



**Resources Department
Town Hall, Upper Street, London, N1 2UD**

AGENDA FOR THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR COMMITTEE

Members of the Voluntary and Community Sector Committee are summoned to a meeting which will be held in Committee Room 1 at Islington Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on **25 January 2022 at 6:30pm.**

Enquiries to : Mary Green
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Despatched : 17 January 2022

Membership

Councillor Kaya Comer-Schwartz(Chair)
Councillor Una O'Halloran
Councillor Michelline Safi-Ngongo
Councillor Diarmaid Ward

Substitute Members

Councillor Rowena Champion
Councillor Satnam Gill
Councillor Sue Lukes
Councillor Asima Shaikh
Councillor Nurullah Turan

Observers

Councillor Janet Burgess MBE
Councillor Jason Jackson
Councillor Anjna Khurana

Quorum: is 2 Councillors



A. Formal matters

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

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

- if it is not yet on the council's register, you must declare both the existence and details of it at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent;
- you may choose to declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest that is already in the register in the interests of openness and transparency.

In both the above cases, you must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item.

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

- *(a) Employment, etc - Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
- (b) Sponsorship - Any payment or other financial benefit in respect of your expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of your election; including from a trade union.
- (c) Contracts - Any current contract for goods, services or works, between you or your partner (or a body in which one of you has a beneficial interest) and the council.
- (d) Land - Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.
- (e) Licences- Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.
- (f) Corporate tenancies - Any tenancy between the council and a body in which you or your partner have a beneficial interest.
- (g) Securities - Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

This applies to **all** members present at the meeting.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting 1 - 2

B. Matters for decision

1. Discretionary rate relief programme 2020 - 2023 3 - 18

C. Matters for information

1. London Boroughs' Grants Committee - levy - for info (decision made by Executive on 13 Jan 22) 19 – 22
2. Community Chest - rounds 1 and 2 (to follow) -

D. 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.

E. 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.

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

G. 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
21 March 2022

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London Borough of Islington

Voluntary and Community Sector Committee - 22 November 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Voluntary and Community Sector Committee held in the Council Chamber at Islington Town Hall, Upper Street, London N1 2UD at 6.30 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** Kaya Comer-Schwartz, Una O'Halloran, Michelline Safi- Ngongo and Diarmaid Ward

Councillor Kaya Comer-Schwartz in the Chair

114 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item A1)

Received from Councillors Janet Burgess MBE, Jason Jackson and Anjna Khurana.

115 DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item A2)

None.

116 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item A3)

None.

117 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Item A4)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 September 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

118 LOCAL INITIATIVES FUND AWARDS (Item B1)

RESOLVED:

(a) That the new proposals and changes to previous proposals submitted by Ward councillors, as set out in Appendix A to the report of the Executive Member for Community Development, be approved in principle, subject to the Corporate Director of Fairer Together being satisfied that the necessary checks have been made and any other issues resolved.

(b) That the declarations of interest made by councillors and detailed at paragraph 4.6 of the report be noted.

(c) That applications for funding for political activities and costs for individuals be not eligible for the Local Initiatives Fund.

(d) That the majority of the temporary revised measures for new and previously funded Local Initiative Fund projects implemented due to the Covid-19 pandemic, as detailed in the report to the Executive on 30 April 2020, be continued.

(e) That the Corporate Director Fairer Together, in consultation with the Executive Member for Community Development, be authorised to make changes to the use of previously awarded funding, with new applications to be considered by the Voluntary and Community Sector Committee.

Reasons for decision

The Local Initiatives Fund was an effective way of addressing local priorities and provided a mechanism for Ward councillors to support small projects which might otherwise not be funded. Proposals submitted for approval represented a wide range of activity and would deliver significant benefit to local communities.

Other options considered

None

Conflicts of interest/Any dispensations granted

None

The meeting ended at 6.34 pm

CHAIR



Report of: Executive Member for Community Development

Meeting of:	Date	Agenda item	Wards
Voluntary and Community Sector Committee	25 January 2022		All

Delete as appropriate		Non-exempt
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SUBJECT: Discretionary Rate Relief Programme 2020-2023

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 In November 2019 the Council’s Executive agreed a new Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR) programme for non-profit and charity organisations for 2020-2023. This report sets out the background to the Council’s DRR policy for 2020-23 (appendix 1) and recommends that the DRR programme is now closed for applications as the Council reaches the agreed levels of foregone income for this programme.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To agree to close the DRR Programme 2020-2023 as the Council reaches the agreed level of foregone income.

3. Background

- 3.1 Islington has an extensive range of independent charities, voluntary and community sector organisations and other not-for-profit organisations whose work is central to the Council’s ambitions for a fairer Islington. Through their reach and responsiveness these organisations improve outcomes for residents across the Council’s corporate priorities and support the Council’s early intervention and prevention ambitions.
- 3.2 As a “billing authority” Islington has the power to grant DRR to organisations that meet certain criteria. Any relief granted is used to reduce the amount the organisation is required to pay in business rates. Powers granted under the Localism Act 2011 allow Councils to grant DRR in any circumstances where it feels fit having regard to the effect on the Council Taxpayers of its area.

3.3 In recognition of the value that not-for-profit organisations play in improving the lives of local residents, the Council's Executive agreed a new Discretionary Rate Relief Policy 2020-23 in November 2019, committing to provide Discretionary Rate Relief to not-for-profit organisations and charities at the same level of £410K of forgone business rates income for the Council per annum.

3.4 The Council's 2020-23 DRR programme was launched in December 2019. There were two application deadlines per year proposed, however due to the Covid 19 pandemic it was recommended that organisations applying outside of funding rounds were brought to the next available committee for approval in order to prevent delays and support the sector during this challenging time.

3.5 To date DRR has been awarded to 136 organisations occupying 173 hereditaments. The total in relief awarded to date is £1,039,497.76 with £311,849.33 being the cost to Islington Council in foregone income.

3.6 Although the above figures indicate that the Council is not yet at the foregone income levels, there are approximately 10 hereditaments which were approved for DRR in previous rounds subject to inspections and valuations to establish business rates. The agreement was based on these valuations falling within the DRR thresholds laid out in the policy (appendix 1). The Valuations Office carries out these inspections which have been delayed during the pandemic. It is therefore estimated that once these have been completed, and allowing for annual inflationary increases to business rates will bring the Council to the level of agreed foregone income.

3.7 It is therefore recommended that the DRR programme is closed and no further applications accepted for the remainder of the programme (up to 31 March 2023).

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Implications

DRR is awarded at the discretion of the council. Under the current business rates retention scheme, the Council bears 30% of the costs of discretionary rate relief, (with 33% and 37% borne by Central Government and the Greater London Authority respectively). Based on actual costs to date, £1.04m discretionary rates relief had been awarded so far, Council will forfeit approximately £0.312m worth of business rates income in the current financial year.

Hence any increase in the overall costs of discretionary rate relief represent a real loss of income to the Council which would need to be offset by additional compensatory savings elsewhere in the departments. The relief awards in this report will be met from the existing arrangements within the collection fund.

4.2 Legal Implications

The Council has a discretion to grant rate relief as set out in the policy. The policy provides guidelines as to the circumstances in which awards will be made and as to the total amount of awards that can be made, and permits a departure from those guidelines in exceptional circumstances.

Public funding/support given in Great Britain since 1 January 2021 is no longer subject to state aid law. New rules on subsidy control now apply, which are in many ways closely analogous to EU state aid law. Public authorities are to make a case by case consideration of their proposed subsidy in compliance with the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) reached between the UK and the EU. The TCA is incorporated into domestic law by virtue of Section 29 of the EU (Future Relationships) Act 2020.

The concept of subsidy subject to the TCA requirements is defined in very broad terms. A subsidy is a measure which:

- a) is given by a public authority (including a local authority)
- b) makes a contribution to an enterprise conferring an economic advantage that is not available on market terms (for example, grants, loans at below market rate, or allowing a company to use publicly owned offices rent free). An enterprise could be a government department or charity if it acts commercially; and
- c) affects international trade

The UK-EU TCA obligations must be met if they apply, and the subsidy must meet the terms of its principles. The TCA sets out principles which all subsidies of more than 325,000 Special Drawing Rights (approximately £350,000) given to a single beneficiary over 3 years must meet.

The only exceptions are subsidies to compensate for natural disasters, subsidies for agriculture and subsidies for audio visual. If in scope, the council must consider these principles in the design and granting of subsidies on a case-by-case basis. Failure to do so could leave the council open to judicial review.

The principles are that the subsidies should:

- i. Pursue a specific public policy objective to remedy an identified market failure or to address an equity rationale such as social difficulties or distributional concerns ("the objective")
- ii. Be proportionate and limited to what is necessary to achieve the objective
- iii. Be designed to bring about a change of economic behaviour of the beneficiary that is conducive to achieving the objective and that would not be achieved in the absence of subsidies being provided
- iv. Not normally compensate for the costs the beneficiary would have funded in the absence of any subsidy
- v. Should be an appropriate policy instrument to achieve a public policy objective and that objective cannot be achieved through other less distortive means
- vi. Subsidies' positive contributions to achieving the objective should outweigh any negative effects, in particular the negative effects on trade or investment between the UK and EU.

The government is seeking views on the best way to design a bespoke approach to UK-wide subsidy control, including any additions to the principles underpinning the regime

and any subsidies which should be excluded from the commitments to these principles. It is also seeking thoughts on how best to manage the most distortive kinds of subsidies, in addition to opinions on the role and powers of the independent body that will oversee the regime. The government aims to deliver a subsidy control regime that:

- Facilitates strategic interventions to support government priorities, including supporting the economy's recovery from COVID-19
- Takes account of the economic needs of the UK's individual nations and strengthens the economic bonds of our Union
- Protects the UK's competitive and dynamic market economy and
- Ensures that subsidies in the UK are given in line with our international commitments including those in the UK-EU TCA

The consultation ended on 31 March 2021. A Subsidy Control Bill has since been introduced.

For the avoidance of doubt, the council can still pay out subsidies over previously approved schemes as these will be in line with the principles. This includes subsidies related to COVID-19 that have previously been given under the State Aid Temporary Framework. The council must keep these schemes under review and apply the principles to any changes made to these schemes.

4.3 **Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030**

The awarding of DRR is unlikely to have any significant direct environmental impacts. However, part of the application process was to ask organisations what they were doing to contribute towards the net zero emissions ambition. The answer to this question made up 33% of the scoring that formed the basis of the decision on which organisations to award rates relief to. This may encourage organisations to reduce their carbon emissions in order to obtain relief in future years, and rewards organisations that do so. The current policy for 2020-2023 also mandates that DRR awards cannot be made for car parking spaces, in line with Islington's ambition to achieve net zero carbon emissions from the borough by 2030.

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.

Organisations recommended for DRR are particularly focussed on serving poor and vulnerable residents and those with protected characteristics. Many groups are based on Council Housing Estates or located in deprived neighbourhoods. The criteria for DRR were drawn up specifically to support organisations that create a fairer Islington by delivering the commitments in Islington's strategic plan.

5. Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1 The Council has a strong partnership with the voluntary, community and not-for-profit sector and values highly the role that local organisations play in meeting the needs of some of Islington's most disadvantaged communities.
- 5.2 Awarding discretionary rate relief to not-for-profit organisations or other bodies providing a community or social benefit is a cost-effective way of supporting local organisations delivering the commitments set out in our corporate plan.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – DRR Policy 2020-2023

Background papers: none

Final report clearance:

Signed by:



Executive Member for Community Development

Date: 04/01/2022

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Islington Council's Discretionary Rate Relief Policy 2020-23

Our policy for the application of Discretionary Rate
Relief to charities and not-for-profit organisations

October 2019

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Charity and Not-for-Profit Discretionary Rate Relief Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Local Government Finance Act 1988 makes provision for local authorities to award certain reliefs. This policy relates to the discretionary powers of the Islington Council to award business rates relief under Section 44A, Section 47 and Section 49 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 as amended by the Localism Act 2011.
- 1.2. This policy document sets out the Council's approach to providing discretionary rate relief to local charities and not-for-profit organisations for the period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2023. It outlines how we will use the Council's local discretionary powers to grant discretionary rate relief to organisations that meet the schemes criteria.
- 1.3. The policy recognises that public funds are not unlimited and that a proportion of the costs of any relief granted are borne by council tax payers. Therefore, one of the criteria for making an award under the scheme is ensuring that money invested in this way will result in economic and/or community benefit for residents.

2. Scope of this Policy

- 2.1. The Council's Charity and Not-for-Profit Discretionary Rate Relief policy covers Discretionary Rate Relief under which:
 - Up to **20% relief** can be awarded to registered charities and registered sports clubs that qualify for mandatory rate relief.
 - Up to **100%** relief can be awarded to organisations that do not qualify for mandatory relief, but who meet the eligibility criteria stipulated in this policy.

3. General Information

- 3.1. This policy has been agreed by the Council to ensure that:
 - There is a framework under which ratepayers applying for relief are treated in a fair, consistent and equal manner.
 - The overall interest of the Council Tax payers of the borough is safeguarded by ensuring that funds are allocated and used in the most effective and economic way.
- 3.2. The Council will consider each individual case in accordance with the criteria set out in this policy. Consideration may be given to extenuating circumstances falling outside the stated criteria, providing they meet the general principles of the scheme.

- 3.3. In accordance with the Council's Constitution an Executive Director may determine discretionary rate relief applications which fall outside the scope of this approved Policy under exceptional circumstances.
- 3.4. Discretionary Rate Relief is not a matter of right; the Council is entitled through this policy to determine different levels of relief according to the nature and circumstances of individual organisations and the benefits they deliver to the wider community of Islington.
- 3.5. The Council's ability to grant Discretionary Rate Relief may be limited by other factors, such as for example, state aid rules.
- 3.6. Recipients of relief are required to notify the Council immediately of any changes of circumstances which may have an impact upon the award granted.
- 3.7. The Discretionary Rate Relief scheme covered by this policy is funded wholly by the Council foregoing income. The Council will set a limited threshold for the level of income that it will forego each financial year for the award of all Discretionary Rate Relief. This scheme will provide £1.36 million of Discretionary Rate Relief Awards per annum throughout the duration of this policy. Only in wholly exceptional circumstances, will awards that take the overall level of relief awarded above this level, be considered, regardless of whether applications meet the criteria set out in this policy.

4. Maximum Awards

- 4.1. This Council can grant the following levels of relief to organisations applying for Charity and Not-for-Profit Discretionary Rate Relief:

- **Up to 20% Top Up Discretionary Rate Relief for Registered Charities and Registered Amateur Sports Club:**

Charity Top Up Relief of up to 20 per cent can be awarded on premises occupied by organisations in receipt of Mandatory Rate Relief, including:

- Registered Charities (registered with the Charity Commission) for premises which are wholly or mainly used for charitable purposes.
- Registered Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC) registered as such under the Corporation Tax Act 2010, for premises wholly or mainly used for the purpose of the club, or for the purpose of the club and other CASCs.

This is because the Local Government Finance Act 1998 (LGFA) requires Local Authorities to grant 80% Mandatory business rate relief reduction to businesses meeting the conditions above.

- **Up to 100% Discretionary Rate Relief for Charities and Not-for-Profits:**

Islington council will consider awarding Discretionary Rate Relief of up to 100% on premises occupied by certain organisations or institutions that do not qualify for Mandatory Rate Relief, but that meet the criteria in this scheme, including:

- Properties occupied by organisations or institutions that are not-for-profit, and whose main objects are charitable or otherwise philanthropic.
 - Properties occupied by not-for-profit sports or social clubs or societies, or other organisations for the purpose of recreation.
 - Other organisations meeting the policy criteria that the Council believes should receive relief having regard to the interests of persons liable to pay council tax.
- 4.2. The sum available for awards of Discretionary Rate Relief is fixed annually for the duration of this programme. In each round of applications, priority will be given to organisations with the lowest rateable values. However, the number of organisations benefiting and the value of any awards made will be dependent on the number of applications received.
- 4.3. Leisure facilities operated by Greenwich Leisure Ltd (GLL) in the borough will receive Discretionary Rate Relief, regardless of the number of applications received in recognition of the unique role played by these facilities in meeting the health and social needs of council tax payers in the borough.

5. Eligibility

- 5.1. Applicants must fulfil all of the following criteria for any application for Discretionary Rate Relief to be considered (evidence may be required):
- The relevant premises must be in the borough of Islington.
 - The organisation must be directly liable for the rates on the property.
 - The organisation's registered address must be within Islington.
 - The organisation must be a not-for-profit organisation such as a charity, unincorporated association, community interest company, cooperative society, or a charitable company (i.e. an organisation that is registered with the charity commission whose purpose is something other than making private profit for directors, members or shareholders).
 - 75% or more of the primary beneficiaries of the organisation's services must be Islington residents.
 - The organisation must adhere to the Equality Act 2010 to legally protect people from discrimination in the workplace and in the wider society.
 - All of the organisation's employees must be paid the London Living Wage as a minimum, and must review this annually.
 - The organisation must not be subject to investigation by a relevant regulator, which may include the Charity Commission, Ofsted or Care Quality Commission.
 - The organisation must have filed up-to-date accounts with the appropriate national authority at the time of application, where relevant.
- 5.2. Not all charities and not-for-profit organisations will qualify for Charity and Not-for-Profit Discretionary Rate Relief, though may qualify for Mandatory Rate Relief. The following organisations or premises will not be considered for Discretionary Rate Relief regardless of their status:

- Profit making organisations
- Administration offices for national charities
- Overseas aid organisations
- Charity shops and cafes operated by national charities or associated organisations
- Housing Associations
- Private schools, colleges, nurseries or schools that are not within the Islington family of schools
- Buildings used for worship or promotion of religious belief
- Organisations operating a restrictive membership policy for which a fee is payable
- Empty properties
- Car parking spaces

6. Assessment Criteria

6.1. Providing you meet the minimum criteria outlined above we will assess your application for Discretionary Rate Relief using the following scoring criteria. All criteria will carry equal weighting.

Criteria	Criteria Points
1. Council Priorities	1.1 How well your charitable objects or the aims set out in your constitutions align with the council's corporate priorities as set out in 'Building A Fairer Islington – Our Commitment 2018-22' .
2. A Fairer Islington	2.1 How well the services that you provide serve the needs of sections of the community experiencing social or economic exclusion and groups protected under the Equality Act 2010
3. Net zero carbon emissions from the borough by 2030.	3.1 How your organisation is supporting Islington's ambition to have net zero carbon emissions from the borough by 2030.

6.2. In assessing your responses, our scores will score your questions using the framework below. We will require a minimum score of three or above for all criteria in order to recommend applications for a discretionary rate relief award.

Score	Response Assessment
0	There is no response to the question
1	An attempt has been made to respond, but does not meet requirements/solution does not cover any essential points

2	The response/solution partially meets requirements (covers some essential points)
3	The response/solution meets requirements (covers all essential points, may have included clear examples)
4	The response/solution exceeds requirements (covers more than the essential points, giving clear examples)
5	The response/solution will add significant value (covers more than the essential points, giving clear thorough examples to illustrate how value will be added)

6.3. The following limits to awards will apply to Discretionary Rate Relief applications by hereditaments:

Rates Bill (Net of reliefs)	Cost to the Council	Indicative Levels of Funding
Up to £67,000	Up to £20,100	Organisations will normally be awarded Discretionary Rate Relief of up to 100% of their outstanding rates bill.
Over £67,000	Over £20,100	Awards will be proportionate to the level of local benefit which may be less than 100% discretionary rate relief on their outstanding rates bill

7. Duration of Awards

- 7.1. Awards made after the billing year has started will commence from the date on which they are received unless there are extenuating circumstances for the award to commence from an earlier date within that billing year.
- 7.2. General discretionary relief awards are fixed awards made for the period covered by this policy 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2023.
- 7.3. The Local Government Finance Act 1988 requires that the local authority give 12 months' notice for the withdrawal of Discretionary Rate Relief. This notice will be given alongside the award of relief to successful applicants where applicable.

8. Applications Process

- 8.1. Applications must be made by the registered ratepayer using the Council's standard forms which are available on the Council website at:

[Islington.gov.uk/discretionaryraterelief](https://www.islington.gov.uk/discretionaryraterelief)

- 8.2. The application must be made by a person with the authority to act on behalf of the applying organisation. The Council may ask for evidence that the person

making the application is entitled to act in that capacity. There will be two application rounds per year, with deadlines in December and May each year. Details will be advertised on the Council's website.

- 8.3. Applications must explain the purpose and activities of the organisation, providing details of the charitable objects, or organisational purpose as set out in the organisation's constitution or articles of association, clearly showing how that organisation supports or will support the Council's priorities.
- 8.4. Applicants may be required to supply supporting information with their application as detailed in the application form. If any organisation fails to provide information/evidence within the required time limits, their application will not be considered.
- 8.5. If an organisation is unable to provide any of the above, then a detailed explanation outlining your reason(s) must be provided. In some circumstances we may decide that it is necessary to visit the rated property to assist the decision process.
- 8.6. Business Rates are still due and payable as previously billed during the application process and until a final decision has been advised. Any overpayment will be refunded.
- 8.7. Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application once a decision has been made.

9. Applications for Retrospective Periods

- 9.1. Discretionary Rates Relief will not normally be awarded in respect of any day prior to the day that an application is received. However, in exceptional circumstances consideration may be given to awarding rate relief for a retrospective period where the ratepayer can demonstrate good cause for not submitting the application earlier.
- 9.2. No consideration shall be given to an award for a retrospective period where the Council is not able to verify to its satisfaction that the circumstances giving rise to the application pertained for that period.

10. Circumstances that may prevent an award being made or result in an award being terminated

- 10.1. Where the organisation's business premises include the running of a commercially operated bar serving alcohol this must be incidental to the main purpose of the organisation to qualify for relief. Running a bar in itself is not a reason for declining relief, but a club which is primarily a commercial bar is unlikely to qualify.
- 10.2. In addition to the circumstances above under which no award will be made under this scheme; awards will be terminated early under the following circumstances:

- The organisation ceases from activities which the Council deems to meet the above eligibility criteria. The organisation is required to advise the Council of any such change as soon as possible in writing.
- The organisation ceases trading.

11. Review/Reconsideration process

11.1. Discretionary Rate Relief is awarded entirely at the discretion of the local authority so there is no formal right of appeal. However, applicants dissatisfied with the authority's decision may request that their application be reviewed/reconsidered under the following circumstances:

- Additional information that is relevant to the application and that was not available at the time the decision was made becomes available; or
- There are good grounds to believe the application or supporting information was not interpreted correctly at the time the decision was taken.

11.2. Any such request should be made in writing to the Head of Communities and must be received by the Council within 4 weeks of the date the decision letter is sent. Late appeals will not be considered. The Head of Communities decision will be final.

11.3. All review requests must state the reason for the request and include any supporting evidence.

11.4. Where an application is refused either initially or following a review, further applications will not be considered unless:

- The use of the property changes
- The objectives of the organisation changes
- There have been other material changes that may affect the Council's decision

12. Conditions

12.1. All organisations will be expected on request to:

- Make available annual accounts or financial statements
- Provide evidence of activity over the past year
- Demonstrate plans for services and activities over the coming year
- Provide evidence that all employees are paid the London Living Wage as a minimum

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Report of: Corporate Director of Resources

Meeting of	Date:	Ward(s):
Voluntary and Community Sector Committee	25 January 2022	All
		Non-exempt

LONDON BOROUGH GRANTS COMMITTEE 2022/23

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 Approval of the London Borough Grants Committee budget comes under the Terms of Reference of Voluntary and Community Sector Committee. However, the London Boroughs Grants Committee budget and council contribution for 2022/23 was approved by the Executive on 13 January 2022 for reason of urgency, as London Councils had requested confirmation by 14 January 2022. Therefore, this is being notified to Voluntary and Community Sector Committee for information only.
- 1.2 The overall Grants Committee budget for 2022/23 is unchanged from 2021/22. There is a 2% increase in Islington’s contribution due to a relatively higher population growth in the borough compared to the rest of London (the 2020 mid-year population being used to calculate individual borough contributions).
- 1.3 The London Boroughs Grants Committee contributes towards the funding of many London-wide organisations providing a wide range of services. These services are accessible by Islington residents and contribute towards the council’s priorities including tackling homelessness and violence against women and girls and supporting people with no recourse to public funds.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To note the 2022/23 London Boroughs Grants Committee budget (£6.668m) and the annual contribution from the council (£0.184m). (**Paragraph 3.2**)

3. Background

3.1 Islington benefits from being a member of the London Boroughs Grants Committee in two main ways:

- It estimated that approximately 50% of the current year funding approved by the London Boroughs Grants Committee is allocated to commissioning organisations based in the borough (such as Women's Aid Federation of England, Solace Women's Aid, Galop, Women's Resource Centre and Shelter).
- Most commissioning organisations provide services across London and in many cases benefit Islington residents. It is estimated that approximately £0.250m (4%) of the current year funding benefits Islington residents.

3.2 The London Councils Grants Committee considered proposals for expenditure in 2022/23 at its meeting on 24 November 2021. The London Councils Leaders' Committee considered a budget at its meeting on 7 December 2021 and the following recommendation is now made for constituent councils (including Islington) to agree an overall level of expenditure of £6,668,000 comprising:

- Payments to Commissions - £6,173,000
- Administrative Expenditure - £435,000
- London Funders Membership Fees - £60,000
- Borough contributions - £6,668,000 (Islington contribution £183,779)

4. Implications

4.1 Financial implications:

The council's 2022/23 contribution to the London Boroughs Grants Committee (£0.184m) has been factored into the council's 2022/23 budget proposals.

The Grants Committee budget requires the approval of two thirds of London boroughs for it to be approved. In the event of the budget not being approved, the budget will remain unchanged from 2021/22.

4.2 Legal Implications:

The council is required to inform the Committee of its approval or otherwise of the London Borough Grants Committee budget.

4.3 Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030

The services funded by the London Boroughs Grants Committee, some of which are based in Islington, have environmental impacts related to building occupation and office use. Some may also involve travel, which could contribute to vehicular emissions and congestion.

4.4 Equality 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. London Councils has confirmed in their grants programme

monitoring reports that funded services provide support to people within all the protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010), and in particular target groups highlighted as particularly hard to reach or more affected by the issues being tackled. Funded organisations are also required to submit equalities monitoring data, which can be collated across the grants scheme to provide data on the take up of services and gaps in provision to be addressed. The London Councils grants team reviews this annually.

5. Reason for recommendation

5.1 The council was asked to notify London Councils by 14 January 2022 whether it approves the 2022/23 London Boroughs Grants Committee budget and the council's contribution. For reason of urgency, this approval was gained by the Executive on 13 January 2022 and is being notified to Voluntary and Community Sector Committee for information only.

Appendices: none

Background papers: none

Signed by:

Corporate Director of Resources

Date 14 January 2022

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