

Committee/Meeting Corporate Grants Programme Board	Date: 6 th June 2013	Classification: Unrestricted	Report No:
Report of: Ann Canning, Corporate Director Education, Social Care and Wellbeing Originating officer(s) Barbara Disney, Service Manager, Strategic Commissioning		Title: Small Grants for Older People Wards Affected: All	

Lead Member	Cllr Abdul Asad
Community Plan Theme	§ A safe and supportive Community § A Healthy Community
Strategic Priority	Housing and Overcrowding

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Social isolation and loneliness are often considered to be particular problems of older age. Reduced social contact, loneliness, isolation and being alone are thought to affect older people's quality of life and their health. There are a number of very small pensioners groups, often on estates, which go some way to alleviating social isolation and this funding offers support to these groups.

2. **DECISIONS REQUIRED**

The Corporate Grants Programme Board is recommended to:-

- 2.1 Approve the processes and criteria for inviting applications for Education, Social Care and Wellbeing's small grants for pensioners groups 2013/14
2.2 Confirm the availability of funding for the proposal
2.3. Agree the process for agreeing the grant funding

3. **REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS**

- 3.1 To ensure a range of peer support groups which promote independence and alleviate social isolation among older Tower Hamlet residents.

4. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 4.1 Members could make the decision not to support this proposal and to allocate the money elsewhere.

5. BACKGROUND

- 5.1 Education, Social Care and Wellbeing (previously Adults, Health and Wellbeing) provide an annual small grant scheme for pensioner groups within the remit of the NHS and Community Care Act 1990.

The grants support local groups, promoting independence by providing social activities for older local residents and reducing social isolation.

In 2012-13, £25,000 was allocated to support small local pensioner groups but only £22,000 allocated. This year £25,000 will be available to be allocated to these small, community groups.

6. BODY OF REPORT

6.1 Small Grants allocation and assessment

The specific purpose of these grants is to support small local organisations to provide social activities for pensioners in their neighbourhood, which helps to reduce social isolation and to increase independence. In recent years the Council has been in a position to award grants to all of the organisations that applied.

In considering the small grants allocation, officers take into consideration the small grants criteria and prioritise the funding requests as follows:

- a) Rent
- b) Utilities bills (e.g. gas, electricity, water rates, insurance)
- c) Small equipment (e.g. bingo machines, kitchen equipment)
- d) Facilitator costs, day trips, parties.

To be able to deal with funding requests in a fair and equitable way:

- a) all requests for rent, bills and small equipment will be met up to the maximum grant award of £500
- b) groups requesting assistance with running costs, small equipment or social activities are allocated awards based on the number of members currently registered with the group, with the following guidelines used:

Number of registered members	Proposed award
Up to 19 members	£300
20 to 29 members	£350
30-39 members	£400
40-70 members	£450
70 members and above	£500

6.2 Small Grants 2013/14

It is planned to place an advertisement in the East End Life edition of once authority given, inviting local pensioners' groups in Tower Hamlets to apply for a small grant. Application forms (Appendix B) will also be sent to those groups that had been awarded a small grant in 2012/13. The deadline for completed returns will be around three to four weeks after the advert has been placed.

Returned applications will be assessed by an officer in line with the agreed criteria (Appendix A) and guidelines with recommendations put forward for approval by the agreed route.

It is hoped that applicants can be informed of the outcome of their applications as soon after the decision is made, with payments made to successful applicants soon thereafter.

6.3 Timetable

STAGES	DATE
Advertisement in East End Life	Week beginning 7 th October 2013
<i>post applications to currently funded organisations by Friday 4th October 2013</i>	
Send application forms to new groups	By Friday 25 th October 2013
Closing date for applications	Friday 1 st November 2013
Assessment of applications	Completed by Wednesday 6 th November 2013
Write report with recommendations	Completed by Wednesday 6 th November 2013
Approval of report by Mayor	Completed by Friday 22 nd November 2013
Write to all applicants on outcomes	Completed by Friday 29 th November 2013
Set up and raise payments	Completed by Friday 6 th December 2013

Cheque/BACS sent by Central Payments	December 2013
Reconciliation of Payments	January/February 2014

7. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 7.1 The £25,000 allocated to be awarded to small local organisations through the process detailed in this paper will be met from existing budgets.
- 7.2 The grant allocation/award process will be managed using existing council resources and thus there are no additional cost implications arising from this.

8. CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL SERVICES)

- 8.1 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a general power of competence to do anything that individuals generally do unless specifically prohibited by law. This power may also support the giving of grants to voluntary organisations.
- 8.2 In exercising this power, the Council should have regard to its strategy set out in its Community Plan
- 8.3 Officers must be careful to ensure that the conditions relating to the payment of a grant is complied with.
- 8.4 As the Council has a statutory discretion to consider bids for grant funding, and may have to consider numerous applications from limited funds it is entitled to establish guidelines on the approach for allocating those funds in order to ensure that the available resources are used effectively and remain available for projects of exceptionally high impact on and benefit to the community.

9. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 The service specification supports two of the four themes of the Community Plan:

§ A healthy community

Small groups such as these groups for older people support the prevention agenda and offer additional opportunities for peer led advice around healthy living and exercise activities and health promotion.

§ A safe and supportive community

Small group provision contributes to the safe and supportive community theme by promoting peer support and volunteering and ensuring that services are safe to use for service users

- 9.2 The small groups provision enables the needs of a wide range of clients including those with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and long term conditions to be catered for. Special focus can be given to providing services to the diverse faith and ethnic communities in Tower Hamlets.
- 9.3 However, due regard continues to be given to encourage people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low through volunteering, and engagement in shaping services and decision that affect their own lives, such as involvement in user groups.

10. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 10.1 There are no immediate sustainability or environmental issues to consider. The prospective service providers, as organisations within the borough, would be required to comply with all national and local legislation regarding energy conservation, recycling etc. As services will be provided locally, most of their staff would be local too, thereby reducing commuting.

11. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are small one-off payments for which invoices and evidence are provided.

12. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 There are no immediate Crime and Disorder reduction implications.

13. EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

- 13.1 There are none.

14. APPENDICES

- 14.1 Appendix A – Small Grants Criteria – 2013 - 13
Appendix B – Small Grants Application Form – 2013-14.

Brief description of “background papers”

Name and telephone number of holder
and address where open to inspection.

To be completed by author

To be completed by author ext. xxx

None