

<b>Grants Determination Sub Committee</b>	 <b>TOWER HAMLETS</b>
11 September 2019	
<b>Report of:</b> Will Tuckley, Chief Executive	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted
<b>Community Benefit Rent Reduction update</b>	

<b>Lead Member</b>	<b>Councillor Candida Ronald, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector</b>
<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Robert Mee, Interim Voluntary & Community Sector Team Manager Brenda Doku, Programme Assessment & Monitoring Officer
<b>Wards affected</b>	All
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No
<b>Forward Plan Notice Published</b>	12 August 2019
<b>Reason for Key Decision</b>	Not a key decision
<b>Community Plan Theme</b>	<b>All</b>

### Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to update the Grants Determination Sub-Committee on grants that have been awarded by the Community Benefit Rent Reduction Panel at its meetings on 6 February and 3 July 2019. 7 organisations have been awarded funding totalling £165,352

The Community Benefit Rent Reduction Scheme was agreed by Cabinet in November 2016. Subsequently a revised version which extended the eligibility of organisations was agreed in March 2018. Decision making on applications has been delegated to the Community Benefit Rent Reduction Panel.

### Recommendations:

The Grants Determination Sub Committee are recommended to:

1. Note the organisations and projects funded through the LBTH Community Benefit Rent Reduction Scheme as detailed in 3.6.

## **1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS**

- 1.1 As part of the Community Benefit Rent Reduction Scheme being delegated to officers, there is a requirement to update the Grants Determination Sub-Committee of grants that have been awarded to local voluntary and community organisations.

## **2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 2.1 As this is a noting report, the Grants Determination Sub-Committee may request additional information on organisations awarded funding.

## **3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT**

### **Community Benefit Rent Reduction (CBRR) Scheme**

- 3.1 The purpose of the Assessment Panel is to ensure the fair and transparent application of the Council's Community Benefit Rent Reduction policy and to assess individual applications and make decisions on whether an applicant has met the requirements of the Eligibility Criteria. The Assessment Panel comprises the Head of Revenues (Chair), the Head of Benefits and a representative of the THCVS.
- 3.2 Tower Hamlets Council recognises that the local voluntary and community sector is a valuable and important asset that delivers important services and benefits to local residents. Tower Hamlets Council is committed to ensuring this community value is appropriately recognised and reflected in its community buildings lettings policy.
- 3.3 Recognising that actively investing in the local community sector often represents good value for the public purse and helps Tower Hamlets Council achieve its own social, economic, and environmental outcomes as set out in its Community Plan, Tower Hamlets Council will offer, through a consistent, transparent, and accountable process, a Community Benefit rent-reduction of 80% to organisations that meet the Eligibility Criteria and assessment set out in the Council's policy.
- 3.4 Organisations are required to evidence that they pass the following tests as part of the rent reduction assessment process:
- Have an appropriate Quality Assurance Standard
  - Have an updated Business Plan
  - Complete a Social Value Assessment detailing how projects of the organisation meet social, economic and environmental priorities of the Council.
  - Complete the Social Value UK Social Return on Investment Assessment (only for organisations where the proposed benefit exceeds £20,000 per annum)

3.5 Organisations that are successful with their application will be required to enter into a grant agreement with the Council for the rent reduction. The agreement will include an annual audit of the organisations to ensure that they still meet the requirements of the three tests undertaken as part of the application process.

3.6 CBRR awarded including lease amount and premises usage:

No.	Organisation	Date of award	CBRR (80%) – grant amount per annum	Organisation contribution per annum	Total lease amount per annum	Premises usage
1	Wapping Bangladeshi Association	6/02/19	£32,792	£8,198	£40,990	The organisation's activities timetable demonstrates that the asset is intensively being used.
2	Stifford Centre Limited	6/02/19	£26,320	£6,580	£32,900	The organisation's activities timetable demonstrates a high usage of the centre.
3	Black Women's Health & Family Support	6/02/19	£28,800	£7,200	£36,000	The organisation has a number of projects that it delivers from the centre.
4	Age UK East London	3/07/19	£28,800	£7,200	£26,500	The organisation has a number of projects that it delivers from the centre.
5	Bethnal Green Weightlifting Club	3/07/19	£21,200	£5,300	£26,500	The organisation's activities timetable demonstrates the high usage of the facilities including free dedicated sessions for the over 55's and training for under 18s.
6	Legal Advice Centre	3/07/19	£18,400	£4,600	£23,000	The organisation demonstrates a high usage of the centre by the community.
7	SPLASH	3/07/19	£9,040	£2,260	£11,300	The organisation's activities timetable demonstrates the high usage of the centre.
			<b>£165,352</b>	<b>£41,338</b>	<b>£206,690</b>	

#### **4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 A full equalities analysis (EA) was undertaken in relation to the Community Benefit rent reduction policy and was included with the report to the 1 November 2016 Cabinet that approved the policy.

4.2 The EA included an Action Plan with the following areas that the CBRR scheme adheres to:

- Criteria for community benefit rent reduction to include evidence of organisation promoting equalities
- Equalities monitoring to be included within the monitoring arrangements

## **5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.

### **One Tower Hamlets Considerations**

5.2 The contribution of VCS organisations helping to deliver One Tower Hamlets objectives and priorities are explicitly recognised and articulated within the Council's agreed Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy

VCS Organisations play a key role in delivering services that address inequality, improve cohesion and increase community leadership. These services are real examples of 'One Tower Hamlets' in practice.

### **Best Value (BV) Implications**

5.3 The level of awards to organisations was determined by the quality of their individual applications as well as the overall usage of the premises by a cross section of the community.

Additionally, the application appraisal process took into consideration the proposed levels of outputs and outcomes to be delivered as well as the organisation's track record and the bid's overall value for money rating.

There will be ongoing performance management of the approved portfolio of projects to ensure that interventions meet the required standards; that the evidencing of project achievements and expenditure is accurately recorded and reported.

### **Sustainable Action for a Greener Environment**

5.4 All programme beneficiaries, be they individuals or local organisations, will be encouraged to consider taking appropriate steps to minimise negative impact on the environment when taking up the opportunities offered within the programme and on an ongoing basis.

## **Risk Management Implications**

5.5 A number of different risks arise from any funding of external organisations.

The key risks are:

- The funding may not be fully utilised i.e. allocations remain unspent and outcomes are not maximised
- The funding may be used for purposes that have not been agreed e.g. in the case of fraud
- The organisation may not in the event have the capacity to achieve the contracted outputs/outcomes

As part of the ongoing programme management arrangements, support, advice and guidance will be made available to projects to ensure that all performance and other risks are minimised.

## **Crime and Disorder Reduction Implications**

5.6 The activities, services and outcomes that are being targeted through this grant programme support the objectives of reducing crime and disorder.

Throughout the CBRR scheme, those people involved in, or at risk of involvement in, the criminal justice system will be targeted for support.

## **Safeguarding Implications**

5.7 As part of the initial application process organisations were required to provide details of their safeguarding policy, if appropriate. The Grant Agreements for both funding streams includes requirements in relation to safeguarding.

Organisations providing services to children or vulnerable adults and employing staff or volunteers in a position whose duties include caring for, training, supervising or being responsible in some way for them, are required to fully comply with all necessary safeguarding requirements.

## **6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

6.1 This report provides an update on the LBTH Community Benefit Rent Reduction Scheme. The report also allows opportunity for greater transparency and scrutiny around the Councils grant processes.

6.2 The Community Benefit Rent Reduction (80%) Scheme to date has allocated grant funding of £165,352 per annum. A budget to fund this expenditure needs to be identified and considered as part of the council's budget setting and medium term financial strategy before costs are incurred.

- 6.3 Organisations that are a part of the Community Benefit Rent Reduction Scheme will be expected to contribute 20% towards the rent which to date will amount to £41,338 per annum.

## **7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES**

- 7.1 This report is a noting report and is in line with the previous approving report. There are no further legal issues.
- 7.2 Any equalities issues are dealt with in line with the overall equalities assessments undertaken as part of the scheme and as the scheme progresses.

---

### **Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents**

#### **Linked Report**

- NONE

#### **Appendices**

- NONE

#### **Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012**

- NONE

#### **Officer contact details for documents:**

Robert Mee, Interim Voluntary & Community Sector Team Manager

**Phone:** 020 7364 0487      **Email:** [robert.mee@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:robert.mee@towerhamlets.gov.uk)