Grants Determination Sub Committee	
6th July 2023	TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Sharon Godman, Director of Strategy, Improvement and Transformation	**Classification:** Unrestricted
VCS Funding Awarded Under Delegated Authority	

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.

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 Ccommittee'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   Local Community Fund and Infrastructure & Capacity Building Programmes

(a)   Cabinet agreed at its meeting on 29th March 2023 to authorise the Chief Executive to agree to an extension of four weeks for current core Council grant funded VCS services – the Local Community Fund (LCF) and the Infrastructure & Capacity Building programmes - beyond their scheduled end date of 30th September 2023. This was agreed to enable these services to remain in operation until the new Mayor's Community Grant Programme starts in November 2023. This extension was subsequently confirmed by the Chief Executive for the whole month of October 2023 at a total cost of £241,304. The Council is expecting its VCS funded projects operating in October 2023 to be delivering on a basis which is proportionate to a standard month of activity for individual projects.

(b)   Appendix A outlines the extension funding for 48 LCF projects and the Infrastructure & Capacity Building project for October 2023. One organisation did not take up this offer of extension funding for its LCF project.

3.2   Innovation Fund

(a)   The Council is keen to encourage and support innovation in the sector and acknowledged that this would require some funding to enable the sector to pilot new initiatives and approaches to service delivery and support.

(b)   The Innovation Fund supports VCS organisations to "test and learn" new ways of working, new initiatives and new delivery models that if successful could be scaled up and commissioned more formally.

(c)   Further details can be found on the Spacehive Tower Hamlets and the Tower Hamlets Innovation Fund web pages with more information available in the factsheet.

(d)   Since the last meeting of the Sub-Committee there have been no additional awards of funding from the Innovation Fund under delegated authority.

3.4   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 last meeting of the Sub-Committee one organisation has been assessed and awarded funding from the Emergency Fund budget under delegated authority.

Organisation	Total Emergency Funding Approved
Globe Community Project	£7,749

(c) Further details of the organisation awarded is set out in Appendix B.

3.5 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 the council's website at the CBRR page.

(c) There have been no further leases agreed since the last Sub-Committee meeting.

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.

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Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report
- NONE

Appendices
 Appendix A – VCS Organisation Receiving Extended Council Funding in October 2023
 Appendix B – Emergency Funding

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012
- NONE.

Officer contact details for documents:
Or state N/A