015	Local businesses, local residents and other visitors to the Town Centre	2,500	3,000	7,485	£1,200 sponsorship from local businesses, £3,285 further sponsorship tbc	

NEW PROPOSALS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE IN NOVEMBER 2015

Ward	Councillor	Organisation	Project Summary	Timescale	Areas / Residents to Benefit	Number of Residents to Benefit	Budget Proposal Amount (£)	Project Total (£)	Match Funding Details	Governance and Human Resources Comments
Holloway	Diarmaid Ward / Rakhia Ismail / Paul Smith	Healthy Generations (formerly Music for People)	Musician fees, volunteer and travel expenses for 44 Movement and Mobility sessions at Age UK's Drovers Centre.	Oct 2015 to Sept 2016	Older people	22 regulars at Movement and Mobility sessions	380	1,540	Not applicable	The amount requested is £1,540.
Holloway	Diarmaid Ward / Rakhia Ismail / Paul Smith	The Friends of Paradise Park	Funding to pay for a bouncy castle, inflatables and rides for a Fun Day in Paradise Park.	3 September 2016	Local residents	2,000	750	3,000	£1,950 from funding applications tbc, £395 from raffle and stalls tbc	The amount requested is £1,500.
Holloway	Diarmaid Ward / Rakhia Ismail / Paul Smith	Age UK Islington	Hall hire for a Holloway ward partnership meeting at Drovers Centre which will focus on Caledonian tube station.	12 November 2015	Residents who use Caledonian Road tube	Unable to quantify	104	104	Not applicable	
Holloway / St Georges	Diarmaid Ward / Rakhia Ismail / Paul Smith / Kat Fletcher / Satnam Gill / Nick Ward	LBI Town Centre Development Team (on behalf of Nags Head Town Centre Management Group)	Nags Head Festive Fair. Funding to contribute towards a variety of entertainment, equipment for the lights switch on, workshops and volunteers expenses.	26 November 2015	Local businesses, local residents and other visitors to the Town Centre	2,500	2,400	7,485	£4,485 sponsorship from local businesses	The amount requested is £3,000.
Junction	Janet Burgess	Girdlestone Third Age Group	Funding to pay for Christmas dinner in a local pub for 35 members and refreshments, raffle prizes and music for a Christmas party at Girdlestone Community Centre.	December 2015	Older people	35	1,000	1,000	Not applicable	

NEW PROPOSALS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE IN NOVEMBER 2015

Ward	Councillor	Organisation	Project Summary	Timescale	Areas / Residents to Benefit	Number of Residents to Benefit	Budget Proposal Amount (£)	Project Total (£)	Match Funding Details	Governance and Human Resources Comments
Junction	Kaya Comer-Schwartz / Tim Nicholls	Islington Mind	Three course Christmas dinner for mental health service users and volunteers. Funding to pay for dinner ingredients, cutlery, crockery, decorations and snacks.	23 December 2015	People with mental health problems, carers and volunteers	Up to 90	500	600	£100 Islington Mind	
Mildmay	Joe Caluori / Jenny Kay / Oly Parker	Hawthorne Close TRA	Funding to pay for an annual restaurant Christmas dinner for older people of Hawthorne Close TRA.	17 December 2015	Older people from Hawthorne Close	12	200	200	Not applicable	
Mildmay	Joe Caluori / Jenny Kay / Oly Parker	Golden Oldies Senior Citizens and Disabled Group	Funding to pay for a Christmas party and gifts for older and disabled residents of Mildmay ward (who are often isolated).	11 December 2015	Mainly older people from Mildmay ward	25 to 30	250	400	£100 from weekly raffles, further fundraising ongoing	
Mildmay	Joe Caluori / Jenny Kay / Oly Parker	Highbury Estate Wildlife Meadow	Funding to pay for compost for Highbury Estate / Bushfield House Wildflower Meadow so that Spring flowering seeds and bulbs can be planted.	Before mid December 2015	Local residents	Unable to quantify	500	2,500	£2,000 funded by the gardening volunteers	
Mildmay	Joe Caluori / Jenny Kay / Oly Parker	Mildmay Community Partnership	Halloween party for children on the Mayville Estate. Funding to pay for equipment, decorations and food.	31 October 2015	Children living on the Mayville Estate	50 children and parents	100	100	Not applicable	

NEW PROPOSALS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE IN NOVEMBER 2015

Ward	Councillor	Organisation	Project Summary	Timescale	Areas / Residents to Benefit	Number of Residents to Benefit	Budget Proposal Amount (£)	Project Total (£)	Match Funding Details	Governance and Human Resources Comments
Mildmay	Joe Caluori / Jenny Kay / Olly Parker	Mildmay Community Partnership	Christmas / Winter Fair event at Mildmay Community Centre. Funding to pay for entertainer, food, refreshments, decorations and goody bags for children.	19 December 2015	Local families from Mildmay ward	200	800	920	£120 raised from raffles at earlier events	
St Georges	Kat Fletcher / Satnam Gill / Nick Ward	St George and All Saints Church	Bugsy Malone and the Great British Bake-Off pantomime at St Georges. Funding to pay for mats for children to sit on at the front of the fixed seating.	Pantomimes in second week of December	Local residents	Audience of 600 over the four performances	507.30	3,500	Remainder through in kind support (volunteer time and venue hire)	
St Peters	Alice Perry / Gary Doolan / Martin Klute	Friends of Waterside Play and Youth Project	40th anniversary street party. Funding to contribute towards a range of entertainment and equipment.	7 August 2015	Residents, groups and businesses from St Peter's ward	300+	500	1,345	£200 Rydon, £200 Friends of Waterside, £445 donations	
St Peters	Alice Perry / Gary Doolan / Martin Klute	LBI Public Lighting (Essex Rd festive lighting)	Installation, maintenance and energy for festive lighting on 14 lamp columns and 1 festoon on shop canopy in Essex Road for six weeks.	1 Dec 2015 to 4 Jan 2016	Local residents, businesses and visitors to the area	Unable to quantify	3,860.49	3,860.49	Not applicable	
Tollington	Jean Kaseki	Cascadura Team Community Supporters	Christmas concert held in Upper Holloway Baptist Church Hall. Funding to pay for hall hire, musicians' travel expenses, printing and stationery.	12 December 2015	Local residents	150	250	600	£350 from LBI Housing tbc	

PROJECT CHANGES TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE IN NOVEMBER 2015

Ward	Councillor	Organisation	Project Summary	Timescale	Areas / Residents to Benefit	Number of Residents to Benefit	Budget Proposal Amount (£)	Project Total (£)	Match Funding Details	Governance and Human Resources Comments
Hillrise	Micheline Ngongo / David Poyser / Marian Spall	Hillrise ward consortia led by Caxton House Community Centre	Two Hillrise Winter Festivals - an open air carol service in Hillside Park / community centre cafe area and a Winter Fair at Hornsey Lane Estate Community Association. Funding to pay for refreshments, entertainment, prizes/hampers, admin and publicity.	11 and 12 Dec 2015	Local residents	300 to 400	1,178.86	1,851.36	£440 in kind support from Caxton House and HLECA (space hire), £232.50 tombola and raffle income from summer festival	Grant originally awarded in March and June 2015 for a summer festival for which there was an underspend of £1,178.86.

Total LIF funding requested and balance remaining

Total Local Initiatives Fund budget allocation 2015-16:	£240,000
Total allocations to be made from previous years' budgets:	£16,140
Amount allocated by VCS Committee to date:	£90,731
Balance remaining:	£165,409
New proposals for November VCS Committee:	£47,086
Total amount remaining to allocate in 2015-16:	£118,322

2015-16 Balance remaining by ward:	
Ward	Balance:
Barnsbury	£1,436
Bunhill	£10,413
Caledonian	£10,800
Canonbury	£12,530
Clerkenwell	£10,743
Finsbury Park	£8,447
Highbury East	£11,070
Highbury West	£3,370
Hillrise	£2,790
Holloway	£25
Junction	£7,034
Mildmay	£14,962
St George's	£3,647
St Mary's	£8,293
St Peter's	£5,092
Tollington	£7,669

£118,322**Notes:**

Includes £775 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £695 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £2,053 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £1,000 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £1,495 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £1,035 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £1,000 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £500 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £786 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £5,177 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £50 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £1,513 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £60 from previous LIF allocations