Appendix 2 – Full Table of Feedback and Proposed Action

If accepted by the Grants Panel this will be developed into a full action plan before being submitted to Cabinet.

Identified in review	Source	Proposed action	Who/When	Risks - Positives
Theme 1 Identified issues with the process				
Groups unable to access funds as the commissioning service specifications were too complex not written in an accessible form at.	Members Third Sector Officers	Grant working party (one grant officer from each directorate) to review and simplify specifications were we can. All grant documents to be tested with potential applicants. Introduction of small grants pot (if approved) will open access to funds to new and smaller groups who need to grow and to support key organisations.		Less control on services we fund. Improved outcomes meeting residents' needs. Smaller groups funded and supported to develop.
Online application form questions and guidelines did not anticipate all details needed from groups to ensure they answered questions appropriately.	Officers	Grant working party (one grant officer from each directorate) to review and refine questions on online form to improve links with scoring system.		More eligible applications being turned down due to budget constraints. Increased understanding of what information needs to be provided to score well in an application.
Applicant groups didn't understand the scoring process	Third Sector Officers	Indication of scores to be including in guidance notes in line with best practice of other funders should commissioning approach be maintained	Lead by EH By December 2009	More eligible applications being turned down due to budget constraints. Increased understanding of improved scoring system.

Identified in review	Source	Proposed action	Who/When	Risks - Positives
Online application process needs developing to redress issues identified through calls to officers during the process.	Officers	Develop the adding documents page so that we use a section for each document required rather than drop down menu. Grant officer working party to develop and review guidance for groups to be extended in response to problems identified this year Legal Status drop down menu to be amended so that groups can choose more than one status (eg. Registered charity and company limited by guarantee). Pop up guidance notes that groups can access on each page relevant to section rather than separate document Closing date to be included more often in guidance and online form. Ensure that small organisations are given whatever support they need to apply		More eligible applications being turned down due to budget constraints. Issues solved to enable more groups access application process.
Importance of core funding for smaller Third Sector Organisations cannot be underestimated.	Third Sector	Greater clarity about resources available by giving an indication of grant levels for activities so that groups are aware of size of projects to apply for. To make sure that the costs of providing a service, under a service agreement, reflect an understanding of the full cost of delivery, including any relevant part of the overhead costs.		Fewer applicants receive mainstream grant funding. Funded groups more sustainable, supporting a thriving third sector.
Theme 2 Results of the process.				

Identified in review	Source	Proposed action	Who/When	Risks - Positives
That smaller local organisations were disadvantage of the process resulting in more funding going to larger national organisations.	Members Third Sector	Consider providing a flexible small grants funding pot (N.B. Community Chest proposed in the Third Sector Strategy subject to funding) Grant working party (one grant officer from each directorate) to review and refine scoring matrix. Develop grant eligibility to ensure that only locally based groups have access to mainstream grant funds. To strengthen ability of the scoring and moderation process to ensure specialist groups that represent equality groups gain funds. To be agreed in priorities and arrangement report to Cabinet.	Lead by EH By October 2009	Smaller local groups may not be the best choice for some delivery. Smaller local groups supported to be sustainable. Local NI7 indicator improved. Funded groups from all equality strands valued and access funds.
Groups unable to access funds as the commissioning service specifications prescribed work narrowly, and their services do not fit into these but do fit into Council One Tower Hamlets and improving the quality and life of residents.	Members Third Sector	One Tower Hamlets priorities to be themed through all specifications in the way equality issues are. As funding streams become available to review priorities to ensure all key council priorities supported. One Tower Hamlets to be considered as the focus for a specific funding stream	Lead by	Less resource allocation for funding streams. Key priorities reflected in grant funded provision.

Identified in review	Source	Proposed action	Who/When	Risks - Positives
Theme 3 - Accountability and transparency				
Lack of clarity about the rationale for scoring and moderation process.	Members Third Sector Officers	Ensure that there is clarity about the approach for determining funding allocations. On the basis of the agreed approach, develop training and written guidance for all involved to improve the consistency of approach To be agreed in priorities and arrangement report to Cabinet.	Lead by EH By (when is report going up?)	
Lack of involvement of the Third Sector in the process.	Members Third Sector	Thematic focus groups when developing priorities and specifications. If CVS in place involve in agreeing scoring and moderation frame work. Also involving them in the actual assessment and moderation process.		Conflict of interest for groups involved in allocation and also applying against other groups for limited budgets. Greater confidence in the process.

Identified in review	Source	Proposed action	Who/When	Risks - Positives
Lack of proactive communication with groups between application deadline and public decision making stage.	Members Third Sector Officers	Ongoing training and guidance provided to officers including assessing, moderation and engaging with stakeholders. Mainstream grant officers meetings take place quarterly to ensure consultation and clear understanding on development of processes and procedures and to co-ordinate and plan the process Template emails and letters to be sent out during process to keep applicants informed the stage of process. Website updated to inform groups of stage of process.		Lead to increase of groups lobbying Councillors. Groups less frustrated about length of time waiting for information. Less calls to officers and members.
Theme 4 – Level of support available when applying for grants.				
Third Sector groups need appropriate professional independent help and support to apply for grants.	Members Third Sector Officers	• Enable support to targeted groups in applying through providing funded advice from an independent third sector body not competing for same funds. • Details of training and support provided for organisations in the preparation of bidding applications to be included in overview reports for the grants process.		Limited resources to engage infrastructure support. New CVS, if approved, could provide this service as part of delivery for our funded support.

Identified in review	Source	Proposed action	Who/When	Risks - Positives
Some groups experienced problems in applying because of the new online arrangements.	Members Third Sector Officers	All Grant Officers to be available on closing day to give phone advice. Continued IT support, mentoring and training provided. To hold workshops for targeted groups including those: • who have not applied on line before • previously funded that failed to apply or were unsuccessful in their 2009/10 applications • calling about difficulties • from organisations that support equality groups that demonstrate limited access to funds.		More eligible applications being turned down due to budget constraints.

Identified in review	Source	Proposed action	Who/When	Risks - Positives
Some of the smaller groups did not have access to the technology needed to apply on line and, because of this, were at a disadvantage	Members Third Sector Officers	• Enable support to targeted groups in applying through providing funded IT support services. • Enable groups with limited IT systems to send in supporting documents other ways before deadline. (to be included in guidance) • Cut off of system to be later than closing date/time to support groups struggling with sending in last minute applications. However, once closed it should not be opened. • If groups have failed to attach documents to inform them and give them a deadline to submit after deadline.		Limited resources to engage infrastructure support. New CVS, if approved, could provide this service as part of delivery for our funded support.
Theme 5 – Advertising and Publicity				
Ongoing improvement to website information and documents need to increase directorate control.	Officers	Specifications to have a controlled process for sign off in directorates. Website information to be approved by ? prior to inclusion.		Increased pressure on tight times scales. Control in directorates.

Identified in review	Source	Proposed action	Who/When	Risks - Positives

Small groups with limited knowledge local grant process fail to hear about application process.	Third Sector	Use existing networks to inform groups of application round.
		   Posters at community centres to insure small groups meeting at their premises are informed of funding opportunities.
		   Communicate through dedicated third sector provider days.
		   Development of new CVS (if resources approved) will enable enhanced communication between the Third Sector and the Council.
				More applications and increased expectation of funding from groups from limited pot.
				
				Increase of funding to smaller local groups.

Theme 6 – Timescales of process.				
Longer time between advert and application submission required.	Third Sector	Timescales for commissioning and grant aid to be announced in good time with an earlier advert in East End Life followed up by one nearer the closing date. More guidance on website to encourage groups to look at application forms earlier.		Applicants will continue to leave looking at the application form until to late to produce answers and documents required as well as access adequate support. Improved opportunity for groups to develop processes and documents required.

Identified in review	Source	Proposed action	Who/When	Risks - Positives
Not enough notice provided where funding is to be reduced or terminated. Decisions made too late to allow applicant organisation appropriate time to do budgeting and resource management. Late indications means having to make redundancy notices even when unnecessary resulting in low moral of staff.	Third sector	Bring forward application process and decision making process. To confirm funding amounts three months before the start of projects, if possible.		Awards will need to be made against indicative budgets and groups will need to given provisional indication of allocation prior to budget approval. Supports Third Sector Organisations to manage including making redundancies as result of funding coming to an end. Efficiency in recognising and responding to future challenges in relation to resources.
Theme 7 – Feedback, Appeals and Enquiries				
Lack of strategic advocacy and representation through the consultation and application process meant groups felt concerned that enquires would and did lead to applications being turned down.	Third Sector	Development of new CVS (if resources approved) will enable voice of third sector at a strategic level.		Increase time of process and procedure development. Increased confidence in the process.

Identified in review	Source	Proposed action	Who/When	Risks - Positives
Increase in enquiries from groups that were not eligible for grants.	Members Third Sector Officers	If an organisation does not provide evidence that it meets grant eligibility criteria the officer informs the organisation in writing, stating clearly why the application has been rejected as soon as known rather than waiting for March. Offer of individual feedback to groups who are unsatisfied with outcome. The application is withdrawn form the assessment procedure and report at this stage.		Organisations will still be unsatisfied with response. Organisations provided with clear reasons for any decisions taken that enable the group to understand and develop to be more successful in application process.
Increase in queries from long standing organisations.	Members Third Sector Officers	Controlled appeals process to limit enquiries with clarity about who can appeal and for what reasons. The process should provide groups the right to have the decision of the Grants Panel's reviewed when funding is not awarded or is significantly reduced to an organisation which received an on-going revenue grant (for staffing and/or running costs) in the previous financial year.		Funding will need to be retained for appeals so some allocation will need to be made pending appeals and this will delay outcome for some applications. Reduced and managed appeals.