

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

**MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE THIRD SECTOR GRANTS PROGRAMME
BOARD**

HELD AT 10.15 A.M. ON FRIDAY, 16 MAY 2014

TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE CRESCENT, LONDON E14 2BG

Members Present:

Councillor Md. Maium Miah (Chair)	(Advisor to the Mayor and Cabinet on Third Sector and Community Engagement)
Councillor Alibor Choudhury Shazia Hussain	(Cabinet Member for Resources) (Service Head Culture, Learning and Leisure, Communities Localities & Culture)
Barbara Disney (Substitute for Deborah Cohen)	(Service Manager, Strategic Commissioning, Adults Health & Wellbeing)
Graham White	(Interim Head of Legal Operations)

Other Councillors Present:

Officers Present:

Everett Haughton	– (Third Sector Programmes Manager, Third Sector Team, Development and Renewal)
Robert Mee	– (Programme Analysis and Review Officer)
Stephen Murray	– (Head of Arts and Events, Communities Localities & Culture)
Matthew Mannion	– (Committee Services Manager, Democratic Services, LPG)

Others In Attendance

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Deborah Cohen for whom Barbara Disney was substituting.

2. DECLARATIONS

Councillor Md. Maium Miah reported that he shopped at Cliftons which was his local superstore but he did not consider this to be a Pecuniary Interest in relation to Item 5.1 (Boishakhi Mela).

3. REVIEW OF NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

Subject to minor amendments to titles and the attendance list order, the minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

4. REVIEW OF OUTSTANDING/DEFERRED ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS CGPB MEETINGS

4.1 Matters Arising

In response to questions regarding Item 4.4 (Mayor's Community Events Fund – Round 6), Everett Haughton (Third Sector Programme Manager) reported that the draft Mayoral Decision Proforma was awaiting final legal clearance and confirmation as to whether the decisions were 'Key Decisions' or not.

Councillor Alibor Choudhury requested it be noted that the Board were concerned it had taken nearly five weeks to address these issues and asked that they be concluded as soon as possible.

5. REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

5.1 MSG Application - Boishakhi Mela

Stephen Murray, Head of Arts and Events, introduced the report. He provided a short background on the Boishakhi Mela and then explained that he had been asked to look at the 2014 application from a cultural point of view and that his findings were outlined in the attached report. In particular he highlighted the lack of detail in many areas made it difficult to come to firm conclusions about the cultural offer and the related value for money of the Mela but that equally he had only written the report based on the application and not on any evidence from previous events.

The Board then discussed the application, they noted a number of points including that:

- The Mela was seen as a significant, successful and well attended event.
- Deloitte carried out a yearly audit of the financial performance of the Mela and were shortly due to report on the 2013 event.

- There had been a previous decision that funding for the Mela should be gradually reduced to encourage it to seek alternative funding sources.
- The risk to the Mela Trust should funding suddenly be removed.

The Board also noted that the report was set out in a different way to many Grants reports and without a specific recommendation. It was therefore for the Board to determine it had all necessary information and to come to its own recommendation.

Graham White, Interim Head of Legal Operations, reminded the Board of the principles of conducting business as usual during the pre-election period and the Code of Conduct for Pre-election Publicity. In particular that:

- The Board had to be particularly mindful of greater risks arising in particular that a controversial decision would carry a greater risk of challenge.
- The Council could not undertake any publicity of this decision before the election beyond the obligation to publish the decision report itself.

The Board noted the risks but considered that the Mela was a yearly event that regularly applied for grant funding and that it was not controversial. However, Graham White explained that it was the nature of the decision itself to be considered controversial if it did not comply with the previous Cabinet decisions concerning phased reduction of financial assistance and therefore a decision to reduce funding to the Trust in comparison to last year would mitigate that risk.

It agreed to let the Mayor decide whether he wished to take the decision and whether it should be taken before the election or afterwards.

The Board also noted the requirement to look to reduce funding for the event. The Board considered that £100k was an appropriate grant value for 2014 but that this must be subject to the completion of a satisfactory audit for 2013 and that it should be phased alongside a similar audit in 2014.

In relation to an Equalities Impact Assessment, the Board was notified that one had not been necessary for this decision in previous years and was therefore not considered necessary on this occasion either.

Finally, the Board also noted that the Mayoral Decision sheet would need full legal and financial comments before being presented to the Mayor including details of where the funding was coming from and whether this was a Key Decision. Legal advice at the Board meeting indicated that it was not likely to be a Key Decision.

The Board recommended that:

1. A report be prepared for the Mayor to consider awarding a £100k grant to the Boishakhi Mela Trust subject to the following conditions:

- i. That satisfactory legal and financial comments be provided including detailing the funding source.
- ii. That officers draw up a proposed phased payment approach to the grant funding taking into account the formula agreed in 2013 and also the successful completion of the Deloitte audit of the 2013 event.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Nil items.

The meeting ended at 10.42 a.m.

Chair, Councillor Md. Maium Miah
Corporate Third Sector Grants Programme Board