

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

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Ward(s)</b>
Voluntary and Community Sector Committee	6 July 2021		All

**SUBJECT: Islington Council's Community Chest: Rounds Two and Three Grant Awards  
2020/21****1 Synopsis**

- 1.1 Small voluntary and community organisations play an important role in Islington, helping to build community resilience and supporting residents who are experiencing poverty and isolation. Islington Council's Community Chest (ICCC), one of the borough's most popular grant programmes, has proved to be a very effective way of funding grassroots activity and developing the capacity of local groups.
- 1.2 This report sets out the organisations approved by Islington Council's Community Chest Panel for the second and third rounds of funding for 2020/21, which took place on 3 November 2020 and 9 March 2021 respectively.

**2 Recommendation**

- 2.1 To note the funding decisions made by Islington Council's Community Chest Panel in relation to the second and third rounds of ICCC grant funding for 2020/21, as set out in Appendix 1. This is for information only.

**3 Background**

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

- 3.2 ICCC is available to local organisations with a turnover of no more than £100,000 per year – in most cases less than £50,000 per year. Organisations can apply for one grant of up to £5,000 per year. The priority is to support applications from the most deprived areas of the borough with a focus on the following thematic areas:
- Advise and support people
  - Educating people and improving their skills and employability
  - Improving people’s mental and/or physical health
  - Improving the local environment and making communities safer
  - Reduce isolation and increasing people’s involvement in the community
- 3.3 Under current grant funding arrangements, agreed by the VCS Committee in March 2015, the Council provides funding of £200,000 per year and Cripplegate Foundation adds £50,000 per year (from which £36,000 per year is deducted to cover the costs of administering and developing the programme).
- 3.4 Applications to the ICCC are considered by the Islington Council Community Chest Panel (ICCCP), which meets three times a year. The ICCCP is Chaired by the Executive Member for Community Development and consists of two nominated ward Councillors, representatives from Cripplegate Foundation and representatives from the Voluntary and Community Sector, nominated by the Islington Community Network.
- 3.5 The ICCCP also considers issues of wider relevance to the local voluntary and community sector and reviews priorities annually to ensure that the programme continues to meet the needs of Islington’s most vulnerable and isolated residents. In addition, panellists track application trends and identify any gaps in the programme that should be addressed.
- 3.6 In April 2017 the VCS Committee decided to transfer full responsibility to ICCCP regarding confirming the awarding of grants to VCS Organisations, rather than being required to decide on recommendations made by the panel. This change has helped to streamline the decision-making process and reduce delays in notifying VCS organisations of the outcome of their applications. The Council’s interests are protected by having the Executive Member for Community Development as Chairperson of the ICCCP. The VCS Committee continues to receive reports to note decisions made by ICCCP in respect of awards through the programme. However, the Council has reserved the right to adjust this arrangement if deemed necessary.
- 3.7 To note £3,500 was reimbursed into the ICCC funding pot as a result of a reduction in the amount of funding requested by a previous application and a further £2,025 was reimbursed from a group that ceased operation. This provided an additional £5,525 to carry over into the round 1 funding round for the 2019/20 year. A further historic underspend of £35,974 was identified through a Cripplegate audit. It was agreed to divide this equally into each round for the 2019/20 year (£11,991 per round) with any year end underspend rolled over into the financial year 2020/21.
- 3.8 For round one 2020/21 of ICCC there was £71,334 available and with £3,117 underspend from the previous round this gave a total of £74,741 available to allocate. The ICCC panel reviewed 21 eligible applications and agreed 16 recommendations for funding totalling £74,650. This left £199 to be carried forward into round 2.

3.9 An underspend of £1,555 from Round Two of 2020/21 was carried forward into the third round of 2020/21.

#### **4 Round Two and Three Grant Awards 2020/21**

4.1 The second and third rounds of ICCC were widely advertised to local groups through the VCS newsletter produced by the council, voluntary sector networks and forums, tenants and residents' associations, and on the Cripplegate Foundation website.

4.2 The panel reviewed and agreed 14 recommendations for funding totalling £69,580 in round two of the programme (see Appendix 1). All projects in this round were agreed for funding and all projects were funded at the full amount requested. Five (36%) of applications were from first-time applicants/groups that have not previously received funding. An underspend of £1,555 from Round Two of 2020/21 was carried forward into the third round of 2020/21.

4.3 The total number of applications received for round three was 13 and nine of these were recommended by the panel for funding totalling £38,520 (see Appendix 2). This means that the amount of underspend carried over for financial year 2021/22 of the programme is £34,369 which would mean allocating £11,456 per round.

#### **5 Implications**

##### **5.1 Financial implications:**

5.1.1 The Council's grant funding of £200,000 per year referred to in this report has been met from existing budgets allocated to ICCC in the Housing General Fund.

5.1.2 At the start of FY20/21 the total sum available for distribution in grants by Cripplegate was £217,117. Grant awards in Round 1,2 and 3 totalled: £74,650, £69,580.00, and £38,520.00 respectively. The remaining sum of £34,367 carried forward and available in FY21/22.

##### **5.2 Legal Implications:**

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

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

5.3.1 Several of the projects funded by the ICCC grants had carbon and environmental impacts, including energy use in buildings, purchase of food and materials, printing and the generation of waste, as well as travel-related impacts including vehicular emissions and contributing to congestion.

5.3.2 However, due to the Covid 19 outbreak and social distancing measures in place, many centres and offices were closed and activities took place online or digitally, reducing the impact on the environment as there was less travelling to events and less use of resources as detailed above, when delivering projects. Some of the funded activities in 2020/21 also had positive impacts, including encouraging sustainability in fashion, improving greenspaces and raising awareness of nature.

#### 5.4 **Resident Impact Assessment:**

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

5.4.2 ICCC provides resources for small community organisations, many of which are volunteer-led and wouldn't meet the criteria for funding under other programmes. It enables some of Islington's most disadvantaged residents to access community-based services and activities including through newly established groups who offer the potential for adding to existing provision locally or who can reach communities that may not otherwise be supported. Analysis of grants demonstrates ICCC's success at meeting the needs of groups across the protected characteristics.

## 6 **Conclusions**

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

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Approved Grant Awards for ICCC: Round Two 2020/21 - For information only  
Appendix 2 - Approved Grant Awards for ICCC: Round Three 2020/21 - For information only

**Background papers:** none

Final report clearance:

**Signed by:**

*Una O'Halloran*

Date: 28 June 2021

Cllr Una O'Halloran  
Executive Member for Community Development

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## Islington Council Community Chest Round Two Awards 2020/21

Organisation	Project / Activity	Grant Award (£)
<b>Advise and Support People</b>		
Crux	Establishing a local mediation service for Islington Residents	£5,000.00
MEWSO - Middle Eastern Women and Society Organisation	Rebuilding Lives	£5,000.00
Islington Turkish, Kurdish and Cypriot Women's Welfare Group	Advice Connect Service for BAME women	£5,000.00
Maa Shanti	Maa Shanti Empowerment Activities	£5,000.00
Eritrean Community in the UK (ECUK)	Connecting Communities through Digital Inclusion	£5,000.00
<b>Educate People and Improve their Skills and Employability</b>		
Mer-IT digital	Hardware and Software Fundamentals course	£4,740.00
Minority Matters LTD	Advantage Education and After School Club	£5,000.00
Kurdish association for New Generations/Abroad (KANGA)	Kobani Supplementary School	£4,970.00
Arco - Music for All Ltd.	Music for All	£4,970.00
Jannaty Women's Social Society	Fashion and sustainability	£5,000.00
<b>Improve the Environment and make Communities Safer</b>		
Pop Up Poet	Powerful Pupils	£5,000.00
<b>Improve People's Mental and / or Physical Health</b>		
Phoenix Pottery	Phoenix Pottery Community Class	£5,000.00
<b>Reduce Isolation and Increase People's Involvement in the Community</b>		
The Olden Community Garden	Olden Community Garden	£5,000.00
Insaan Culture Club	Black Lives Matter	£4,900.00
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£69,580.00</b>

## Appendix 2

### Islington Council Community Chest Round Three Awards 2020/21

Organisation	Project / Activity	Proposed Grant Award (£)
<b>Educate People and Improve their Skills and Employability</b>		
Creative Opportunities	Youth Board	£5,000.00
Eat Club	Eat Club Live	£5,000.00
Eritrean Youth Club [EYC]	Coding programme	£3,215.00
St Peter's Children and Young People's Activities Group (SPAG)	SPAG Summer 2021	£5,000.00
<b>Improve the Environment and make Communities Safer</b>		
Friends of Pooles Park. Pooles Park Primary School	Naturehood for our Neighbourhood Project	£4,080.00
<b>Improve People's Mental and / or Physical Health</b>		
Let Me Know	LMK Relationship Workshops with Young People in Islington	£2,900.00
<b>Reduce Isolation and Increase People's Involvement in the Community</b>		
CULPEPER COMMUNITY GARDEN	Elfrida Gardeners	£4,825.00
Seeds Alliance	Seeds alliance	£5,000.00
SUNDAY CLUB	SUNDAY CLUB	£3,500.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>£38,520.00</b>