

## Islington Council's Community Chest: Funding Prospectus for 2015 to 2018

### 1. Introduction

Islington Council's Voluntary and Community Sector Committee met on 19 January 2015 to consider a procurement strategy for Islington Council's Community Chest (ICCC).

Members of the committee noted that the current partnership arrangements are working well and on this basis agreed to invite the Cripplegate Foundation to submit a proposal for the future support and development of ICCC.

The proposal will be considered by the VCS Committee at its meeting on 16 March 2015.

Subject to final budget approval in February 2015, the Council will make a contribution to ICCC of £200,000 per year for three years from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2018.

Your proposal should be sent by email to [Giles.Rankin@islington.gov.uk](mailto:Giles.Rankin@islington.gov.uk) by 5pm on Friday 20 February 2015.

### 2. A Resilient Voluntary Sector for Islington

The voluntary sector lies at the heart of the council's ambition for a fairer Islington. Each day, hundreds of staff and volunteers in community organisations across the borough provide valuable services to our most vulnerable residents. In 2013/14 the council spent almost £40m on services delivered by the voluntary sector.

Unprecedented cuts in government spending present enormous challenges to maintaining essential services and responding to new demands. The council continues to face the biggest cuts to government funding since the Second World War, with our core government funding having been cut in half since 2010.

Reduced resources mean that we have to find new ways of meeting our priorities, which residents tell us are jobs, housing and coping with the rising cost of living. We are open to voluntary sector solutions to improving local services and we want to work with innovative organisations that are well run, provide value for money and deliver positive outcomes for residents.

The council acknowledges the importance of its financial support to local voluntary groups and to the infrastructure that sustains and enables the wider sector to flourish. We will continue to provide funding, and although we won't be in a position to do so to the same extent in future years, we believe we can build a resilient voluntary sector in Islington if we work together creatively and imaginatively.

The council is looking at ways of supporting local voluntary organisations to develop greater resilience and independence themselves and in the communities they serve. Suggestions for areas we would like to explore with the voluntary sector, and with other partners, include diversifying income by securing more external funding, reducing costs on things like premises, and strengthening the key skills needed to run successful organisations.

Discussions around developing a resiliency strategy began at the annual Islington Voluntary Sector Conference in November 2014 and there will be further consultation with local organisations in 2015. To allow time to work up a robust set of proposals the council agreed in December to extend grant awards from the VCS Grants Fund and the Advice Fund for twelve months to 31 March 2016.

### 3. Future Plans for ICCC: Your Proposal

Islington Council believes that small voluntary and community groups are an important resource to local communities and can significantly address issues of isolation and help to develop social capital and cohesion in the borough.

We want ICCC to continue to support grass roots activity and bring additional capacity building, networking and development support to local groups. Our view is that ICCC has a key role to play in enabling local organisations to foster community resilience.

As part of your proposal we would like you to:

- Consider the extent to which the current priorities of ICCC are helping communities to tackle poverty and isolation and suggest any changes that would enable the resources of ICCC to be deployed more effectively.

The current priorities are:

- Advising and supporting people
  - Educating people and improving their skills and employability
  - Reducing isolation and increasing people's involvement in the community
  - Improving people's mental and/or physical health
  - Improving the local environment and making communities safer.
- Propose new ways of raising the profile of ICCC and promoting its impact and achievements; explain how you will highlight the council's role as the main funder.
  - Specify Cripplegate Foundation's financial contribution to ICCC and how much it will cost to manage the programme; include a breakdown of the main expenditure items.
  - Assess the potential for increasing the size of ICCC with contributions from other funders; set out options with timescales.
  - Consider the feedback relating to ICCC received from respondents to the council's recent consultation on support to local voluntary organisations; please refer to section 13 of the attached Summary of Responses.
  - Outline the added value for ICCC applicants of engaging with the programme and explain how this will help to build a more resilient voluntary sector e.g. fundraising advice, developing key skills, connecting with other organisations.
  - Describe how ICCC processes will foster community resilience e.g. enabling services to reach into the community, signposting residents to advice/support. How will data collected from applications and monitoring forms be used to identify the needs of residents and groups, particularly those with protected characteristics?

We would like you to involve the Community Chest Panel in drawing up your proposal and look forward to receiving your submission.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your proposal please contact Giles Rankin, Islington Council on 020 7527 3159 or email [Giles.Rankin@islington.gov.uk](mailto:Giles.Rankin@islington.gov.uk)