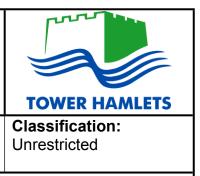
# **Commissioner Decision Report**

27 May 2015



**Report of:** Louise Russell, Service Head Corporate Strategy & Equality

## One Tower Hamlets Fund

Originating Officer(s)	Tahir Alam
Wards affected	All wards
Key Decision	The report is a Non-Executive decision
Community Plan Theme	A Prosperous Community/ A Safe and Cohesive
	Community/A Healthy and Supportive Community

#### **Executive Summary**

The One Tower Hamlets Fund was introduced in 2011 and is running in its fourth year. The fund was developed to meet our 'One Tower Hamlets' aspiration which runs through the Community Plan. This is about reducing inequality and poverty, strengthening cohesion and making sure our communities live well together.

Grants of up to £7000 are available to community and local resident led organisations, and resident groups. The fund is intended to support projects which bring together residents to either, address specific local issues which undermine cohesion; and /or bring communities together through exhibitions, cultural activities and celebrations that help to break down the barriers to understanding.

The Council received 16 applications from which 2 did not meet the One Tower Hamlets Fund eligibility criteria. This report contains an evaluation of the applications for Commissioners to review, and agree the proposed awards to organisations based on officer assessments and recommendations.

#### **Recommendations:**

The Commissioners are recommended to -

- 1. Agree the proposed awards for One Tower Hamlets Fund totalling £44,638 to the organisations listed in table 1 of Appendix 1 and in the amounts listed there.
- 2. Agree entry into Grant Agreements in support of each grant.
- 3. Authorise the Service Head to agree the terms and conditions of the grant agreement, after consultation with the Head of Legal Services.

## 1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

1.1 Commissioners agreed at their meeting on 25 February 2015 to open the One Tower Hamlets Fund to local groups. This report presents the assessments of the applications received and asks the Commissioners to agree to fund the projects proposed in table 1 of Appendix 1.

## 2. <u>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS</u>

- 2.1 An alternative option would be to decide not to fund any of the organisations who have applied for grants and to use the funds for other purposes, for example the larger types of project typically associated with Main Stream Grants.
- 2.2 This is the last round of the One Tower Hamlets Fund, and has now been incorporated into the Mainstream Grants process as part of the Theme on community engagement, cohesion and resilience.

# 3. DETAILS OF REPORT

- 3.1 The One Tower Hamlets Fund is available to local resident led organisations and resident groups to help us realise our One Tower Hamlets aspiration, which runs through the Community Plan. This is about reducing inequality and poverty, strengthening cohesion and making sure our communities live well together.
- 3.2 The One Tower Hamlets Fund awards small grants, up to £7000, to community and local resident led organisations, and resident groups. The fund is intended to support projects which bring together residents to either address specific local issues which undermine cohesion; and /or bring communities together through exhibitions, cultural activities and celebrations that help to break down the barriers to understanding.
- 3.3 The Council received 16 applications with total funding requested of £93,873. The applications were assessed against the One Tower Hamlets Fund eligibility criteria<sup>1</sup>. Two applications did not meet the eligibility criteria and were not carried forward to the scoring stage. Details of these organisations are listed in Table 3 of Appendix 2.
- 3.4 To ensure robustness, fairness and transparency the final scoring was divided into two parts. The initial assessment was carried out by two officers who scored the applications individually against the weighted scoring criteria, which also involved an appraisal for value for money.
- 3.5 The weighted criteria for the scoring process are outlined as below:
  - How will your project/proposal address local cohesion based issues? (Weighting: 40%)
  - Which equality groups will you be targeting for the project? (Weighting: 25%)
  - How do you know there is a need for this project in your neighbourhood? (Weighting: 15%)
  - How will you know if the project has been successful and how will you ensure it will be sustainable? (Weighting: 20%)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> <u>http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgsl/851-900/871\_community\_grants/one\_tower\_hamlets\_fund.aspx</u>

- 3.6 A final moderation meeting was then conducted, and the final assessment of scores was made by a presiding third officer, after hearing the case from both officers. The final moderated scores for each organisation based on the above criteria are detailed in Appendix 1 of the report. The final scores were marked in line with our 46% average quality threshold criteria. Any applications not achieving the threshold are not recommended for award. Assessors looked into the value for money of each application based on their budget breakdown proposed activities, outcomes and outputs to be delivered by the project and recommended awarding a reduced amount than requested, where expenditure focused on core staffing costs or day to day running of the organisation which is outside the One Tower Fund criteria as outlined in the guidance issued with the application. As part of the grant award process discussions will be held with successful organisations on how they can deliver the outputs and outcomes based on reduced funding and address areas of weakness identified in the assessment of their application
- 3.7 The final moderation of the applications has led to officers recommending grant to be awarded to eight organisations detailed in table of Appendix 2. These organisations represent a good geographical coverage of the borough (map in Appendix 3), and cover work with a range of equalities protected characteristics. Six organisations did not meet the minimum quality threshold score of 46% and are not recommended for award. Details of these organisations are listed in table 2 of Appendix 2.

## 4. <u>COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER</u>

4.1. The budget allocated for the One Tower Hamlets Fund is £50k per annum. This report seeks commissioner approval to make grant awards from this fund to local organisations following the bidding process that is detailed within the report. The recommended awards total £44,638 and the names of the organisation and amounts to be awarded to each bidder are detailed in Appendix 1 below.

#### 5. <u>LEGAL COMMENTS</u>

- 5.1. The power of the commissioners to make decisions in relation to grants arises from directions made by the Secretary of State on 17 December 2014 pursuant to powers under sections 15(5) and 15(6) of the Local Government Act 1999 (the Directions). Paragraph 4(ii) and Annex B of the Directions together provide that, until 31 March 2017, the Council's functions in relation to grants will be exercised by appointed Commissioners, acting jointly or severally. This is subject to an exception in relation to grants made under section 24 of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, for the purposes of section 23 of that Act (disabled facilities grant).
- 5.2. The making of any grant should be supported by the Council's statutory powers. In this instance, the report states that all of the grants are targeted at achieving the Council's One Tower Hamlets objective. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a general power of competence to do anything that individuals generally may do, subject to specified restrictions and limitations imposed by other statutes. This general power of competence may support the giving of grants to community groups, provided there is a good reason to do so. There may be a good reason for giving a grant if it is likely to further the Council's sustainable community strategy under section 4 of the Local Government Act 2000, which is contained within the Tower Hamlets Community Plan. The One Tower Hamlets objective is a cross-cutting theme identified in the Community Plan.

- 5.3. The Council is obliged, as a best value authority under section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999, to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness". In this instance the scheme has been opened up to competition and submissions have been evaluated against predetermined criteria. The criteria appeared to include assessments of value for money, as reference is made to this in Table 1 in Appendix 1. The authority should consider the outcome of those evaluations and the associated recommendations of officers. The Council should enter into grant agreements with the award recipients. A robust review and contract monitoring process should be included in each agreement to ensure that the funds are protected and that the Council can demonstrate the genuine benefit received from the money spent.
- 5.4. In carrying out its functions, the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful conduct under the Equality Act 2010, the need to advance equality of opportunity and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (the public sector equality duty). A proportionate level of equality analysis is required to support the Council's consideration.

## 6. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1. The contribution of Third Sector organisations to delivering One Tower Hamlets is explicitly recognised in the Council's Third Sector Strategy. Organisations play a key role in delivering services that address inequality, improve cohesion and increase community leadership: the deliveries of these services are real examples of 'One Tower Hamlets' in practice.
- 6.2. The opportunities offered through the One Tower Hamlets Fund play a key role in strengthening community cohesion at a local level and therefore delivering the aims of One Tower Hamlets. An equality analysis of the projects recommended to be funded is attached in Appendix 4. This highlights that the One Tower Hamlets fund as a programme will have positive impact on all the protected characteristics as there are a range of projects that will benefit different groups and also bring a diverse range of community together to address local issues including those that are seldom heard such as Chinese, disabled and LGBT residents.

#### 7. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

7.1 Aspects of the recommended projects for funding support the spirit of SAGE. The Council as a funder of third sector proposals that meet these priorities assists in the implementation of the strategic aims of SAGE along with its community and voluntary sector partners.

#### 8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. A number of different risks arise from any funding of external organisations and include the following:
  - The funding may not be fully utilised i.e. allocations remain unspent or outcomes are not maximised;

- The funding may be used for purposes that have not been agreed e.g. in the case of fraud;
- The organisations may not be able to secure additional funding necessary to deliver the agreed activities;
- The organisation may not have the capacity to achieve the outputs and outcomes required.
- 8.2 These risks will be minimised through robust grant agreements, two action learning events to help develop the projects and learn and support each other and monitoring which will be linked to payment to ensure organisations' are delivering against their targets.

#### 9. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The services that will be provided through these funding streams cover a broad spectrum of activities, some of which are key drivers in contributing to the reduction in crime and disorder, in particular, improving community cohesion.

## 10. BEST VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The One Tower Fund supports the Council's aim of reducing inequality, strengthening cohesion and supporting community leadership. All applications were assessed for value for money based on their proposed activities at the moderation meeting by officers. This included a review of budget breakdown for each project and whether the proposed outcomes and outputs were providing value for money in regards to the funding requested. Further discussions will be held with successful organisations as part of the grants award process to agree outcomes and how the budget can be used to effectively their targets.
- 10.2 The guidelines issued with the application also provided guidance for organisations about what the One Tower Hamlets funds can be used for. Most of the reductions on budget requested relates to core staffing costs and organisation running costs which are outside the remit of the One Tower Hamlets Fund.

#### 11. SAFEGUARDING IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no direct safeguarding implications arising from this report. Organisations funded who are working with vulnerable adults or young people will be expected to have safeguarding policies and procedures, and staff DBS checked. These will be discussed as part of the grant awards process with the relevant organisations.

#### Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Document

#### Linked Report

None

#### Appendices

- Appendix 1 One Tower Hamlets Application Assessment Scores
- Appendix 2 Analysis of application assessments
- Appendix 3 Geographical locations of organisations recommended for grant award
- Appendix 4 One Tower Hamlets Fund Equality Analysis

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012 None

**Officer contact details for documents:** Tahir Alam, Strategy, Policy & Performance Officer – 020 7364 5064

# Appendix 1

# One Tower Hamlets Fund Application Assessment Scores

Organisation	Project Name	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total Score
Progressive Youth Organisation	PYO's Open Platform	16	10	3	4	33
Brick Lane Women and Girls Project	Senior Leader	16	10	6	8	40
Community Solutions	The Wapping Workshop	24	15	6	12	57
Ensign Youth Club	Safe Environment	16	10	6	12	44
Mile End Community Project	Re-defining Community and Leadership	24	10	6	6	46
Tower Hamlets Somali Organisations Network	THSON: Bringing Us Together for Football and Mutual Respect	24	10	9	12	55
St. Hilda's Community Centre	Established Wisdom: Celebrating Diversity in Tower Hamlets	32	20	12	16	80
SPLASH	4Cs: Bringing our community together	24	5	3	4	36
Ocean Youth Connexions	Participate Activate Communicate Empower	16	10	3	8	37
Milestone	E14 Leadership Development Programme	36	20	12	16	84
Tower Hamlets Friends and Neighbours	Well-being Activities for the Vulnerable and Elderly (WAVE)	12	10	6	12	40
SocietyLinks Tower Hamlets	SocietyLinks Reach Out	28	20	6	16	70
Rainbow Hamlets	Rainbow Hamlets LGBT + Empowerment	24	20	9	8	61
East London Chinese Community Centre	Serving the community, bringing cultures together	28	15	9	8	60

# One Tower Hamlets Fund Table 1 Successful Organisations

Organisation Name	Outline of Proposed Project	Grant Request Amount £	Value for money and Officer Proposed Amount £	Moderate d Score	Rationale: Strength and Weaknesses
Community Solutions	Develop a social cohesion project incubator in Wapping that will include the creation of a Core Group of local grassroots representatives of the community, who have relevant project ideas and will be supported develop at least 5 cohesion projects based in the needs of the local community and implement these. To look at ongoing tension in the local community between young people of different ethnicities. It proposes to work with local young and older people from a mediation point of view and within this look at aspects of leadership and social responsibility.	£ 7,000 £7,000	Amount £7,000The budgetcoversrunning oftheprogram, itwas felt thatit was valuefor moneythereforethe fullaskingamount hasbeenrecommended£4,500The projectcosts arelargelysalary ratherthan cost forengagementinitiativesandactivitieswhich doesnot reflectvalue formoney, arevised	57	Strengths:         • Will generate new ideas for local community based projects around cohesion         • Involves local people to think about solution to local issues         • Empowers local people to take responsibility over their community         • Organisation has a wealth of experience and is linked to other services locally as well as community champions         Weaknesses:         • No specific objectives have been set around cohesion initially         Strengths:         • Identification of local cohesion issues and methods of addressing these         • Developing Leadership skills for young people         • Creating community champions         • Working with local services to achieve aims of project         • Organisation has experience of delivering cohesion projects
			amount has been recommend ed		<ul> <li>Not enough information around sustainability or projects and measurement of outcomes</li> <li>Need to include a broader range of equality groups</li> </ul>
Tower Hamlets Somali Organisation Network	Intergenerational project engaging young and older people through sports and training related workshops, developing volunteering opportunities and promoting leadership. Addressing issues around unemployment, mental health, anti-social behaviour and local cohesion issues.	£5,930	£5,230 The cost for referees was not clearly reflected in the project proposal and this was reduced from the total	55	<ul> <li>Strengths:</li> <li>Developing volunteering opportunities</li> <li>Intergeneration project addressing a range of issues</li> <li>Identification of local cohesion issues and methods of addressing these</li> <li>Developing local leadership</li> <li>Weaknesses:</li> <li>Not enough information around</li> </ul>

Organisation Name	Outline of Proposed Project	Grant Request Amount £	Value for money and Officer Proposed Amount £	Moderate d Score	Rationale: Strength and Weaknesses
			requested amount.		<ul> <li>sustainability or projects and measurement of outcomes</li> <li>Need more detail on how football projects correlate directly with other project initiatives</li> </ul>
St. Hildas Community Centre	Engage local disabled young people and older people of different faiths to address local cohesion issues through activities such as discussion workshops, cultural events, health workshop and arts and crafts.	£6,958	£6,958 The project covers cost on running the program, it was felt that it was value for money therefore the full asking amount has been recommend ed	80	Strengths:         • Working with people with disabilities         • Addressing a cohesion issues through a range of projects         • Targeting people of different and backgrounds         • Developing young people as community leaders         • Strong sustainability and success measurement plan in place         • Experience of delivering a range or projects locally         •         Weaknesses:         • Could have defined how it was going to engage a broader range or equality groups
Milestone	To run training workshops and one-to-one mentoring to facilitate local social action campaigns, address issues around unemployment, negative impacts of drug and gang culture on young people; growing tensions between communities based on cultural and poor quality housing conditions.	£6,500	£4,400 The project is largely based on salaries, and did not reflect value for money, revised amount recommend ed	84	<ul> <li>Strengths:</li> <li>Projects address a wide range of cohesion issues around drugs, race and ethnicity, gang culture, effect of unemployment</li> <li>Targets a good range equality characteristics</li> <li>Has a strong set of cohesion objectives that have been identified from previous research</li> <li>Strong sustainability and success measurement plan in place</li> </ul>
SocietyLinks Tower Hamlets	Work with young and older people to address issues around radicalization and safety. Hold events and workshops looking at local concerns and explore as a community how to tackle these issues and break down barriers to negative attitudes towards others and build community resilience. Run a number of activities to bring local residents together in	£7,000	£7,000 The project covers cost on running the program, it was felt that it was value for money therefore the full asking amount has	70	<ul> <li>Strengths:</li> <li>Working broadly with the community and to address issues and build community resilience</li> <li>Addressing a cohesion issues through a range of projects</li> <li>Addressing issues around radicalisation</li> <li>Developing young people as community leaders</li> <li>Strong sustainability and success measurement plan in place</li> <li>Weaknesses:</li> </ul>

Organisation Name	Outline of Proposed Project	Grant Request Amount £	Value for money and Officer Proposed Amount £	Moderate d Score	Rationale: Strength and Weaknesses
	fun and positive activities and develop meaningful relationships.		been recommend ed		<ul> <li>Could have had better evidence of need for project</li> <li>Could have had more information on how local people were going to be engaged</li> </ul>
Rainbow Hamlets	Develop and deliver a leadership programme for local LGBT population which enables them to a leadership role in the community. Also develop a Rainbow Hamlets Community Network which brings together a range of local LGBT organisations to increase wider community interactions and address cohesion issues.	£7,000	£3,500 The project is largely based on salaries, and did not reflect value for money, revised amount recommend ed	61	<ul> <li>Strengths:</li> <li>Has a good focus in the LGBT community as well as addresses multi dimension protected groups</li> <li>Has a good objective in developing a borough wide representative voice in a wanting area on LGBT issues</li> <li>Good range of activities and engagement with other local services</li> <li>Building leadership</li> <li>Weaknesses:</li> <li>Budget does not reflect activities appropriately the large majority is salaries</li> <li>Could have had more information on the need for project</li> </ul>
East London Chinese Community Centre	Engage with underrepresented Chinese and Vietnamese community. facilitating dialogue and engagement opportunities through activities kinked to history, culture, food, culminating in an overall exhibition about culture and diversity	£7,000	£6,050 Building insurance and phone bills are not in the remit of the OTH fund, after deduction the above amount has been recommend ed	60	<ul> <li>Strengths:</li> <li>Engages a hard to reach group</li> <li>Addresses issues around community cohesion, citizenship and integration</li> <li>Has a good set of cohesion related activities</li> <li>Builds community leadership and gives marginalised communities a voice</li> <li>Weaknesses:</li> <li>Could have had engaged more equality groups in the project</li> <li>Could have thought more about future sustainability</li> </ul>

# One Tower Hamlets Fund Table 2 Unsuccessful Organisations

Organisation Name	Outline of Proposed Project	Grant Request Amount £	Moderated Score	Rationale
Progressive Youth Organisation	To develop coaching cultural and social community activities, to help elderly people to learn about computers and using technology, to encourage participation through activities including pool, table tennis, football, games console. Also encourage participation in outdoor activities such as playing football.	£7,000	33	<ul> <li>The application gave limited answers on how it was going to meet cohesion objectives, and how these correlated to the identified activities.</li> <li>The project identified engagement with a limited equality group and only offered a very limited response to the weighted equality question.</li> <li>The application was not able to demonstrate an adequate strategy for sustainability</li> </ul>
Brick Lane Women and Girls Project	To deliver ESOL classes for women. To develop money management skills, how to use public transport, Hospital and GP appointment or telephone services, Local authority such as Housing, benefits, and school. Deliver coffee mornings and give women welfare advice on housing, child benefit, income support and other related issue as well as discuss health issues, deliver cooking session and have a food festival to promote food diversity.	£7,000	40	<ul> <li>The application gave limited answers on how it was going to meet cohesion objectives, and how these correlated to the identified activities.</li> <li>The application provided a very limited response on how it would address equality groups</li> <li>There is not enough evidence and justification that this project is needed as there is ample work already on ESOL delivered by the council as well as local organisations such as the Bromley by Bow Centre, City Gateway, Limehouse Project and so on.</li> </ul>
Ensign Youth Club	to address issues around domestic Violence, deliver IT classes, Health Workshop running workshops and a seminar with representation from Social Service, PCT, GP, local community leaders, local councillor, faith leaders, local role model and community members to have open discussion on the smoking agenda about the issues affecting our communities.	£6,485	44	<ul> <li>The scope of this work, domestic violence, IT classes and health issues, does not fall under the spirit of the One Tower Hamlets Fund, and does not directly correlate to community cohesion issues and objectives</li> <li>Equality groups mainly included women and limited ethnicity and were not broad encompassing of the other protected characteristics</li> </ul>

SPLASH	To encourage opportunities for training and employment on Canary Wharf for young and old people from the community, to celebrate cultural diversity and creating opportunities for progression and development and work with the local college and primary schools to do this. To have painting panels activity on the canary wharf glass bridge through which different communities will be brought together.	£7,000	36	<ul> <li>Apart from employment related aspirations for local people, the application does not identify any other tangible objectives of meeting community cohesion issues or objectives</li> <li>There is no detailed identification of equality targeted groups, information is very limited</li> <li>The need for this project is not evidenced</li> </ul>
Ocean Youth Connexions	To develop community leadership amongst young people. Develop relationships between residents and services. Have activities such as cooking and seas side funday	£7,000	37	<ul> <li>This project was funded last year based on a similar proposal</li> <li>Weak and limited response on how they will tackle community cohesion related issues</li> <li>Limited response in regards to including equality groups</li> <li>Due to the similar proposal from last year, sustainability is a concern</li> </ul>
Tower Hamlets Friends and Neighbours	To target isolated and vulnerable older people in the borough of Tower Hamlets, who may suffer from depression and loneliness and are inactive. Targeting isolated client group who have limited mobility and/or are housebound, and/or whose first language is not English. Accompanying people to local services and places, as well developing activities inside and outside the home.	£5,000	40	<ul> <li>The project does not adequately identify how it would address a range of cohesion based issues in the local community that affects a broad range of people and are crosscutting</li> <li>Mainly concentrates on elderly care. Which is not directly in the scope if the OTHF, and fall within the remit of social services , CCG and Public Health</li> </ul>

One Tower Hamlets Fund Table 3 Organisations that did not meet	the Eligibility Criteria
Organisation Name	Eligibility Criteria's not met
Soundtek Carrom Club UK	<ul> <li>Organisation is not based in Tower Hamlets</li> <li>Organisation does not have bank or building account details</li> </ul>

1 Love Community C.I.C	Not a properly constituted organisation

