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## AGENDA FOR THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE

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Members of the Voluntary and Community Sector Committee are summoned to a meeting which will be held in Committee Room 4 at the Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on **16 June 2016 at 5:30pm**.\*\*

**\*\* please note start time\*\***

**John Lynch**  
**Head of Democratic Services**

Enquiries to : Mary Green  
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Despatched : 8 June 2016

### Membership 2016/17

Councillor Richard Watts (Chair)  
Councillor Andy Hull  
Councillor Kaya Comer-Schwartz

### Substitute Members

Councillor Janet Burgess MBE  
Councillor Joe Caluori  
Councillor Asima Shaikh  
Councillor Diarmaid Ward  
Councillor Claudia Webbe

### Observers

Councillor Theresa Debono  
Councillor Mouna Hamitouche MBE  
Councillor Marian Spall  
(1 vacancy)

**Quorum: is 2 Councillors**



**A. Formal matters** **Page**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Declaration of substitute members
3. Declarations of interests

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 - 10
5. Membership, terms of reference and dates of meetings of the Committee in 2016/17 11 - 14

**B. Matters for decision** **Page**

1. Voluntary sector grants programme 2016-2020 15 - 50
2. Local Initiatives Fund awards 51 - 58

**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 is scheduled for 11 July 2016 at **6.30pm (please note start time)**

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London Borough of Islington

## **Voluntary and Community Sector Committee - 21 April 2016**

Minutes of the meeting of the Voluntary and Community Sector Committee held at Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 21 April 2016 at 6.00 pm.

**Present:**           **Councillors:**           Andy Hull, Asima Shaikh and Claudia Webbe

**Also present:**       **Councillors (Observers)**       Theresa Debono and Jean-Roger Kaseki

In the absence of the Chair, Councillor Shaikh was appointed to chair this meeting.

### **Councillor Asima Shaikh in the Chair**

**86**        **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Received from Councillors Richard Watts and Rakhia Ismail.

**87**        **DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Councillor Claudia Webbe substituted for Councillor Richard Watts.

**88**        **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Claudia Webbe declared an interest in agenda item B1 – Local Initiatives Fund – as a trustee of City YMCA and a trustee of St Luke’s Parochial Trust.

**89**        **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED:**

That, subject to the addition of Councillor Kaseki’s name to the list of apologies, the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and the chair be authorised to sign them.

**90**        **LOCAL INITIATIVES FUND AWARDS**

A revised Appendix A was laid round.

**RESOLVED:**

(a) That the proposals for funding under the Local Initiatives Fund submitted by Ward councillors and 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 the Assistant Chief Executive (Governance and Human Resources) being satisfied that the necessary checks have been made and any other issues resolved.

(b) That the amendments to Ward budgets resulting from project funding being returned, detailed in Appendix A of the report, be also noted.

**Reasons for decision**

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

**Voluntary and Community Sector Committee - 21 April 2016**

Other options considered

None

Conflicts of interest/Any dispensations granted

None

The meeting ended at 6.06 pm

**CHAIR**

## NEW PROPOSALS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE IN APRIL 2016

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 / James Murray	Friends of Joseph Grimaldi Park	Purchase of a marquee for Joseph Grimaldi Park to provide cover from the sun or rain.	To be bought in May 2016	Local residents, especially those who attend the annual park festival	2,000+ (festival goers)	948.85	948.85	Not applicable	
Barnsbury	Jilani Chowdhury / Mouna Hamitouche / James Murray	St Silas Relax, Stay and Play	Continuation of stay and play sessions for pre school children aged up to four years. Funding to support hall hire and sessional workers for a 36 week period.	April 2016 to March 2017	Pre school children and their parents / carers	150	2,592	3,500	£908 door charge underwritten by the church	
Bunhill	Robert Khan / Claudia Webbe	City YMCA, London	Six weekly workshops focussing on skills that young people need to sustain their employment after they have completed an employability programme. Funding to pay for planning, recruitment and delivery, lunch and refreshments, an employability specialist, volunteer training and expenses.	April to May 2016	Errol Street Hostel residents (aged 16 to 25) and Bunhill residents attending job centre	29 at the hostel	1,399.20	5,749.90	£3,708 City YMCA, £643 2015-16 Bunhill LIF	£643 Bunhill LIF awarded to this project in March 2016.
Bunhill	Troy Gallagher / Robert Khan / Claudia Webbe	Islington Play Association	Eighteen volunteer-led healthy cooking sessions at Toffee Park Adventure Playground. Local volunteers will achieve qualifications, develop transferable skills and gain experience. Funding to pay for ingredients.	April to October 2016	Mainly children and families in Bunhill	Approx 340 children	410	6,996	£4,946 Health & Social Care Volunteering Fund, £410 Tollington 2015-16 LIF, £1,230 Caledonian & Holloway 2016-17 LIF tbc	£410 Tollington LIF awarded to this project in March 2016 for activity in Tollington ward.

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Canonbury	Alexander Diner/ Clare Jeapes / Nicholas Wayne	LBI Greenspace	Outdoor gym equipment in St Paul's Park. Funding to pay for the creation of a concrete base and safety surface and the purchase and installation of five pieces of gym equipment (pull up bars, bike, ski machine, sit up bench, chestpress/pull down).	Site works begin 9 May 2016	Park visitors, young users of the Rose Bowl and pupils and staff from St Pauls Steiner School	Unable to quantify	2,000	25,477	£18,000 Canonbury LIF, £5,477 LBI Parks Service	£18,000 Canonbury LIF awarded to this project in January 2016.
Canonbury	Alex Diner	Essex Road Giants FC	Football team made up of young people from the Marquess Estate. Funding to pay for kit, equipment, trophies and venue hire for an end of season celebration.	Kit to be bought as soon as possible, end of season event in July 2016	Young people aged 11 to 16 from the Marquess Estate	50	1,500	1,500	Not applicable	
Clerkenwell	James Court / Raphael Andrews	Artistry Youth Dance	Eight weeks of 'Resilience' dance workshops for young people at the Old Finsbury Town Hall culminating in performances during Big Dance Week and at the end of July. Funding to pay for choreographer and studio hire.	1 May to 20 July 2016	Young people aged 14 to 19 years from black ethnic minority groups	408 (8 dancers and 400 audience members)	1,500	3,320	£1,580 through in kind support (choreographer fees, studio hire and transport costs), £240 private donor (costumes)	
Finsbury Park	Asima Shaikh	Islington Somali Community	Outings for vulnerable older Somali people living in Finsbury Park. Funding to pay for trips to London Zoo and the British Museum.	June to September 2016	Somali older people living in Finsbury Park ward	40	500	924	£424 members and ISC tbc	The amount requested is £1,500.



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Highbury West	Theresa Debono / Richard Greening / Andy Hull	The Garden Classroom	The Acorn Club at Gillespie Park, a pilot nature themed outdoor holiday programme which will be run over four days during August. Funding to contribute towards facilitators, Gillespie Park venue hire, resources, publicity, programme and senior management, refreshments, volunteers, subsidy for low income families and book keeping.	30 August to 2 September 2016	Targetting all the schools in Highbury West ward	50+	1,730	3,814	£384 discount on LBI Gillespie Park hire, £1,700 through parent/carer contributions tbc	£1,544 LIF awarded to the same project in March 2016 (for May half term).
Highbury West	Theresa Debono / Richard Greening / Andy Hull	The Garden Classroom	Event to celebrate the creation of a new bee education area in Gillespie Park. Funding to pay for music, dance, costumes, management, printing, materials, equipment, ingredients for bee themed items for café and prizes for a quiz.	Event on 12 June 2016	Targetted at local schools but open to all	200 to 300+	1,000	2,380	£610 Awards for All, £360 City Bridge Trust, £490 LBI Ecology Centre in kind	
Hillrise	Micheline Ngongo / David Poyser / Marian Spall	Harberton Road Street Party 2016	Street Party on Harberton Road to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday. Funding to pay for a children's entertainer and the printing of publicity.	Sunday 12 June 2016	Local residents	Up to 500	250	3,000	£500 Whitehall Estate Agents sponsorship, £2,250 in kind from residents	
Hillrise	Micheline Ngongo / David Poyser / Marian Spall	ArchWay With Words	A celebration of poetry at St Andrew's Church in Whitehall Park as part of ArchWay With Words 2016. Funding to pay for practitioners, poets, professionals and marketing.	15 to 22 October 2016	Local residents focussing on those with mental health problems	500+	1,000	2,000	£1,000 from Essential Living (developers of Archway Tower)	£1,200 Junction LIF awarded to part of festival in March 2016. £2,500 LBI Festivals Fund awarded to overall project.

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Hillrise	Micheline Ngongo / David Poyser /Marian Spall	Caxton House Community Centre	Funding to pay for tutor costs for 50 weekly sessions of intergenerational zumba classes which run all year round. This is one of three healthy living projects being run by the centre.	September 2016 to August 2017	Open to all	1,700 to 1,800	1,500	9,737	£6,737 Caxton House (premises and publicity), £1,500 for gentle exercise tutor costs tbc	The amount requested is £3,000,
Hillrise	Micheline Ngongo / David Poyser /Marian Spall	Hillrise ward consortia led by Caxton House Community Centre	A summer festival which will be led and organised by a number of local groups and the ward councillors. Funding to pay for activities and materials, food and refreshments, publicity and admin.	13 August 2016	Open to all	400 to 500	3,000	4,220	£750 in kind Caxton House (premises) & Hornsey Lane Estate Comm Assoc (equipment use), £470 tombola, raffle & BBQ tbc	
Hillrise	Micheline Ngongo / David Poyser /Marian Spall	Living Space Art School / Designers & Artists Ltd	Funding for fifteen weeks of a Drawing and Painting for All course culminating in an exhibition of art work in the Caxton House café. Funding to pay for creative producer and creative arts tutor.	20 April to 28 September 2016	Mainly people aged over 50	12 participants per week	1,500	3,150	£1,500 Designers & Artists Ltd (cash & in kind), £150 Creative Fruits in kind for design services	The amount requested is £3,000. £990 LIF awarded to this ongoing project in January 2016.
Junction	Janet Burgess / Kaya Comer-Schwartz / Tim Nicholls	Archway Town Centre Group	A one day Archway town centre festival organised by Hargrave Hall Community Centre and the Archway Town Centre Group. Funding to contribute towards stalls hire, publicity, facepainters, entertainment. music and other associated costs.	18 June 2016	Local residents, town centre visitors and local businesses	500	1,000	2,846	£1,000 Hargrave Hall tbc, £900 business sponsorship tbc	

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Junction	Janet Burgess / Kaya Comer-Schwartz / Tim Nicholls	Artway: Archway Art Trail Committee	Three day event showcasing local artists by creating a trail around local studios and businesses displaying local artists' work. The trail will be complemented by workshops in two local venues. Funding to pay for workshop fees, printing of trail map, signs for venues and workshop materials.	24 to 26 June 2016	Artists, local businesses, children (through school workshop) and local residents	1,000+	1,000	2,500	£1,500 tbc from participants' fees, business sponsorship and advertising on map	
Mildmay	Joe Caluori / Jenny Kay / Olly Parker	MER-IT	Nine week course on hardware and software fundamentals for young people which will be held at Mildmay Community Centre. Funding to pay for room hire.	2 May to 27 June 2016	Young people mainly from estates in Mildmay ward	12	200	4,200	£4,000 2015-16 Mildmay LIF	£4,000 awarded to this project in March 2016. An extra £200 is sought for room hire.
Mildmay	Joe Caluori / Jenny Kay / Olly Parker	London Village Network	Ten week project encouraging young people to identify a career path. Various industries will provide insight into developing a business leading onto the young people developing a business plan and putting it into practice. Funding to contribute towards the salaries of the co-ordinators and youth leaders.	3 May to 12 July 2016	Young people aged 16 to 24 from Mayville estate	10 to 15	2,000	7,000	£5,000 LBI Community Chest	
St Marys	Angela Picknell / Gary Poole / Nurullah Turan	St Mary Magdalene Church	Three outdoor jazz concerts in St Mary Magdalene Gardens on Friday evenings in July. Funding to contribute towards musicians and publicity.	Concerts on 1, 8 & 15 July	Local residents	300 per performance	700	1,700	£1,000 LBI Greenspace	

## NEW PROPOSALS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE IN APRIL 2016

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St Marys	Angela Picknell / Gary Poole / Nurullah Turan	St Marys Church, Upper Street	Week long festival as part of a 'Soul in the City' community cohesion initiative. Funding will contribute towards entertainment, the Fun for All Day on 4 June (bouncy castle, community gardening, face painting, etc) and the Youth Programme.	1 to 5 June 2016	Local residents especially young people	2,000+	2,500	10,000	£5,000 St Mary's Church, £500 private donation, £2,000 Morris Trust tbc	
St Peters	Alice Perry / Gary Doolan / Martin Klute	Octopus Community Network	Funding for the purchase of a milk float which will be turned into a potting shed and mobile nature classroom (a Gro-Mobile) to empower local residents to transform unloved local spaces into vegetable patches and wildlife havens.	April 2016 to April 2017	Local residents	200+ St Peters residents	500	15,781	£6,962 Spacehive crowd funding to date (includes £1,000 15-16 Highbury East & Tollington LIF, £2,500 from Growing a Greener Britain)	
St Peters	Alice Perry / Gary Doolan / Martin Klute	Islington Boat Club	Five week programme of summer sports activities which includes various watersports as well as martial arts and mountain biking. The programme will be run five days per week. Funding to contribute towards cost of coaches / instructors.	July to August 2016	Young people aged 9 to 19 from St Peters ward and the surrounding areas	Up to 50	2,500	20,412.50	£721 Coleman Coyle, £1,000 WC Innholders, £10,000 LBI Summerversity tbc, further funding applications made	
St Peters	Alice Perry / Gary Doolan / Martin Klute	Angel Canal Festival	One day annual community festival celebrating the Regents Canal around the City Road Lock and Basin area providing arts activities and events for all the family. Funding to pay for t-shirts and packed lunches for 80 young volunteers.	Sunday 4 September 2016	Young volunteers and festival goers who are mostly local residents	80 young volunteers, 8,000 festival goers	850	21,500	£1,700 LBI Festivals Fund, LBI Community Chest tbc, remainder from grants / donations tbc	

**Total LIF funding requested and balance remaining**

<b>Total Local Initiatives Fund budget allocation 2016-17:</b>	<b>£240,000</b>
Total allocations to be made from previous years' budgets:	£13,114
Balance remaining:	£253,114
<b>New proposals for April VCS Committee:</b>	<b>£32,080</b>
<b>Total amount remaining to allocate in 2016-17:</b>	<b>£221,034</b>

<b>2016-17 Balance remaining by ward:</b>	
<b>Ward</b>	<b>Balance:</b>
Barnsbury	£12,440
Bunhill	£13,191
Caledonian	£16,500
Canonbury	£11,659
Clerkenwell	£14,500
Finsbury Park	£15,071
Highbury East	£16,105
Highbury West	£12,770
Hillrise	£7,750
Holloway	£15,025
Junction	£13,615
Mildmay	£12,810
St George's	£15,000
St Mary's	£12,647
St Peter's	£16,950
Tollington	£15,000

**£221,034****Notes:**

Includes £981 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £1,500 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £159 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £1,000 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £571 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £1,105 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £500 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £25 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £615 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £10 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £847 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £5,800 from previous LIF allocations

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<b>Report of: Assistant Chief Executive – Governance and Human Resources</b>
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Meeting of	Date	Agenda Item	Ward(s)
Voluntary and Community Sector Committee	16 June 2016		n/a

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**Subject: MEMBERSHIP, TERMS OF REFERENCE AND DATES OF MEETINGS OF VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE in 2016/17**

**1. Synopsis**

To inform members of the remit of the Voluntary and Community Sector Committee.

**2. Recommendation**

2.1 To note the membership of the Voluntary and Community Sector Committee, appointed by the Executive on 19 May 2016, its terms of reference and dates of meetings for the municipal year 2016/17, as set out at Appendix A.

**3. Background**

3.1 The terms of reference of the Voluntary and Community Sector Committee (as contained in Part 5 of the Council's Constitution) are set out at Appendix A. The quorum of the Committee is two Councillor members.

3.2 The membership and dates of meetings in 2016/17 are also set out at Appendix A for information.

**4. Implications**

**4.1 Financial Implications**

None.

## 4.2 Legal Implications

None.

## 4.3 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.

A resident impact assessment has not been carried out since this report relates solely to the administrative arrangements for the Committee and will not impact upon residents.

## 4.4 Environmental Implications

Papers are circulated electronically where possible and consideration is given to how many copies of the agenda might be required on a meeting by meeting basis, with a view to minimising numbers. Any agenda not used at the meeting are recycled.

## 5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendation

The report is submitted to inform members of the remit of the Committee.

### Background papers:

Islington Council's Constitution  
Programme of meetings

Final Report Clearance

Signed by

\_\_\_\_\_  
Assistant Chief Executive (Governance & HR)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Received by

\_\_\_\_\_  
Head of Democratic Services

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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## 1. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP 2016/17

<u>Members</u>	<u>Substitutes</u>	<u>Observers</u>
	(all other members of the Executive)	
Councillor Richard Watts (Chair)	Councillor Janet Burgess MBE	Councillor Theresa Debono
Councillor Andy Hull	Councillor Joe Caluori	Councillor Mouna Hamitouche
Councillor Kaya Comer-Schwartz	Councillor Diarmaid Ward	Councillor Marian Spall
	Councillor Asima Shaikh	
	Councillor Claudia Webbe	

## 2. MEETING DATES (all at 6.30pm)

11 July 2016	19 September 2016	14 November 2016
23 January 2017	28 March 2017	

## 3. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE

### Terms of Reference

1. To oversee 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.
2. To be responsible for the allocation of the Islington Community Fund including:
  - a. determining the Council's policy in relation to discretionary rate relief for charities and other non-profit making bodies and considering and approving applications for discretionary rate relief from the Discretionary Rate Relief Fund\*;
  - b. allocating the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Grants Fund;
  - c. allocating the Advice Fund;
  - d. 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;
  - e. allocating the VCS Rescue Fund

\* If it considers it prudent to do so, the Committee may alter the overall allocations between the Discretionary Rate Relief Fund and the VCS Grants and Rescue Funds

3. To review and, if necessary, withdraw funding to organisations where there is a potential breach of conditions of grant aid and/or service level agreement

4. To consider the management, use and disposal of Council-owned buildings occupied by voluntary and community sector organisations and to agree the disposal or leasing of Council-owned properties to voluntary sector and community bodies, including where relevant, the rent to be set, save that decisions referred to in Part 3 4.4(j) may be taken by officers with the relevant delegated authority.
5. To approve the annual budget proposed for the London Councils' Grants Committee.
6. To make an annual report to the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee on its activities.



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

Meeting of:	Date	Agenda item	Ward(s)
Voluntary and Community Sector Committee	16 <sup>th</sup> June 2016		All

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## SUBJECT: Islington VCS Partnership Grants Programme 2016-2020

### 1 Synopsis

- 1.1 In November 2015 the VCS Committee ratified the Council's VCS strategy, "*Towards a Fairer Islington: Voluntary & Sector Strategy 2016 – 2020*" (Appendix 1). The strategy recognises the considerable contribution that the voluntary and community sector makes to supporting local residents and articulates a new approach to the Council's work with the sector, one based on much closer collaboration and partnership working with organisations, whether they receive grant funding or not. Towards a Fairer Islington re-emphasised the Council's ongoing commitment to providing core grant funding to VCS organisations to deliver a range of activities and services that improve outcomes for local residents; and that can help build resilience and capacity across the sector.
- 1.2 In January 2016 the VCS Committee agreed proposals for a new VCS Partnership Grants Programme 2016-2020, to replace the Islington VCS Grants Fund and Advice Fund. Grants awarded through the fund will contribute towards the core costs of strategically important local organisations. Grants will be awarded on a two plus two year basis across five programme strands:
- 1) Strategic Partners – Borough-wide Infrastructure
  - 2) Strategic Partners – Neighbourhood
  - 3) Delivery Partners
  - 4) Strategic Partner – Volunteering; and
  - 5) Strategic Partners – Advice
- 1.3 Despite the difficult financial challenges faced by the Council, Council agreed to maintain the existing levels of expenditure in the VCS Grants Fund (£1,163,200) and Advice Fund (£1,165,000) which totalled £2,328,200 per annum. In line with the strategy's aspiration to bring together funding programmes from across the council, an additional £367,800 from Housing and Adult Social Services and Islington's Clinical Commissioning Group has been secured for the VCS Partnership Grants Programme 2016-2020, resulting in an overall VCS Grants Fund of £2,696,000.

- 1.4** The VCS Partnership Grants Programme was launched on January 15<sup>th</sup> 2016, with a deadline for applications of March 4<sup>th</sup> 2016. A total of 97 applications were received from 81 individual organisations and one consortium, requesting a total of £4,506,774.99. The recommendations in this report would result in grant allocations to 43 organisations and one consortium, to the value of £2,554,000 per annum.
- 1.5** Following an analysis of the proposed portfolio, including ongoing equality assessments and a Resident Impact Assessment (Appendix 2), it is recommended that £140,000 of funding is retained to address identified gaps in provision in order to ensure that the portfolio of grant funded organisations can address the strategic priorities outlined in the VCS Strategy. This would result in a final allocation of £2,694,000 per annum.
- 1.6** This report provides an overview of the VCS Grants Programme outlining the programme structure, the competitive application and assessment processes, and makes recommendations on the allocation of grant funding across the five strands of the VCS Partnership Grants Programme 2016-2020. It also highlights future grant management arrangements and areas of further development across the portfolio.

## **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1** To agree the proposed VCS Partnership Grants Programme Awards across the five programme strands as set out in Section 9 and appendix 3 of this report.
- 2.2** To agree the proposal to retain funding of £140,000 to respond to identified gaps in the VCS Partnership Portfolio in order to support the delivery of the VCS Strategy as highlighted in section 9 of this report.

## **3 Background**

- 3.1** Since August 2014, and to help the council develop its thinking around future support for local voluntary organisations, the council held a series of consultation events with the Voluntary and Community Sector, other public sector bodies and potential future investment partners. This work led to the development of a new VCS strategy for Islington. *“Towards a Fairer Islington: Voluntary & Community Sector Strategy 2016 – 2020”*. The Council’s Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy 2016-2020 was agreed at VCS Committee in November 2015.
- 3.2** At a time when central government is cutting funding for public services and cutting welfare benefits for those out of work and in work, the Strategy recognises that the need for a strong, resilient, independent voluntary and community sector, able to respond to the needs of Islington’s residents, is greater than ever. The strategy recognises the key role that the sector will have over the next four years in:
- 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 championing equality
  - Supporting neighbourhoods and communities to grow
  - Providing or sign-posting residents to appropriate, high quality advice and guidance
- 3.3** The strategy identifies four ways in which the Council will continue to support the sector and its work in meeting the needs of residents:

- **Funding:** including partnership grants and small grants programmes, a bespoke training and capacity building fund, and discretionary rate relief.
- **Commissioning and procurement:** Commissioning organisations to deliver services, and ensuring social value is included in our approach to commissioning.
- **Premises:** developing a borough-wide premises strategy that maximises the use of our buildings, 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

## 4 The Islington VCS Partnership Grants Programme 2016-2020

4.1 At its meeting in January 2016, Islington's VCS Committee agreed recommendations to provide funding for VCS organisations through the VCS Partnership Grants Programme 2016-2020. The grants programme aims to support organisations that can deliver the strategic priorities set out in the VCS Strategy. Funding will be provided to successful organisations on a two plus two year basis, across the following strands:

- 1) Strategic Partners – Borough-wide Infrastructure
- 2) Strategic Partners – Neighbourhood
- 3) Delivery Partners
- 4) Strategic Partner – Volunteering; and
- 5) Strategic Partners – Advice

The two plus two year basis for grant awards will see a formal review period for all organisations that receive funding to ensure that the commitments made within any established grant agreements are satisfactorily upheld. It also aims to ensure that the Council can respond flexibly to changes in funding arrangements from central government and increases or decreases in the availability of grant funding at a local level over the next four years.

### 4.2 Strategic Partners - Borough-wide Infrastructure

This strand of the grants programme supports strategic borough-wide organisations with the necessary expertise and capacity to provide leadership to Islington's voluntary and community sector, in line with the priorities outlined in the VCS Strategy. Funded organisations are expected to:

- Provide strategic leadership for the sector
- Ensure that Islington's voluntary and community sector has skills and knowledge needed to sustain and grow
- Ensure that Islington's voluntary and community sector can compete for funding and is financially secure
- Ensure that Islington's voluntary and community sector maximises the use of its resources

### 4.3 Strategic Partners – Neighbourhood

This strand of the grants programme supports strategic neighbourhood partners that work with other voluntary and community sector organisations and mainstream services to develop, deliver, coordinate and sustain a high quality offer of neighbourhood-based services and activities. Funded organisations are expected to:

- Provide strategic leadership within the local community

- Coordinate a coherent and engaging neighbourhood-based offer of services and activities for local residents
- Ensure that local community facilities and assets are utilised to their full potential
- Attract external funding that can facilitate delivery in the local community

#### **4.4 Delivery Partners**

This strand of the grants programme supports organisations that work directly with residents to improve outcomes and quality of life. Grants will be awarded to organisations that have engaged with residents and communities, undertaken effective community profiling and developed high quality services or activities that meet identified need. Organisations funded under this strand are expected to:

- Work with residents to tackle complex social issues and long-term health challenges
- Support residents to be more resilient and independent
- Promote cohesion, reduce inequalities and champion the needs of Islington's diverse communities
- Support neighbourhoods and communities to develop and grow

#### **4.5 Strategic Partners - Volunteering Brokerage**

This strand of the grants programme supports strategic partners to provide a borough-wide volunteering brokerage service and support Islington's VCS organisations to manage volunteers effectively. Organisations funded under this strand are expected to:

- Provide strategic leadership to promote volunteering in Islington's voluntary and community sector
- Create high quality volunteering opportunities within Islington's voluntary and community sector
- Work with VCS partners and local businesses to ensure that Islington's voluntary and community sector capitalises on corporate volunteering programmes
- Work with the council, VCS and other key partners to ensure Islington's Voluntary and community sector provides pathways into employment for Islington residents

#### **4.6 Strategic Partners – Advice:**

This strand of the grants programme supports registered advice and guidance organisations to apply new working practices to provide a coherent and seamless advice system that supports Islington residents in line with the Islington Advice Model (Appendix 4), this programme comprised of six distinct strands:

- Access and outreach
- Primary access channel
- Detailed triage service and initial advice
- Generalist advice
- Targeted specialist advice and legal support for excluded population groups
- Specialist advice and litigation

## **5 Budget**

**5.1** At its meeting in January 2016, the VCS Committee agreed to maintain grant funding for the VCS in line with existing spending levels, resulting in a core budget of £2,328,200. Of this £1,165,000 was allocated to the VCS Advice Grants Programme and £1,163,200 to the VCS Grants Programme.

**5.2** A key objective of the Council's VCS Strategy was to establish a corporate approach to the Council's work with VCS in order to align grant and commissioning processes and

reduce duplication in monitoring arrangements. As a result Housing and Adult Social Services and Islington's Clinical Commissioning Group, have contributed funding of £367,800 to the VCS Partnership Grants Programme 2016-2020, resulting in an overall VCS Grants Fund of £2,695,800.

5.3 The following indicative budget levels were allocated across each of the strands within the VCS Partnership Grants Programme as follows:

- **Borough wide Partners:** Up to £210,000
- **Neighbourhood Partners:** Up to £525,000
- **Delivery Partners:** Up to £400,000
- **Volunteering Partners:** Up to £40,000
- **Advice Partners:** £1,406,000

## 6 Launch and Application Process

6.1 The VCS Partnership Grants Programme was launched on January 15<sup>th</sup> 2016, with a deadline for applications of March 4<sup>th</sup> 2016. Information, including the prospectuses, application forms and answers to frequently asked questions were uploaded to the Voluntary and Community Sector webpages of Islington Council's website.

6.2 Information on the programme was communicated through the Council's Twitter feed, to every organisation that received grant funding between 2011 and 2015, and through the networks of Islington Council's VCS partners. Six 'Question and Answer' sessions with a minimum of one for each of the programme strands, were organised by Islington Council's VCS Team, over 70 people attended these events. Sign language interpretation was provided at two of these events.

## 7 Applications Received

7.1 The VCS Partnership Grants Programme 2016-2020 was heavily oversubscribed. Across all programme strands a total of 97 applications were received from 81 individual organisations and 1 consortium, requesting a total of £4,506,774.99 against a budget of £2,696,000 (see Table 1).

Table 1: Number of applications received and total requested by grants strand

Strand	No. of Applications	Total Requested	Available
<b>Borough-wide</b>	11	£438,725.38	£170,000 - £210,000
<b>Delivery</b>	53	£959,318.63	£320,000 - £400,000
<b>Neighbourhood</b>	14	£814,000	£475,000 - £525,000
<b>Volunteering</b>	2	£80,000	£30,000 - £40,000
<b>Advice</b>	17 (8 orgs & 1 consortium)	£2,248,730.98	£1,406,000
Strand 1 - Access & Outreach)	2	£250,000	£200,000
Strand 2 - Primary Access Channel)	4	£132,812	£50,000
Strand 3 - Triage)	4	£185,000	£100,000
Strand 4 - Generalist)	3	£742,134	£350,000
Strand 5 - Targeted Specialist)	3	£388,784.98	£250,000
Strand 6 - Specialist)	1	£550,000	£550,000
<b>Total Applications</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>£4,560,774.99</b>	

## 8 Assessment Process

8.1 The assessment process for the VCS Partnership Grants Programme was run in two stages.

**8.2** At each stage in the process, officers assessed recommendations in line with the Council's equalities objectives and the need to establish a balanced and diverse portfolio working with different sections of the community and across the borough's wards.

### **8.3 Stage One Assessment**

**8.3.1** In the first stage, applicants were invited to submit a written application in response to the published prospectuses and application forms.

**8.3.2** All applications were independently assessed by a minimum of three Council officers, with the same officers assessing all applications within a given strand.. Assessments were made against the minimum criteria outlined in the prospectuses and in line with six scoring matrices established for each grant strand. Applicants' responses to each of the criteria within the scoring matrix (under the headings 'Finance', 'Proposal', 'Beneficiaries and Equalities', 'Our Priorities', 'Risks, Monitoring and Evaluation', and 'Past Performance and Operations') were rated on a scale of 1 to 5.

**8.3.3** Across all of the grants strands, answers to each section of the application form were weighted as follows:

- **Finance:** Up to 10% of overall score (including the organisation's ability to attract resources, levels of reserves held, plans to diversify income)
- **Proposal:** Up to 25% of overall score (the outcomes, activities, vision and rationale outlined by the applicant)
- **Beneficiaries and Equalities:** Up to 25% of overall score (the target group identified by the organisation and responsiveness of the organisation's services to the needs of the community served)
- **Our Priorities:** Up to 25% of overall score (the way in which the organisation responded to the priorities identified in the prospectuses and Council's VCS Strategy – as outlined above)
- **Risks, Monitoring and Evaluation:** Up to 5% (the organisations proposals to manage and mitigate risks, and its proposals for monitoring and evaluation)
- **Past Performance and Operations:** Up to 10% of overall score

**8.3.4** Moderation meetings were held with assessors for each strand. All of the scores of individual officers were aggregated to identify an overall average score for each application. The applications under each strand were then ranked in order to establish a shortlist of organisations to progress to the second stage of assessment. All organisations were contacted on 9th May to notify them of the outcome of the first stage of assessment.

**8.3.5** All organisations that were not shortlisted, and that requested feedback on their application, were offered a face-to-face or telephone meeting.

### **8.4 Stage Two Assessment**

**8.4.1** In the second stage of the assessment, officers met with shortlisted applicants between 12th May and 31st May. These meetings, in the majority held at the organisations offices, provided the assessment officers with the opportunity to discuss applications in more detail and highlight any areas that need further development of clarification before funding recommendations were established.



- 8.4.2** Organisations were encouraged to provide any additional information or points of clarification within one working week in order to support their application for funding and enable officers to make final recommendations for funding.
- 8.4.3** Prior to final recommendations being proposed, a full Resident Impact Assessment was undertaken by officers.

## 9 Funding Recommendations and Key Issues

- 9.1** Details of recommendations for funding for each strand are outlined in appendix 3. These recommendations would result in grant awards to the value of £2,554,000 per annum across the five strands of the programme as summarised in Table 2:

**Table 2: Summary of funding recommendations by strand**

<b>Strand</b>	<b>No. of Organisations</b>	<b>Total Recommended Funding</b>
<b>Borough-wide</b>	6	£170,000
<b>Delivery</b>	21	£365,000
<b>Neighbourhood</b>	12	£570,000
<b>Volunteering</b>	1	£35,000
<b>Advice</b>	5 (4 orgs & 1 consortium)	£1,414,000
Strand 1 - Access & Outreach	1	£219,000
Strand 2 - Primary Access Channel	1	£50,000
Strand 3 - Triage	4	£100,000
Strand 4 - Generalist	3	£350,000
Strand 5 - Targeted Specialist	2 (1 org & 1 consortium)	£245,000
Strand 6 - Specialist	1	£450,000
<b>Total Applications</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>£2,554,000</b>

- 9.2** Throughout the process officers have assessed the quality of submissions against set criteria. These criteria aim to establish and support the development of a diverse portfolio of organisations that operate across the borough, and that is able to deliver against the priorities identified in the VCS Strategy.
- 9.3** Officers have undertaken on-going equalities impact assessments and a Resident Impact Assessment (RIA) examining the proposed impact of recommendations in relation to the protected characteristics identified within the Equalities Act 2010; Age; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Marriage and Civil Partnerships; Race; Religion and Belief; Sex and Sexual Orientation. See Appendix 2.
- 9.4** In summary, the RIA has highlighted a number of areas where recommendations are expected to improve outcomes for key target groups and specifically address current gaps in the existing VCS Grants Fund portfolio. In particular the proposed portfolio will result in an increase in grant funding for organisations that work directly with our most vulnerable residents and specifically sees an increase in funding for organisations that target support at women, LGBT residents, direct delivery of services for residents with disabilities and young people.
- 9.5** In addition to these positive developments, the RIA and an analysis of the proposed portfolio against the priorities set out in the VCS strategy has identified a number of gaps in provision in geographical and thematic areas. This is in part because applications were either not received that responded to key areas, or those that were received, did not meet the minimum shortlisting criteria.

**9.6** This has resulted in gaps in the following areas:

- Disabilities: The proposed grant allocations to organisations across the delivery, neighbourhood and advice strands provides funding for organisations providing direct services and activities for people with disabilities. However, there remains a gap in the portfolio for organisations led by disabled people that provides strategic borough wide leadership and voice for residents with disabilities. Disabled people continue to face considerable challenges in relation to health, employment and welfare benefits. Therefore this gap also needs to be considered in the context of services that are commissioned to address these challenges.
- Elders: The proposed grant allocations to organisations across the delivery, neighbourhood and advice strands provides funding for organisations providing direct services and activities for elders. However at a strategic borough wide level there is a gap in the portfolio that facilitates Elder led leadership and voice.
- Interfaith work and Tackling Hate Crime: An analysis of the proposed portfolio indicates that there is a significant gap at a strategic borough wide level in terms of leadership of inter-faith work. Given the rising levels of faith based hate crimes in the borough there is a clear need to support a leadership function which can facilitate and support work at a local level to promote community cohesion and develop collective responses to tackle rising levels of faith based hate crime.
- Caledonian Ward: Given the high levels of deprivation in the Caledonian ward, the VCS strategy identifies the area as a focus for support. However the area does not currently have the same levels of VCS infrastructure at both a strategic neighbourhood or delivery partner level as other parts of the borough. As a result a bespoke intervention co-produced with corporate and community partners is recommended in Caledonian Ward.

**9.7** Given the aims of the VCS Partnership Grants Programme and the priorities identified within the VCS Strategy, it is recommended that £140,000 of funding is retained to support and facilitate work in these areas. This recommendation would bring the overall level of investment through the VCS Grants Programme to £2,694,000 per annum.

## **10 Next Steps**

**10.1** As part of the Council's commitment to the Islington Compact all organisations currently receiving funding require a minimum of three months' notice of any changes to future grant levels. In order to provide clarity for the sector, and in recognition of the significance of VCS Grants funding for many organisations, it was decided not to issue notice of the end of current grant agreements until the outcomes of the VCS Grants Programme 2016-2020 were decided.

**10.2** Subject to approval of the recommendations all organisations currently receiving grant funding and have had extension to their existing grants agreements will be informed that their current grant agreement will draw to a close on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016. All organisations approved for funding will be informed that their new grant agreement will start on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016.

**10.3** Organisations recommended for funding will be required to sign grant agreements which will detail the six-monthly monitoring arrangements and conditions associated with the grants. Quarterly payments of grants will be conditional upon organisations upholding the conditions of the grant agreement.

**10.4** In June and July officers from the VCS Team and other relevant Council departments will draw up specifications to address the gaps in provision as identified in 9.6. It is envisaged that these additional grant agreements will begin on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016 in line with the main VCS Partnership Grants Programme.

**10.4.1** As detailed in the VCS strategy, The VCS Development team will work with VCS partners, in particular the organisations funded through strands 1 and 2 to try and secure additional external funding where possible in order to strengthen the role and work of the organisations funded through the programme and the wider VCS. Similarly the corporate premises strategy aims to ensure greater parity in terms of premises arrangements for our VCS partners ensuring that funding is targeted at service delivery rather than premises costs.

## **11 Implications**

### **11.1 Financial Implications:**

As outlined above commitment to the proposed grant allocations and retained funding would result in a financial commitment of £2,694,000 per annum until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020, against a budget of £2,696,000 per annum.

### **11.2 Legal Implications:**

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.

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.

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").

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. In agreeing the recommended grant levels 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.

The council must also ensure that it complies with its duty to secure best value (Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999)

### **11.3 Environmental Implications**

There are no environmental implications associated with the delivery of the VCS Partnership Grants Programme.

## 11.4 Resident Impact Assessment:

**11.4.1** A primary focus of “Towards a Fairer Islington: Voluntary & Community Sector Strategy 2016 - 2020” which the Partnership Grants Programme aims to support the delivery of is addressing inequality, promoting community cohesion and supporting our most vulnerable residents.

**11.4.2** A key aim of the VCS Partnership Grants Programme 2016-2020 is to provide core funding to voluntary and community sector organisations working across Islington’s diverse communities. The fund seeks, not only to pay due regard to the aims of the equality duty, but to actively support a portfolio of organisations that can pro-actively address structural inequalities within the borough. A Resident Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached as Appendix 2.

## 12 Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

**12.1** The current VCS Grants Fund and Advice Fund, part of the Islington Community Fund have provided a valuable resource to the voluntary and community sector since 2011. The end of these funding arrangements provides an opportunity for the Council to think afresh about how it wants to support the sector to help deliver against Council’s priorities and the Council’s VCS Strategy.

**12.2** The recommendations in this report reflect the priorities and services outlined in “*Towards a Fairer Islington: Voluntary & Community Sector Strategy 2016 - 2020*” and the Advice Review which identifies how and where VCS organisations can add real value and support the council in taking forward its ambitions to promote a fairer Islington.

### Final report clearance:

Signed by:



7<sup>th</sup> June 2016

**Received by:** Executive Member for Economic and Community Development Date

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

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### Appendices

Appendix 1 Towards a Fairer Islington VCS Strategy 2016-2020.  
Appendix 2 Resident Impact Assessment  
Appendix 3 VCS Partnership Grants Programme: Funding Recommendations  
Appendix 4 Islington Advice Model



ISLINGTON

# Towards a Fairer Islington: Voluntary & Community Sector Strategy

2016-  
2020

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 we 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 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 £70 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

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:** Commissioning organisations to deliver services and ensuring social value is included in our approach to commissioning.
- **Premises:** Developing a borough-wide premises strategy that maximises the use of our buildings, 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 by 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:** Commissioning organisations to deliver services, and ensuring social value is included in our approach to commissioning.
- **Premises:** developing a borough-wide premises strategy that maximises the use of our buildings, 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.



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).

## 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 reductions to 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 and grant funding arrangements where appropriate.
- 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 with limited capacity 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 organisations 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.
- Identify trusts and external grant funding and help 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 agendas) or demographic interest groups as an effective way to advance common issues, gain efficiencies and promote 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. 1,169 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 locally focussed organisations were actively operating in the borough. 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 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 grass roots organisations that have 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.

Type of organisation	Income	Number (approx)	Examples
<b>Tier 1:</b> 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.
<b>Tier 2:</b> 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.
<b>Tier 3:</b> 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.
<b>Tier 4:</b> Medium, mainly Islington focussed.	£250,000 to £1 million	40	Mental health, specialist advice groups, larger nurseries.
<b>Tier 5:</b> Large established local and regional charities.	£1 million and over	30	Large community hubs, social care and large children's services providers.
<b>Tier 6:</b> National and regional charities. Not Islington focussed. Largely located in south of the borough.	£10 million plus	Under 30	NSPCC, Shelter, Amnesty International.

Table 2: Islington VCS Organisations Categorisation by Size

### 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 cover a range of areas, so it is difficult to classify them within distinct sectors of activity. The table below shows the primary focus for local organisations that we have been able to map.

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

Table 1: Voluntary and Community Organisations: Primary Thematic Focus – Source: National Council for Voluntary Organisations commissioned by London Voluntary Service Council (2013)

### 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, where a number of important community centres and voluntary sector hubs are located. These centres often host smaller organisations within their premises. The number of organisations found in the north of the borough may also be reflective of 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. Typically these organisations are located in the south of the borough.

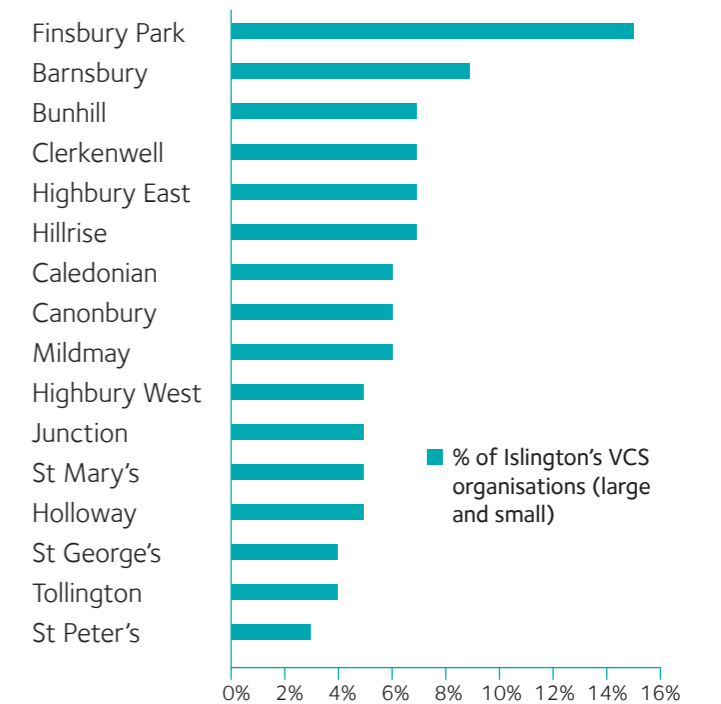


Figure 1: VCS Location by Ward (approximate)

## 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.



### Community Hubs

- 1 St Luke's Parochial Trust
- 2 Mildmay Community Partnership
- 3 Caxton House Community Centre
- 4 Hornsey Lane Estate Community Association
- 5 Hanley Crouch Community Association
- 6 Whittington Park Community Association
- 7 Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust
- 8 Highbury Roundhouse Youth & Community Centre
- 9 Hilldrop Area Community Association
- 10 Holloway Neighbourhood Group
- 11 Finsbury Park Community Hub
- 12 Peel Institute
- 13 Bemerton Villages Management Organisation

### Housing Community Centre

- 14 Finsbury Unity Room Community Centre
- 15 Brunswick Estate Community Room
- 16 Vibast Community Centre
- 17 Peregrine Tenants Hall
- 18 Rahere House Community Centre/Kings Square Estate
- 19 Gambier Hall/Betty Brunker Hall
- 20 Providence Place Community Centre
- 21 Walter Sickert Community Centre
- 22 Half Moon Crescent Community Centre
- 23 Almorah Community Centre
- 24 Popham Estate Community Centre
- 25 Bentham Court Community Centre
- 26 Weston Rise Community Centre
- 27 New Orleans Community Centre
- 28 St Johns Community Centre
- 29 Girdlestone Estate Community Centre
- 30 Harry Rice Community Centre
- 31 Hargrave Hall
- 32 Holly Hall Community Centre
- 33 Aubert Community Centre
- 34 Stephens Ink Community Centre
- 35 York Way Community Centre
- 36 Chesnuts Community Centre
- 37 Birchmore Hall
- 38 Williamson Street Community Centre
- 39 Bennett Court Community Centre
- 40 Durham Road Community Room
- 41 Westbourne Community Centre
- 42 Nailour Hall
- 43 Lorraine Estate Community Centre
- 44 Margery Street Community Centre

Figure 2: Islington VCS Hubs and Community Centres

## 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.

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

### Council Voluntary Sector Contracts and Grants

## 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 was held from 19 June 2014 to 15 August 2014. This consultation focussed on the programmes in Islington Community Fund.

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.

Page 34 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.

Type	Support Required
<b>Tier 1</b> Under £10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Setting up – charity registration, organisational etc.</li> <li>■ Using volunteers – eg DBS checks.</li> <li>■ Practical development – finance management, trustees, developing policies etc.</li> <li>■ Fundraising inc. small grants applications.</li> <li>■ Finding premises.</li> <li>■ Information and intelligence,</li> <li>■ Developing links.</li> <li>■ Accessing capacity building sources.</li> </ul>
<b>Tier 2</b> £10k – £50k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Fundraising to diversify income.</li> <li>■ Communications and marketing.</li> <li>■ Finance and administration.</li> <li>■ Staff development.</li> <li>■ Governance and trustee training.</li> <li>■ Volunteer support and supervision.</li> <li>■ Business planning.</li> <li>■ Developing new activities.</li> <li>■ Links with similar organisations.</li> <li>■ Suitable and affordable premises.</li> </ul>
<b>Tier 3</b> £50k – £250k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Business planning – inc. measuring impact and cost of services.</li> <li>■ Management and staff s development.</li> <li>■ Developing better links with statutory sector as well as VCS.</li> <li>■ Information and intelligence.</li> <li>■ Securing flexible funding.</li> <li>■ Developing new services.</li> <li>■ Improved access to</li> <li>■ Income generation/trading (inc. private sector links).</li> <li>■ Fit for purpose premises.</li> <li>■ Consortia/joint working/mergers.</li> <li>■ Service specific support eg. adult/children’s social care and accessing public sector procurement opportunities.</li> <li>■ Volunteer training, support and supervision.</li> <li>■ IT development.</li> </ul>
<b>Tier 4</b> £250k – £1m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Links to contracts and commissioning opportunities.</li> <li>■ Developing income generation inc. trading.</li> <li>■ Increasing use of volunteers.</li> <li>■ Professional trustees.</li> <li>■ Innovation.</li> <li>■ IT development.</li> </ul>
<b>Tier 5</b> £1m +	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ability to compete against external VCS organisations and private sector for LBI contracts.</li> <li>■ Professional trustees.</li> <li>■ Innovation.</li> </ul>
<b>Tier 6</b> Over £10m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Links with Islington’s VCS and Council – eg expertise and employment opportunities for residents.</li> </ul>

Support Needs by Organisational Size

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.

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## Resident Impact Assessment

**Title of policy, procedure, function, service activity or financial decision: VCS Partnership Grants Programme.**

**Service Area: PPC: VCS Development Team.**

### 1. What are the intended outcomes of this policy, function etc?

#### Introduction

In November 2015 the VCS Committee ratified the Council's VCS strategy, "***Towards a Fairer Islington: Voluntary & Sector Strategy 2016 – 2020***" (Appendix 1). The strategy recognises the considerable contribution that the voluntary and community sector makes to supporting local residents and articulates a new approach to the Council's work with the sector, one based on much closer collaboration and partnership working with organisations, whether they receive grant funding or not. Towards a Fairer Islington re-emphasised the Council's ongoing commitment to providing core grant funding to VCS organisations to deliver a range of activities and services that improve outcomes for local residents; and that can help build resilience and capacity across the sector.

The strategy identifies four ways in which the Council will continue to support the sector and its work in meeting the needs of residents:

- **Funding:** including partnership grants and small grants programmes, a bespoke training and capacity building fund, and discretionary rate relief.
- **Commissioning and procurement:** Commissioning organisations to deliver services, and ensuring social value is included in our approach to commissioning.
- **Premises:** developing a borough-wide premises strategy that maximises the use of our buildings, 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 VCS Partnership Grants Programme 2016-2020

At its meeting in January 2016, Islington's VCS Committee agreed recommendations to provide funding for VCS organisations through the VCS Partnership Grants Programme 2016-2020. The programme was a key commitment within the Council's VCS Strategy.

The grants programme aims to support organisations that can deliver the strategic priorities set out in the VCS Strategy over the next four years in:

- **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 championing equality**
- **Supporting neighbourhoods and communities to grow**
- **Providing or sign-posting residents to appropriate, high quality advice and guidance**

The VCS Partnership Grants Programme fundamentally aims to address the challenges faced by residents disadvantaged by structural inequalities. Funding will be provided to successful organisations on a two plus two year basis, across the following strands:

- 1) Strategic Partners – Borough-wide Infrastructure
- 2) Strategic Partners – Neighbourhood
- 3) Delivery Partners
- 4) Strategic Partner – Volunteering; and
- 5) Strategic Partners – Advice

On January 15th 2016, the Council's VCS Development Team published the five corresponding VCS Partnership Grant Strand Prospectus which outline in more detail the key outcomes that the funding programme seeks to achieve for residents. The deadline for applications was 4th March 2016. A total of 97 applications were received from 81 individual organisations and 1 consortium, requesting a total of £4,506,774.99 (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Number of Applications Received and Total Requested by Grants Strand**

<b>Strand</b>	<b>No. of Applications</b>	<b>Total Requested</b>	<b>Available</b>
<b>Borough-wide</b>	11	£438,725.38	£170,000 - £210,000
<b>Delivery</b>	53	£959,318.63	£320,000 - £400,000
<b>Neighbourhood</b>	14	£814,000	£475,000 - £525,000
<b>Volunteering</b>	2	£80,000	£30,000 - £40,000
<b>Advice</b>	17 (8 orgs & 1 consortium)	£2,248,730.98	£1,406,000
Strand 1 - Access & Outreach)	2	£250,000	£200,000
Strand 2 - Primary Access Channel)	4	£132,812	£50,000
Strand 3 - Triage)	4	£185,000	£100,000
Strand 4 - Generalist)	3	£742,134	£350,000
Strand 5 - Targeted Specialist)	3	£388,784.98	£250,000
Strand 6 - Specialist)	1	£550,000	£550,000
<b>Total Applications</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>£4,560,774.99</b>	

## **Assessment Process**

The assessment process for the VCS Partnership Grants Programme was run in two stages. At each stage in the process, officers assessed recommendations in line with the Council's equalities objectives and the need to establish a balanced and diverse portfolio working with different sections of the community and across the borough's wards.

### **Stage One Assessment**

In the first stage, applicants were invited to submit a written application in response to the published prospectuses and application forms. All applications were independently assessed by a minimum of three Council officers, and assessments were made against the minimum criteria outlined in the prospectuses and in line with six scoring matrices established for each grant strand. Applicants' responses to each of the criteria within the scoring matrix (under the headings 'Finance', 'Proposal', 'Beneficiaries and Equalities', 'Our Priorities', 'Risks, Monitoring and Evaluation', and 'Past Performance and Operations') were rated on a scale of 1 to 5.

Across all of the grants strands, answers to each section of the application form were weighted as follows:

- **Finance:** Up to 10% of overall score (including the organisation's ability to attract resources, levels of reserves held, plans to diversify income)

- **Proposal:** Up to 25% of overall score (the outcomes, activities, vision and rationale outlined by the applicant)
- **Beneficiaries and Equalities:** Up to 25% of overall score (the target group identified by the organisation and responsiveness of the organisation's services to the needs of the community served)
- **Our Priorities:** Up to 25% of overall score (the way in which the organisation responded to the priorities identified in the prospectuses and Council's VCS Strategy – as outlined above)
- **Risks, Monitoring and Evaluation:** Up to 5% (the organisations proposals to manage and mitigate risks, and its proposals for monitoring and evaluation)
- **Past Performance and Operations:** Up to 10% of overall score

Moderation meetings were held with assessors for each strand. All of the scores of individual officers were aggregated to identify an overall average score for each application. The applications under each strand were then ranked in order to establish a shortlist of organisations to progress to the second stage of assessment. All organisations were contacted on 9th May to notify them of the outcome of the first stage of assessment. All organisations that were not shortlisted, and that requested feedback on their application, were offered a face-to-face or telephone meeting.

### **Stage Two Assessment**

In the second stage of the assessment, shortlisted organisations were invited to meet with officers from the VCS team between 9th May and 31st May. These meetings provided the assessment officers with the opportunity to discuss applications in more detail and highlight any areas that need further development or clarification, including the organisations target beneficiaries and equalities impacts.

Organisations were encouraged to provide any additional information or points of clarification within one working week in order to support their application for funding and enable officers to make final recommendations for funding. Prior to final recommendations being proposed, a full Resident Impact Assessment was undertaken by officers.

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## **2. Resident Profile**

Who is going to be impacted by this change i.e. residents/service users/tenants? Please complete data for your service users. If your data does not fit into the categories in this table, please copy and paste your own table in the space below. Please refer to section 3.3 of the guidance for more information.

The VCS Partnership Grants Programme 2016-2020 will provide grant funding for 44 organisations in the borough. These organisations deliver an extensive range of services and activities for Islington residents at key geographical locations - with a focus on those areas of the borough that have high levels of multiple deprivation; that have reach across the whole borough, and that are primarily focussed on supporting residents facing structural and socio-economic disadvantage.

Due to the way in which organisations currently collect and analyse data it is not possible to aggregate equalities monitoring data in a way that would be statistically valid. The VCS team will establish a consistent approach to recording and analysing equalities monitoring data across the proposed portfolio as part of new grant monitoring arrangements.

However, examination of the profile of beneficiaries that applicants have identified in their respective submissions the services funded, disproportionately represent those communities in Islington that are disadvantaged as a result of their gender, age, disabilities, sexual orientation, race and religion/belief.

The VCS Grants Programme 2016-2020 will impact on all organisations that submit applications, i.e. 81 VCS organisations in the borough. Of these, 40 organisations currently receive funding.

### 3. Equality impacts

With reference to the [guidance](#), please describe what are the equality and socio-economic impacts for residents and what are the opportunities to challenge prejudice or promote understanding?

A key aim of the VCS Partnership Grants Programme 2016-2020 is to provide core funding to voluntary and community sector organisations working across Islington's diverse communities. The fund seeks, not only to pay due regard to the aims of the equality duty, but to actively support a portfolio of organisations that can pro-actively address structural inequalities within the borough.

As a competitive process, the grants programme has resulted in some organisations that currently receive funding, no longer being recommended for funding. The proposed portfolio however sees new organisations funded through the programme that will address some gaps in current provision and strengthen other areas of work.

#### **Positive Impacts**

An equalities assessment that involved an analysis of the equalities information provided by applicants and a mapping of organisations recommended to funding across equalities strands, has highlighted the following positive impacts of the proposed portfolio:

- The proposed funding arrangements will see an increase in the total funding being provided to organisations working directly with some of Islington's most vulnerable residents (Strands 2-5) from 88% to 93%. Alongside this a 10% increase in funding (£91,800) will be provided to organisations working directly with residents in local community settings through the Delivery Partner's and Neighbourhood Partner's strands. This is anticipated to increase the direct impact that the portfolio of VCS funded organisations has on some of Islington's most marginalised residents.
- **Gender:** 29% (6 organisations) recommended for funding in the Delivery Partner's strand work primarily to improve outcomes for women, including those affected by domestic violence. This is twice as many organisations that were funded for this work under the previous VCS Grants Fund. All of the proposed funded organisations demonstrate high levels of beneficiaries are women.
- **Age:** Services for younger and older residents are commissioned in the main through Children's Services and Housing & Adult Social Services. However, in line with the borough's demographics, 33% of the organisations (7 organisations) recommended for funding in the Delivery Partner's strand describe work with children and young people as a part of their core purpose; four of these organisations have not previously received grant funding. Similarly, 20% of the organisations funded in the Delivery Partner's strand describe work with elders as a core purpose of the organisation. As a result, the portfolio of organisations is assessed as being better placed to support residents that may experience exclusion as a result of their age.
- **Disabilities:** 24% of the organisations (5 organisations) recommended for funding within the Delivery Partner's Strand of the programme work specifically with residents with disabilities, compared to one organisation in the current VCS Grants Fund. None of these organisations were previously funded and as a result the portfolio of Delivery Partners will better respond to the needs of Islington residents with disabilities.
- **Sexual Orientation:** One organisation funded within the Delivery Partner's Strand and one organisation funded through the Borough-wide strand will work specifically to improve outcomes for LGBT residents. In the past no funding was provided for organisations working with this section of the community.
- **Ethnicity:** Within the delivery strand 62% of the organisations recommended for funding have a core purpose associated with improving outcomes for BAMER residents. In the Borough-wide Partner's strand two of the six organisations recommended for funding work with the specific aim of improving outcomes for BAMER communities. Within the Advice Partner's strand one consortium of BAMER organisation is recommended for funding, this is the first time that these organisations will have formally received funding specifically for their

advice work and funding through this strand will provide an opportunity for community based BAMER organisations to better influence the overall development of Islington's advice offer. Across the entire portfolio, 89% of all organisations recommended for funding state that their work is targeted towards resident from BAMER backgrounds.

- **Faith:** One organisation working with Muslim residents is recommended for funding under the Neighbourhood Partner strand. This organisation was previously funded under the cohesion strand of the VCS Grants Fund.

In addition, the Advice funding strand (which will deliver the advice model developed in partnership with a range of VCS organisations) sees 49% of funding allocated to specialist legal advice targeting residents who are structurally disadvantaged e.g. residents who are disabled, are experiencing mental health etc. The re-profiling of the advice service funding which sees a greater percentage of funding allocated to generalist support will enable more residents to be responded to more efficiently and speedily. The Advice strand also provides funding for BAMER organisations to ensure that the needs of BAMER residents are addressed in strategic planning, development and delivery of advice services funded by the council.

### **Areas to Address**

In addition to these positive developments, the same equalities impact assessments have identified a number of gaps in provision in geographical and thematic areas. This is in part because applications were either not received that responded to key areas, or those that were received, did not meet the minimum shortlisting criteria. The VCS Development Team will work in partnership with other corporate departments, key partners and the wider VCS to address the following areas for further development:

- **Disabilities:** Although the proposed grant allocations to organisations across the delivery, neighbourhood and advice strands provides funding for organisations that directly deliver services and activities for people with disabilities (as highlighted above), there remains a gap in the portfolio for organisations that provide strategic borough-wide leadership and voice for residents with disabilities.
- **Elders:** Although the proposed grant allocations to organisations across the delivery, neighbourhood and advice strands provides funding for organisations that directly deliver services and activities for elders (as highlighted above), there is a risk that the proposed portfolio would result in a gap for an organisation that provides strategic borough-wide leadership and voice for elders.
- **Interfaith work and Tackling Hate Crime:** An analysis of the proposed portfolio indicates that there is a significant gap at a strategic borough wide level in terms of leadership of inter-faith work. Given the rising levels of faith based hate crimes in the borough there is a clear need to support a leadership function which can facilitate and support work at a local level to promote community cohesion and develop collective responses to tackle rising levels of faith based hate crime.
- **Caledonian Ward:** Given the high levels of deprivation in the Caledonian ward, the VCS strategy identifies the area as a focus for support. However the area does not currently have the same levels of VCS infrastructure at both a strategic neighbourhood or delivery partner level as other parts of the borough. As a result a bespoke intervention, co-produced with corporate and community partners is recommended in Caledonian Ward.

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## **4. Safeguarding and Human Rights impacts**

**a) Safeguarding risks and Human Rights breaches**

Please describe any safeguarding risks for children or vulnerable adults AND any potential human rights breaches that may occur as a result of the proposal? Please refer to **section 4.8** of the [guidance](#) for more information.

**If potential safeguarding and human rights risks are identified then please contact equalities@islington.gov.uk to discuss further:**

No safeguarding risks for children or vulnerable adults and any potential human rights breaches have been identified that may occur as a result of the proposal. All funded organisations were required to have safeguarding policies in place as a minimum standard and formed part of the assessment process. This requirement will also be a part of all future grant agreements and will be monitored on a regular basis.

Funding for advice agencies ensures that individual residents can receive advice on human rights issues and have their cases taken up through the legal system if necessary.

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## 5. Action

How will you respond to the impacts that you have identified in sections 3 and 4, or address any gaps in data or information? For more information on identifying actions that will limit the negative impact of the policy for protected groups see the [guidance](#).

In order to mitigate the risks identified in section 3 of this RIA, the following actions are recommended:

- £140,000 of funding should be retained in order to support and facilitate work in the areas identified in section 3.
- Officers within the VCS Team will work with colleagues in Housing, Adult Social Services, and Community Safety in order to develop specifications, and to explore co-financing arrangements for grant funding in the four areas identified above.
- Islington’s VCS Development Team will continue the commitment to work with VCS organisations that do not receive grant funding in order to provide technical support and to identify and support applications to alternative sources of grant funding.
- Establish a consistent and coherent approach to gathering, monitoring and analysing equalities monitoring data as part of the new grants agreement protocols

Please send the completed RIA to equalities@islington.gov.uk and also make it publicly available online along with the relevant policy or service change.

**This Resident Impact Assessment has been completed in accordance with the guidance and using appropriate evidence.**

**Staff member completing this form:**

**Head of Service or higher:**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: [Click here to enter a date.](#)

Date: [Click here to enter a date.](#)

## Appendix 3: VCS Partnership Grants: Funding Recommendations

### Strand 1: Borough-wide Partners

#### Recommendations

Eleven organisations applied under the Borough-wide Partners Strand. Following the assessment process it is recommended that the six organisations receive grant funding as indicated in Table 3 below.

#### Funding

The budget range in the VCS report was £170,000 to £210,000. The level of funding requested by applicants totalled £439,000. These recommendations would increase the total budget allocated to the Borough-wide Strand to £240,000.

Table 1: Recommended grant funding for the Borough-wide strand of the VCS Grants Programme 2016-2020

Organisation	Recommended Grant Award
Camden LGBT Forum*	£25,000
Every Voice – Islington BME Forum	£25,000
Islington Refugee Forum	£20,000
Manor Gardens Welfare Trust	£25,000
Octopus Community Network Ltd.	£35,000
Voluntary Action Islington	£40,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£170,000</b>

\* To be rebranded as Camden and Islington LGBT Forum

## Strand 2: Neighbourhood Partners

### Recommendations

14 organisations applied under the Neighbourhood's Strand. Following the assessment process it is recommended that the 12 organisations receive grant funding from the Strategic Neighbourhood Partnership strand as indicated in the Table 4 below.

### Funding

The suggested budget range for this strand identified in the report to the January 2016 VCS Committee was £475,000 to £525,000. The level of funding requested by a total 14 applicants totalled £814,000.

As outlined in the VCS strategy Neighbourhood partners have a key strategic role identifying local need responding both directly and facilitating the work of delivery partners in meeting the needs of local residents. In order to ensure that these neighbourhood partners are able to fulfil this function, have the appropriate dedicated staffing to fulfil this role and are therefore more sustainable over the duration of the grant programme it is recommended that the minimum level of award is £40,000 per organisation. This level of funding would be sufficient to cover at least one full-time post. In areas where there are high levels of deprivation or key strategic activities taking place the maximum recommended would be £60,000. The total funding recommended for organisations in this strand is £570,000.

Table 2: Recommended grant funding for the Neighbourhood strand of the VCS Grants Programme 2016-2020

Organisation	Recommended Grant Award
Caxton House Community Centre	£40,000
Hanley Crouch Community Association Ltd.	£60,000
Highbury Roundhouse	£50,000
Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust	£40,000
Hilldrop Area Community Association	£40,000
Holloway Neighbourhood Group	£40,000
Hornsey Lane Estate Community Association	£40,000
Mildmay Community Partnership	£60,000
Muslim Welfare House	£40,000
Peel Institute	£40,000
St Luke's Parochial Trust	£60,000
Whittington Park Community Association	£60,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£570,000</b>



## Strand 3: Delivery Partners

### Recommendations

53 organisations applied under the Delivery Partner's Strand. Following the assessment process it is recommended that the 21 organisations receive grant funding as indicated in the Table 5 below.

### Funding

The budget range in the VCS report of January 2-16 was up to £330,000-£400,000. The level of funding requested by a total of 53 applicants totalled £959,318. Recommendations for funding the 21 organisations would result in a budget allocation of £365,000.

Table 3: Recommended grant funding for the Delivery strand of the VCS Grants Programme 2016-2020

Organisation	Recommended Grant Award
All Change	£20,000
Asian Women Lone Parent Association (AWLPA)	£15,000
Circle / Alone in London	£20,000
Centre 404	£20,000
Community Languages Support Services	£20,000
Eritrean Community in the UK	£20,000
Healthy Generations	£5,000
Holloway Neighbourhood Group	£20,000
IMECE Women's Centre	£20,000
Islington Bangladeshi Association	£20,000
Islington Centre for Refugees and Migrants	£15,000
Islington Chinese Association	£15,000
Islington Community Theatre	£15,000
Islington Somali Community	£20,000
Kurdish and Middle Eastern Women's Organisation Ltd.	£15,000
Little Angel Theatre	£15,000
One True Voice Women's Organisation	£15,000
The Parent House	£15,000
The Pilion Trust	£20,000
The Stuart Low Trust	£20,000
Tollington Parish Church	£20,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£365,000</b>

## Strand 4: Volunteering Partners

### Recommendations

Two applications were received under the Volunteering Partners Strand. Following the assessment process it is recommended that the one organisation receives grant funding as indicated in Table 6 below.

### Funding

The budget range in the VCS report was up to £40,000. The level of funding requested by applicants totalled £80,000. These recommendations would result in a budget allocation of £35,000.

Table 4: Recommended grant funding for applicants to the Volunteering strand of the VCS Grants Programme 2016-2020

Organisation	Recommended Grant Award
Voluntary Action Islington	£35,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£35,000</b>

## Strand 5: Advice Partners

### Recommendations

Applications were made across the 5 strands by 7 organisations and 1 Consortium. Following the assessment process it is recommended that the 4 organisations and 1 consortium receive grant funding from the Strategic Advice Partnership strand as indicated in Table 7 below.

These funding proposals result in 15.5% of the available fund being allocated to the delivery of an outreach and access service to ensure that residents who most need advice services can access them; 10.6% into the development and delivery of a common access system, triage assessment and referral process across all advice providers; 24.8% into generalist legal advice and 49.2% into specialist legal advice (17.3% and 31.8% for targeted specialist and specialist respectively).

### Funding

A proposed minimum budget of £1,406,000 was agreed at the VCS Committee in January 2016. The recommendations outlined would result in a budget allocation of £1,414,000 an increase of £8,000 in the overall budget for advice when compared to 2014/15 expenditure. In addition a further £75,000 of funding is recommended to organisations in the delivery partner's strand who offer advice as a core part of their service offer.

**Table 5: Recommended grant funding for applicants to the Advice strand of the VCS Grants Programme 2016-2020**

Organisation	Strand	Recommended Grant Award
Help on Your Doorstep	1: Access and Outreach	£219,000*
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>£219,000</b>
Citizens Advice Bureau	2: Primary Access Channel	£50,000
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>£50,000</b>
Citizens Advice Bureau	3: Triage System	£70,000
Help on Your Doorstep	3: Triage System	£10,000
Islington People's Rights	3: Triage System	£10,000
Islington Law Centre	3: Triage System	£10,000
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>£100,000</b>
Citizens Advice Bureau	4: Generalist Advice	£350,000
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>£350,000</b>
Evelyn Oldfield Unit (Consortium)	5: Targeted Advice	£25,000
Islington People's Rights	5: Targeted Advice	£220,000
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>£245,000</b>
Islington Law Centre	6: Specialist Legal Advice	£450,000
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>£450,000</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,414,000</b>

\* Additional funding to pilot delivery model in GP Clinics across Islington

This level of funding would see allocations to organisations, and elements of the advice model as detailed in Table 8 and Table 9 below:

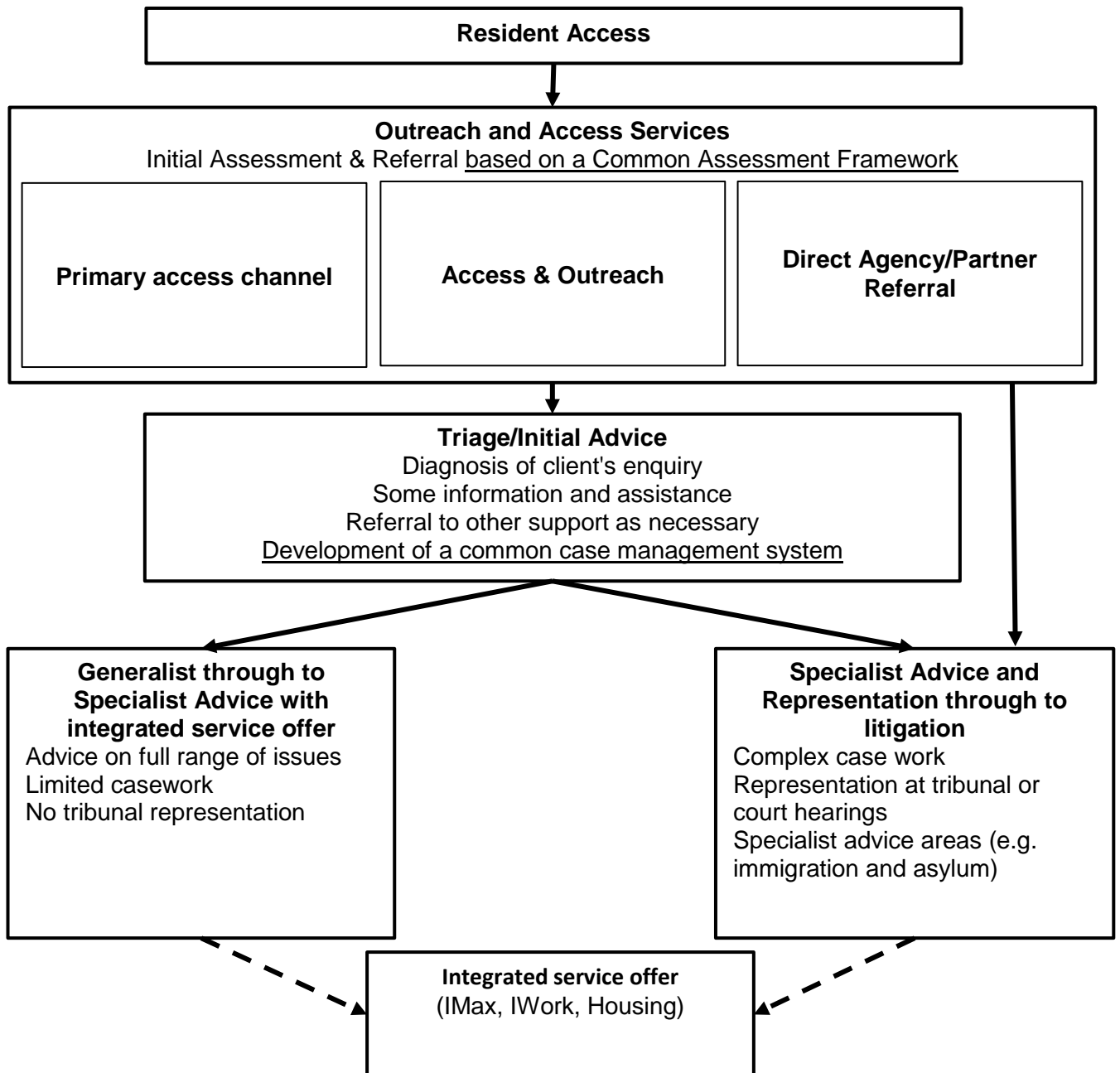
**Table 6: Total recommended grant funding by organisation**

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Recommended Award Amount (All)</b>
Citizens Advice Bureau	£470,000
Evelyn Oldfield Unit - Islington BAMER Advice Alliance	£25,000
Help on Your Doorstep	£229,000
Islington Law Centre	£460,000
Islington People's Rights	£230,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,414,000</b>

**Table 7: Total recommended grant funding by strand**

<b>Strand</b>	<b>Maximum Award (Up to)</b>	<b>Recommended level of funding</b>	<b>% of Overall Advice Spend</b>
Advice (Strand 1 - Access & Outreach)	£200,000	£219,000	15.5%
Advice (Strand 2 - Primary Access Channel)	£50,000	£50,000	3.5%
Advice (Strand 3 - Triage)	£100,000	£100,000	7.1%
Advice (Strand 4 - Generalist)	£350,000	£350,000	24.8%
Advice (Strand 5 - Targeted Specialist)	£250,000	£245,000	17.3%
Advice (Strand 6 - Specialist)	£550,000	£450,000	31.8%
<b>Total</b>		<b>£1,414,000.00</b>	

## Appendix 4: Islington Advice Model



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## Report of: Executive Member for Community Development

Meeting of:	Date	Agenda item	Ward(s)
Voluntary and Community Sector Committee	16 <sup>th</sup> June 2016		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 2016/17 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 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 2016/17 £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 second 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

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.

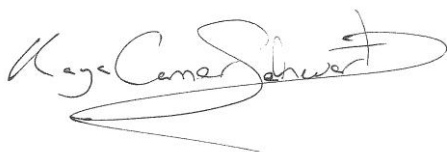
### Appendices

Appendix A – Local Initiatives Fund Proposals

**Background papers:** none

Final report clearance:

**Signed by:**



7 June 2016

Executive Member for Community Development

**Received by:**



7 June 2016

Head of Democratic Services

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## NEW PROPOSALS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE IN JUNE 2016

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	Gary Heather / Asima Shaikh	Jannaty Women's Social Society	Annual graduation ceremony at the Andover Community Centre for Arabic language students and women doing sewing and cooking classes. Funding to pay for refreshments, certificates, gifts, venue hire, volunteer costs and catering accessories.	29 May 2016	Women, young people and children living in Islington	130	500	650	£150 from members for the rent	
Finsbury Park	Gary Heather / Mick O'Sullivan	Holloway Neighbourhood Group	Social activities for older people - two local trips, two new health and well being events and a tea dance. Funding to pay for staff time, entrance fees, refreshments and volunteer expenses.	24 June to 30 Sept 2016	Older people who are at risk of social isolation	50	600	790	£190 Holloway Neighbourhood Group	
Finsbury Park	Gary Heather / Asima Shaikh / Mick O'Sullivan	Holloway Neighbourhood Group	Bouncy castle, food and soft drinks for the annual Mayton Street Festival which is being organised by local residents.	16 July 2016	All local residents	350	500	700	£95 Holloway Neighbourhood Group, £105 income from donations and stalls tbc	
Finsbury Park	Gary Heather / Mick O'Sullivan	Tollington Parish	Events on the Andover and Six Acres estates, including a health and well being day, a fun day and a children's sports day organised in conjunction with the council and local TRAs. Funding to contribute towards the cost of hiring technical, sound and other equipment.	3 to 5 June 2016	Local residents, especially young people on the estate	1800 households on the estates	500	8,000	£5,000 LBI Housing, £2,000 Tollington Parish, £200 New Life tbc	

## NEW PROPOSALS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE IN JUNE 2016

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	Janet Burgess / Kaya Comer-Schwartz / Tim Nicholls	Pemberton Gardens Street Party	Pemberton Gardens 'Big Lunch' Street Party 2016. Funding to pay for DJ, bouncy castle, catering accessories and street entertainment.	Saturday 18 June 2016	Residents from Pemberton Gardens and St John's Church, Upper Holloway	200+	500	800	£300 St John's Church, Upper Holloway tbc	
St Georges	Kat Fletcher / Satnam Gill / Nick Ward	Tufnell Park Primary School Home School Association	Funding to contribute towards the hire of a rodeo bull activity and inflatables at the school summer fair.	Saturday 9 July 2016	Children, staff and their families as well as wider local community	800	400	3,000	Remainder funded through raffle profit	
Page 59 Tollington	Jean Kaseki	Cascadura Team Community Supporters	Fashion show and entertainment for older people and organisations to encourage older people to dress in appropriate clothing, thereby inspiring confidence and improving wellbeing. Funding to pay for hire of the Islington Assembly Hall.	Date in October 2016 to be confirmed	Mainly older people	170	800	1,390	£300 tbc from PFI Housing, remainder from Hanley Crouch Comm Assoc and Age UK Islington tbc	

## PROJECT CHANGES TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE IN JUNE 2016

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
Canonbury	Alexander Diner/ Clare Jeapes / Nicholas Wayne	Urban Hope	Youth worker costs associated with the running of a weekly running club and entry fees and travel to the Lee Valley 10km race.	7 June to 4 September 2016	Young people aged 14 to 18	10	671.34	760	£100 Jones Day law firm	Grant awarded in January 2016 for half term training for which there was an underspend of £671.34.

**Total LIF funding requested and balance remaining**

<b>Total Local Initiatives Fund budget allocation 2016-17:</b>	<b>£240,000</b>
Total allocations to be made from previous years' budgets:	£16,912
Amount allocated by VCS Committee to date:	£32,080
Balance remaining:	£224,832
<b>New proposals for June VCS Committee:</b>	<b>£3,800</b>
<b>Total amount remaining to allocate in 2016-17:</b>	<b>£221,032</b>

<b>2016-17 Balance remaining by ward:</b>	
<b>Ward</b>	<b>Balance:</b>
Barnsbury	£12,738
Bunhill	£13,691
Caledonian	£16,500
Canonbury	£11,659
Clerkenwell	£14,500
Finsbury Park	£12,971
Highbury East	£16,105
Highbury West	£12,770
Hillrise	£7,750
Holloway	£15,025
Junction	£15,115
Mildmay	£12,810
St George's	£15,600
St Mary's	£12,647
St Peter's	£16,950
Tollington	£14,200

**£221,032****Notes:**

Includes £1,279 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £500 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £1,500 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £159 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £1,000 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £571 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £1,105 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £500 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £25 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £2,615 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £10 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £1,000 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £847 from previous LIF allocations

Includes £5,800 from previous LIF allocations

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