

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**

**MINUTES OF THE GRANTS DETERMINATION (CABINET) SUB-COMMITTEE**

**HELD AT 5.30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 3 FEBRUARY 2021**

**ONLINE 'VIRTUAL' MEETING - [HTTPS://TOWERHAMLETS.PUBLIC-I.TV/CORE/PORTAL/HOME](https://towerhamlets.public-i.tv/core/portal/home)**

**Members Present:**

Councillor Candida Ronald (Chair)	(Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector)
Mayor John Biggs	(Executive Mayor)
Councillor Asma Begum	(Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Children, Youth Services and Education)
Councillor Sirajul Islam	(Statutory Deputy Mayor for Community Safety, Faith and Equalities )

**Other Councillors Present:**

Councillor Leema Qureshi  
(Scrutiny Lead Resources)

**Officers Present:**

Awo Ahmed	(Programme Assessment and Monitoring Officer, Corporate Strategy & Policy, Communities Team)
Michael Coleman	(HAC Capital Programme Manager)
Emily Fieran-Reed	(Senior Strategy and Policy Manager, Communities Team, Corporate Strategy & Policy Strategy, Policy & Performance Division)
David Freeman	(Policy and Strategy Manager, Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS))
Robert Mee	(Programme Analysis & Review Officer, Corporate Strategy & Policy, Communities Team, Governance)
Filuck Miah	(Strategy and Policy Officer, Corporate Strategy and Policy Team)
Mohammed Raja	(Parks Development Officer - Community)
Anna Zucchelli	(Heritage at Risk Projects Officer, Place)
Zoe Folley	(Democratic Services Officer, Committees, Governance)

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were none

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

No Declarations of Pecuniary Interests were reported.

**3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES**

1. The minutes of the meeting of the Sub – Committee held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020 be approved as a correct record of the proceedings.

**4. CONSIDERATION OF PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS**

There were none

**5. EXERCISE OF MAYORAL DISCRETIONS**

There were none

**6. REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**6.1 Suttons Wharf Health Centre, To approve additional grant funding of £398,088 (excl. VAT).**

Michael Coleman, (HAC Capital Programme Manager) presented the report seeking an additional £398,088 of s106/CIL funding to meet the increased costs of providing a modern health facility within the Suttons Wharf development, to be operated by the Globe Town Surgery.

It was reported that a number of unforeseen issues had affected the project, leading to further cost increases.

These related to the impact of:

- Brexit related uncertainties and the associated increase in supply costs.
- Covid 19 on working practices.
- The need to change the cladding following the Grenfell tragedy.
- There had also been issues with and delays with the project delivery.

The proposals included contingency funding to cover any small additional costs.

This project was being delivered by NHS Property Services (NHSPS) and the Waltham Forest and East London Clinical Commissioning Group (WELCCG), Jack Dunmore, of the NHS was also present, to respond to questions.

It was noted that the Council had sought assurances from the NHS and challenged the request for additional funding. This was with a view to understanding the costs of the project and ensuring they were required and were not particular to this scheme. Officers were satisfied that the process was robust and that similar issues had arisen with other projects outside Tower Hamlets. The consequences of not approving the funding would mean that the project could not be completed and the benefits of the scheme could not be delivered.

The Sub - Committee and Councillor Leema Qureshi asked a number of questions and discussed the following points:

- Members welcomed the improvements to health facilities in the Borough and was pleased to hear about the proposed completion date of April to May 2021.
- The Sub – Committee also discussed the plans to ensure that the layout met Covid restrictions. It was noted that the layout should comprise such features as one way systems and provide screening where necessary. It was reported that the mitigating measures would be in place in time for the opening of the facility.
- Members also asked about the introduction of the Building (Amendment) Regulations 2018 relating to building cladding and how this had affected the project.
- It was confirmed that the surgery formed part of a mixed used development including buildings with cladding. Details of this was outlined.
- Officers undertook to confirm the date of the redesign changes in relation to the introduce of the new legislation.
- It was noted that liability for the project, (beyond the construction costs, such as the maintenance costs) would rest with NHS Properties and the freeholders.
- In terms of the benchmarking exercise, it was emphasised that Officers had carried out due diligence tests of the costs with the NHS cost consultants, based on other projects, they had worked on. Details of the full assessment process was set out in the report. Assurances were sought and Officers had been assured that the costs were not specific to this project only.

**RESOLVED:**

1. To approve the grant funding of an additional £398,088 of s106 funding for healthcare facilities, excluding VAT, to complete the new health facility within the Suttons Wharf development.
2. To authorise the execution of any agreements necessary to give effect to resolution 1 above.

## **6.2 Renewal of Service Level Agreements with Mudchute Farm and Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park**

Mohammed Raja, (Parks Development Officer), presented the report seeking approval of two Service Level Agreements for the Mudchute Farm and the Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park.

He provided an overview of the request, including the benefits to the Borough of the unique green spaces especially as they remained open to the public during the pandemic. He also highlighted the work of the Mudchute Farm and the Cemetery Park with school children. It was also noted that the Council owned the land and paid a small grant and gained a lot from these organisations.

Councillor Leema Qureshi, (Scrutiny Lead, Resources) presented the Overview and Scrutiny's questions on this report seeking assurances regarding:

- Whether there were alternatives methods available to deliver the projects? The availability of funding match funding for the projects. It was also questioned how success was measured?
- In response, it was confirmed that both the Cemetery Park and the Mudchute Farm had a very skilled worked force, and offered a bespoke curriculum tailored to children and schools in particularly. This provided a unique setting and 'forest classroom', allowing children to have access to green space. In some cases, this might be their only opportunity to do so. The Council were unable to provide this itself. The Cemetery Park was regarded as one of the largest woodland walks. Officers welcomed the opportunity to give children this ability.

In response to the report, the Committee welcomed the recommendations and felt that the Council should be proud of the facilities. They also thanked Mohammed Raja for his work on this.

### **RESOLVED:**

1. The Grants Determination Sub-Committee approve two Service Level Agreements for the Mudchute Farm (£31,000 per year from April 2021 to March 2024) and the Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park (£31,900 per year from April 2021 to March 2024).

## **6.3 Grant to Toynbee Hall to deliver community engagement and cultural activities on Wentworth Street as part of the High Street Heritage Action Zone programme**

Anna Zucchelli (Heritage at Risk Project Officer), presented the report

This report proposes that £93,000 of grant funding from Historic England is awarded to Toynbee Hall to provide community engagement activities and the

cultural programme, as part of their High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) grant funding scheme.

Given the report sought to award the grant to Toynbee Hall, it was requested that this should be awarded as a grant rather than go through the procurement process.

Councillor Leema Qureshi, (Scrutiny Lead, Resources) presented the Overview and Scrutiny's questions on this report and the officers responses, which are summarised below:

- Has the request taken into account the impacts of Covid?
- It was confirmed that this had been taken into account. The funding would be for a 3 year period, involving an initial planning stage before the programme of activities were delivered.
- How would this funding be monitored to ensure it offered for value for money?
- It was noted that the Project Manager who would have oversight of the whole programme. It was also expected that Toynbee Hall would produce regular reports and set out how they were meeting their targets.
- How the project sought to accommodate the needs of local people?
- It was noted that the project should deliver a number of benefits and sought to achieve this through: community engagement, bringing people to the high street, which should support local businesses.
- Councillor Leema Qureshi felt happy for the project to go ahead as long as it supported the needs of local people

The Committee asked a number of questions and discussed the following points.

- The Consortium's decision to offer the grant to Toynbee Hall as the only organisation.
- It was confirmed that they had been meeting regularly and together they had decided that Toynbee Hall were best placed to lead on this project. Members welcomed the work of the Consortium and felt they carried out valuable work in the area. Details of the make up of the Consortium was outlined.
- It was also discussed whether the focus of the community engagement work could be more aimed at Covid recovery initiatives for the markets and the highstreets.
- Overall, taking into account the longer term benefits of the programme (that sought to upgrade the high street, through a wide range of participatory activities and works), Members supported the project, recognising the benefits of the plans in terms of helping the recovery of the high street.

**RESOLVED:**

1. Authorise the Corporate Director Place to offer a grant £93,000 to Toynbee Hall (£31,000 each year for 2021, 2022 and 2023) for the delivery of community engagement & cultural activities on Wentworth Street, under appropriate terms as are agreed with the organisation in consultation with Legal Services.
- 2) Authorise the Corporate Director Place to enter into the grant agreement and any such other agreements required to effect the grant and the use of the grant as detailed in paragraph 1 of the report.

**6.4 Local Community Fund (LCF) Mitigation Actions Update**

David Freeman, (Policy and Strategy Manager), presented the progress report.

This report provides an update on the proposals for implementing the mitigating actions identified in the equality analysis of the Local Community Fund agreed at Cabinet on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019.

It was noted that:

- The report showed that most of the actions had been completed or significant progress has been made in completing them.
- Projects had continued to operate. However organisations and activities had suffered due to the pandemic.
- The specific areas where Covid has had an impact are detailed in the report, along with actions proposed.

The Sub- Committee welcomed the report and felt that the report showed a satisfactory outcome in addressing needs.

**RESOLVED:**

1. Note the progress relating to the Local Community Fund Equality Analysis Action Plan (EAAP) and equality mitigation actions for services whose Mainstream Grants (MSG) funding came to an end on 30 September 2019 as set out in the report and appendices

**6.5 VCS Funding Awarded Under Delegated Authority**

Awo Ahmed, (Programme Assessment & Monitoring Officer) presented the report.

The report provides an update on funding awarded to voluntary and community sector organisations under delegated authority since the last meeting of the Sub- Committee. This included the Innovation Fund Update report

The Committee welcomed the report as it showed the breadth of the work the Council supported in the community and that it had an innovative programme. They thanked officers for all the work that had been done on this.

**RESOLVED:**

1. Note the update on funding awarded and available to voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations under delegated authority since their last meeting
2. Note the Innovation Fund Report Update focusing on highlights of the programme since its inception.

**7. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT**

There were none

The meeting ended at 6.30 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Candida Ronald  
Grants Determination (Cabinet) Sub-Committee

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