

Grants Determination (Cabinet) Sub-Committee

**Wednesday, 17 January 2024 at 6.00 p.m.
Council Chamber - Town Hall, Whitechapel**

Supplemental Agenda

6 .1 VCS Funding Awarded Under Delegated Authority (Pages 3 - 12)

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<p style="text-align: center;">Grants Determination Sub Committee</p> <p style="text-align: center;">17th January 2024</p>	
<p>Report of: Robin Beattie, Acting Director of Strategy, Improvement and Transformation</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">VCS Funding Awarded Under Delegated Authority</p>	

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on funding awarded to Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations under delegated authority since the last meeting of the Sub-Committee.

VCS FUNDING AWARDED UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY (OCTOBER)

Recommendations:

Grants Determination (Cabinet) Sub-Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the update on funding awarded to Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations under delegated authority since the last meeting.

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 There are several funding programmes to support VCS organisations where decisions are made under delegated authority by officers. These decisions are presented to the Sub-Committee for noting in line with the Committee's terms of reference.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The Council could decide not to provide funding to VCS organisations through its various programmes. However, to do this would be contrary to the agreed policy to support VCS activities in the borough set out in the VCS Strategy 2020-2024.

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

3.1 Emergency Funding

- (a) The Emergency Funding is grant support from the Council to local VCS organisations based in Tower Hamlets who are facing a significant loss of council funding. Organisations can apply for one-off grants up to £10,000. Applicants must clearly demonstrate the need for the funding and the fact that they are facing an unforeseen emergency.
- (b) Since the submission of the report for the last meeting of the Sub-Committee three organisations have been assessed and awarded funding from the Emergency Fund budget under delegated authority.

Organisation	Total Emergency Funding Approved
Sisters in Business	£9,069.50
Emmott Close Senior Citizens Club	£10,000.00
Bikeworks	£9,800.00
Total	£28,869.50

- (c) Details of the above Emergency Funding awards are set out in Appendix A.

3.2 Community Benefit Rent Reduction

- (a) The Community Benefit Rent Reduction (CBRR) scheme was set up by the Council to acknowledge the value of the work carried out by VCS organisations leasing its premises through a reduction in the rent payable. The Council charges an appropriate 'market' level rent for its premises and organisations can apply for up to 80% of this as a rent reduction.
- (b) CBRR is only available for short leases of three to five years. To qualify, organisations need to meet several criteria relating to governance, management and quality standards. Full details of the scheme are set out on in the council's VCS Premises Policy ([VCS-premises-statement-of-policy-and-procedures.docx \(live.com\)](#)).
- (c) Decisions are made by the CBRR Panel which consists of the following Council officers - Head of Revenues and Benefits (Chair), Head of Corporate Strategy and Policy, the Head of Asset Management - and the Chief Executive of Tower Hamlets Council for Voluntary Service.
- (d) There has been one CBRR award made under delegated authority since the submission of the report for the last meeting of the Sub-Committee. This award was agreed by CBRR panel on 6th November 2023.

Organisation	Community Benefit Rent Reduction Funding Approved
Pollyanna Training Theatre	£29,869 gross per annum £5,974 net payable (80% CBRR) £23,895 CBRR value

(e) Details of the above award are set out in Appendix B.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

4.1 All grants awarded need to demonstrate how they meet the needs of our diverse communities and support the council's Public Sector Equality Duty. Equalities data is collected as part of the monitoring process, and this will be reported as part of the annual reporting process.

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.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

6.1 This report notes the update on funding awarded to voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations under delegated authority. The total of grants awarded and agreed rent reductions are contained within approved budgets.

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

7.1 The grants and information noted in this report are in line with approvals previously made and the terms of reference for this sub-committee. There are no other legal implications in this report.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE

Appendices

Appendix A – Emergency Funding

Appendix B – Community Benefit Rent Reduction (CBRR) Award agreed at the CBBR Panel Meeting on 6th November 2023

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

- NONE.

Officer contact details for documents:

Or state N/A

Emergency Funding Emergency Funding Award



Sisters In Business

Total award - £9,069.50

Organisation Details

Emergency Funding

Award:

£9,069.50

Date Applied:

3rd October 2023

Date Awarded:

2nd November 2023

Background

Sisters In Business is a registered Community Interest Company (CIC). The organisation supports Muslim women to start up their own businesses, including providing them with the skills to start up a business and help it grow. The organisation has a board with three directors who are responsible for the management and governance of the company. Staffing is made up of an administrator, project coordinator and a community engagement worker. All the staff are recruited as self-employed and therefore pay their own NI contributions.

Defined Emergency

Sisters in Business was facing a financial emergency due to outstanding unpaid invoices from the last six months from one of its primary clients to whom it provides media production services to. Its operational sustainability is heavily reliant on timely payments for services rendered. Sisters in Business made several attempts to recoup the outstanding payments and is now seeking legal help from the Citizens Advice Bureaux.

Award

The Emergency Funding of £9,069.50 was awarded to help fund the salaries for the core staff of Sister in Business between September to December 2023, to enable it to address its emergency and continue providing services to residents.

Emergency Funding

Emergency Funding Award



Emmott Close Senior Citizens Club
Total award - £10,000.00

Organisation Details

Emergency Funding Award:
£10,000.00

Date Applied:
20th November 2023

Date Awarded:
3rd December 2023

Background

Emmott Close Senior Citizen Club is an unincorporated organisation that was set up in 1970 to run a daycare service for older residents in the borough. It provides a safe warm space for older people living in the Ocean estate and neighbouring communities in Tower Hamlets. The Club runs luncheon clubs, activities, events and support to reduce isolation and increase social interactions between older people who often live on their own. The organisation supports 116 beneficiaries, 80 of which are Tower Hamlets residents.

Defined Emergency

Since the council stopped the warden estate service two years ago, which played a crucial role in supporting the opening and closing of the local centre for older residents, the organisation has been relying on small amounts of funding to continue its projects for the elderly. It unsuccessfully applied for Mayor's Community Grant Programme funding. This resulted in a funding emergency for the organisation as it was unable to pay the salary of the older people coordinator responsible for organising and facilitating its weekly sessions. It was also unable to keep the doors open for the above luncheon clubs and drop-in sessions for the older residents in the Ocean estate and local community.

Award

Emergency Funding of £10,000 was awarded to help fund the Club's part-time co-ordinator for a year (December 2023-November 2024).

Award Conditions

- Emmott Close Senior Citizens Club to work with a Council VCS Development Officer to establish a 12-month capacity-building action plan, including financial planning, fundraising, and training
- The Club to agree to referral for support on bid writing and fundraising efforts
- The Club to apply to the LBTH Small Grants – Capacity Building Theme.

Emergency Funding

Emergency Funding Award



Emergency Funding Award:
£9,800.00

Date Applied:
20th November 2023

Date Awarded:
3rd December 2023

Bikeworks

Total award - £9,800.00

Organisation Details

Background

Bikeworks is a registered CIC organisation that was established in 2006 in Tower Hamlets. The organisation has been delivering the All-Ability inclusive cycling clubs to disabled residents of Tower Hamlets for 17 years.

Defined Emergency

The organisation applied for funding from the National Lottery in 2023, after having received six months funding from Public Health Tower Hamlets. The second stage of this application process was delayed, due to the increased demand on funding from the National Lottery from charitable organisations. This resulted in a financial gap for Bikeworks and it was unable to cover the costs of the above clubs from September to December 2023. Its bike fleet lock-up based in Victoria Park was burgled over the summer, which had an impact on its ability to deliver the clubs' sessions. Some of the bikes were covered by the organisation's insurance policy, but the value and short period of repetitive break-ins left Bikeworks with significant capital costs to cover.

Award

The Emergency Funding award enabled Bikeworks to cover the costs of the All-Ability inclusive cycling clubs between September-December 2023 and continue their existence. £7,793 of the funds awarded covered the clubs' salary costs during the above period, including those of the Inclusive Cycling Instructors.

Award Conditions

- Bikeworks CIC to develop a long-term fundraising and financial planning strategy.
- Bikeworks CIC to improve its security arrangement to prevent break-ins from occurring in the future.

Appendix B

Community Benefit Rent Reduction (CBRR) Award agreed at the CBBR Panel Meeting on 6th November 2023

No.	Organisation	Premises	Proposed rent per annum	Organisational assessment	Community Benefit assessment	Use of Premises	Decision
1.	Pollyanna Training Theatre	1 st Floor Raine's House 21, Raine Street, E1W 3RJ	£29,869 gross 80% CBRR £5,974 net CBRR value £23,895	Pass in all sections	66% CBRR exceeds £20k p.a. – the organisation completed and met required standard for the social value assessment	The timetable demonstrates the premises will have a high occupancy level and be used for a variety of activities for children focusing on drama, dance and other performance arts. The premises are made available to other local community organisations when not used by Pollyanna.	CBRR at 80%

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