


Commissioner Decision Report 5 July 2016	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Shazia Hussain Service Head Culture, Learning and Leisure	Classification: Unrestricted
Event Fund	
Annual Report on Event Fund Awards for the year 2015-16	

Originating Officer(s)	Alison Denning
Wards affected	All Wards
Key Decision?	No
Community Plan Theme	One Tower Hamlets

Executive Summary

The Event Fund is a small grant fund which supports small community arts events. It works on a rolling programme with monthly deadlines and has been operating successfully for a number of years. The fund is part of the council's revenue budget and is intended to support the delivery of the council's Community Plan priorities.

On 9th September 2015 the Commissioners agreed to delegate authority to approve Event Fund awards to the Service Head for Culture Leisure and Learning until the end of the financial year. On 13th January 2016 the Commissioners then granted delegated authority to the Service Head for Culture, Learning and Leisure to approve Event Fund on a permanent basis although they did request that the use of this funding should be reported on a quarterly and annual basis for transparency.

This is the Annual Report and covers all successful applications to the Event Fund for the period April 1st 2015 to March 31st March 2016. The report details the awards made; their monitoring outcomes; and any lessons for the future.

Recommendations:

There are no recommendations. This is an Annual Report of Event Fund Grant awards made and approved by Service Head for Culture Leisure and Learning for events that took place between 1st April 2015 and 31st March 2016 and it for the Commissioners to note and comment.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

1.1 No decision is required. This is for information only.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

2.1 There are no alternative options.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

3.1 Event Fund purpose and administration

3.1 The Event Fund is a small grant fund for high quality arts events which are accessible to, and of benefit to the community. The events supported by the fund must take place in Tower Hamlets and benefit Tower Hamlets residents but the organisers applying for funding do not have to be Tower Hamlets based. The Guidelines and Criteria for Event Fund applications is at Appendix A.

3.1.1 The annual budget for the Event Fund is £52,500 with the maximum grant award being £2,500. However, most awards are in the region of £500 - £1,500. The Event Fund works on a rolling programme with monthly deadlines. The available budget is projected forward over the year and an estimated budget allocation is identified for each quarter. Initial projections are based on historical performance and knowledge of the annual cycle of peaks and troughs in the number of events throughout the year. Projections and fund allocation amounts are updated on a monthly basis depending on demand and supply of funds. This is done in order to ensure funding is available to applicants and for events throughout the year.

3.1.2 The Event Fund is administered and managed through the Arts, Parks and Events Service, and assessment of the applications is carried out by three officers independently of each other following a scoring system against a list of criteria as set out in the Event Fund application form. The assessments are carried out monthly and the amounts recommended for award are dependent on the amount of funding remaining available for the quarter, the assessment score and the number of applications.

3.1.3 Applications are initially checked for eligibility. If not eligible they are rejected and not assessed. If eligible, applications are scored across a number of areas:

- track record of delivery for the organisation;
- event content,
- benefit (how it meets the EF Priorities, and objectives of One Tower Hamlets), accessibility, marketing,
- partnerships & community involvement,
- outcomes
- value for money.

These areas each attract a maximum score of 5, with the overall application receiving a maximum score of 30 by each assessor. The three assessors'

scores are then added together to give a maximum score of 90. For further information please see the Assessment Questions at Appendix B

- 3.1.4 For the first half of 2015/16, Event Fund award recommendations were presented to the Commissioners in the form of reports for approval at a Public Meeting. However this was not practical in terms of the time frame from application submission to award and payment of funding. Following the Commissioners decision to delegate award approval to the Service Head for Culture, Learning and Leisure, all assessments of applications are reported at a meeting to the Service Head. A monthly meeting takes place with the Service Head and the Festivals and Events Officer to discuss the recommendations and whether to agree recommended awards. 80% of the payment to a successful applicant is made prior to their event once certain conditions have been met, and the remaining 20% on receipt of their evaluation and monitoring information.
- 3.1.5 This is the first annual report to be presented to the Commissioners since delegated authority was granted.

3.2 Event Fund Awards 201516

- 3.2.1 A total of 76 Event Fund applications were received for the year 2015/16 with a total of 47 awards made and a total of £52,500 has been awarded. Of the 47 awards made, 2 awards were returned, one due to a change in circumstances and the other as the organiser did not receive the additional funding they needed. This funding was put back into the fund and reallocated.
- 3.2.2 Of the remaining 45 awards, some of these included events in multiple venues and which took the number of events up to 152. Repeat events are counted as 1 event in these calculations. Appendices C, D & E contain a full breakdown of the venues and awards.
- 3.2.3 29 applications were declined and which would have been for a number of reasons, including late submission (immediate rejection); lack of evidence of benefit to local people; closed event without access to the general public (e.g. in a school); high ticket prices making it inaccessible to local people; activities taking place in another borough; no partners; unable to demonstrate value for money; or no additional funding secured.
- 3.2.4 A large majority of awards and applications were for events and activities in Bethnal Green, Spitalfields and Banglatown, and Weavers Wards followed by Mile End, St Peter's and Whitechapel Wards. This is mainly due to the volume and location of community arts venues in these areas. It is also assumed that applicants have greater knowledge and experience in applying for funding. No events are recorded as taking place in St Katherine's and Wapping Ward or in Island Gardens Ward. Although an application was made for funding for an event in Island Gardens, it had most of the activity in another borough, and ticket prices were high so it was declined. Various marketing and targeting campaigns were carried out over the course of the year with editorial campaigns in East End Life; targeted emails; Arts Forum online newsletter;

and web and social media notices to respond to this lack of funding in certain wards. There was limited success however. A full list of applications and awards is at Appendix F.

3.2.5 The number of applications and awards per quarter is as follows:

Quarter 1: 12 Applications, 11 Awards, Total Funding	£13,390
Quarter 2: 20 Applications, 11 Awards, Total Funding	£11,905
Quarter 3: 31 Applications, 18 Awards, Total Funding	£17,600
Quarter 4: 13 Applications, 7 Awards, Total Funding	£ 9,605

3.2.6 A total of 210,669 people were recorded by Event Fund monitoring forms from 42 events as having benefited from the award. Of these, 153,905 were for Photomonth (as were 45 venues). Due to data protection, although a list of photographers was given, it does not record where the Photomonth photographers are from but there is a large local push for local people to submit photos both amateur and professional in the months leading up to the project.

3.2.7 Event Fund awardees are required to complete a detailed evaluation with feedback and monitoring statistics, and submit after their event to receive the second part of their funding award. Relevant monitoring information in respect the 9 protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 can be found in Appendices C, G and H.

3.3 Strategic Alignment

3.3.1 The Community Plan provides the long-term vision for the borough, articulating local aspirations, needs and priorities. It informs all other strategies and delivery plans of the council and its partnership, including the council's Strategic Plan. The plan has been developed in consultation with local residents and service users, community and voluntary sector organisations, and a range of representative groups and forums, as well as members of the council. It outlines how the council and its partners will work together to improve the lives of all those who live and work in the borough, and continues the existing focus on tackling poverty and social exclusion in Tower Hamlets.

3.3.2 The Community Plan incorporates a set of high level and cross-cutting priorities with the aim of making a real difference in these areas over the lifetime of the plan. It is the objective of the Event Fund to help support the Community Plans outcomes and contribute towards its five themes.

3.3.3 The aim of the Arts Fund is to support a range of activities and events to promote the One Tower Hamlets principles across the borough, which are:

- Tackling Inequality
- Strengthening Community Cohesion and,
- Building Community Leadership

3.3.4 The events are expected to achieve the following:

- A programme of arts and events activities that include credible methods of delivery to reach a wide audience and promote the One Tower Hamlets principles;
- Produce promotional materials and identify channels to use these events and activities to effectively promote messages which celebrate the rich diversity of all communities within Tower Hamlets;
- Reach a wide range of people throughout the events programme, providing information about anticipated attendance, including from people from a range of different backgrounds and ages, across the 9 protected equality groups where appropriate.

3.3.5 The projects are expected to demonstrate:

Administration and management of events

- An engaging programme of events through a combination of directly delivered events and events which are delivered in partnership with other groups or community organisations.

A robust process for collaborating with community groups or organisations

- Evidence they have a strong approach to partnership working and robust partnership processes in place when funding other local organisations to deliver events on its behalf.

A strong understanding of equality, including:

- Understanding of the council's commitment to equality through the Community Plan and ideally, also some understanding of the council's commitment across the protected characteristics as detailed in the Single Equality Framework.
- That the essence and values of the lead organisation are set by those who use the service. Staff and board members must be representative of the target audience.
- A track record of reaching a range of local residents from diverse backgrounds, living across the borough.
- An understanding of what types of events are most suitable to achieve equality outcomes and how their chosen delivery method will reach the intended client group.
- A proposal that outlines what issues or topics will be addressed through the events, why these have been selected and how they help the council to achieve the One Tower Hamlets principles.

3.3.6 Monitoring & evaluation

- Organisations will be expected to have a system in place to measure the outputs and outcomes by the protected characteristics as set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty where relevant and appropriate.

3.3.7 The Event Fund also contributes towards the following strands of the Mayor's key priorities:

- Regeneration and the creation of Sustainable Communities;
- Creating Jobs and supporting the growth of the Local Economy;
- Young People and Schools;
- Older People and Health;
- Community Safety and Community Cohesion;
- Environment and Public Realm; and
- Arts, Heritage, Leisure and Culture.

Lessons / Action for 16/17

3.3.8 In response to the Mayor's Priorities forming an integral part of the strategic plan for Tower Hamlets, the Event Fund 16 /17 includes in the application criteria that applicants will only be considered for funding if they can demonstrate that the event supports some of the Mayor's Key Strategic Priorities.

3.3.9 Wards to be identified and further targeted that received little or no applications for funding in 15/16 or were unsuccessful.

3.3.10 Further outreach to be carried out working in partnership with the Tower Hamlets Council for Voluntary Service (THCVS) to identify and reach organisations across the borough and support organisations less familiar with the funding application process with the aim of supporting more arts events in wards under-represented by the Event Fund.

3.3.11 Potential venues and partners to be researched in wards under-represented by the Event Fund.

3.3.12 Successful applications (particular those events taking place in the 4 most represented wards) are expected to demonstrate that they are actively targeting and engaging with residents across the borough.

4. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

4.1 This report complies with the requirement to provide an Annual report to the Commissioners Decision Making meeting on payments awarded from the Events Fund. The total available to fund community arts events fund in 2015/16 was £52,500. The process was managed through Arts, Parks and Events team who consider the grant applications and assess them for the purposes of grant award.

- 4.2. Over the course of the year the Event Fund has allocated the full value of the £52,500 fund to 47 applications reported quarterly. This represents 9% of the total value of community activities that have been delivered within the Borough as a result of the Event Fund condition that it is used to lever in additional funding resources.
- 4.3. Awards of £500 or more, received an initial payment of 80% of the grant reflecting the spend profile of events that typically require necessary infrastructure to be purchased in advance of the events. The balance of the 20% of the award was retained until receipt of the completed evaluation form, final budget statement and all supporting documents as specified in the guidelines and criteria.

5. LEGAL COMMENTS

- 5.1 Whilst officers are empowered to exercise their delegated authority in private, the specific delegation requires that quarterly and annual reports should be reported to Commissioners Decision Meetings in Public in respect of the use of the Event Fund. This report therefore details the awards made; their monitoring outcomes; and any lessons for the future. This procedure has been implemented in the interests of transparency.
- 5.2 The Council has a duty under 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. This is referred to as the Council's best value duty. Best Value considerations have also been addressed in paragraph 7 of the report.
- 5.3 Applying this duty to grants, the Council must operate a fair and open application procedure to process a request to obtain funding. Requests for grant funding should ordinarily be measured against a predetermined set of criteria and the criteria themselves must be fair and transparent. The grant agreement should include a clear monitoring process against defined parameters in order for the Council to demonstrate either: that delivery is in line with the application and, therefore, the grant achieved its purpose; or provide clear delineation where outcomes were not achieved and the reasons for such failure are apparent. Monitoring should therefore include measuring performance against the expected outcomes.
- 5.4 This report provides the Commissioners with a performance update advising as to the Event Fund grant awards.

6. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The Event Fund is designed to support small local events that bring people together and help promote a sense of community. Tower Hamlets has a very rich and diverse community. The Event Fund helps to support the local community to celebrate this richness of cultures helping to promote cultural understanding, a sense of inclusion and tolerance and promoting conditions

conducive to a sense of wellbeing, community and local pride. Many of the events promote diversity, equality and intergenerational work which support the Council's One Tower Hamlets theme, making a significant contribution to creating a cohesive community.

- 6.2 All applicants under the scheme must demonstrate that they will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and will not discriminate on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics specified in the Act. All groups funded must fill in the attached monitoring forms which include a template for the recording the nine protected characteristics. This information may be used by the Council to assess the degree to which funded events are successfully serving people with protected characteristics.
- 6.3 An equality analysis has been completed [Appendix J]; the equalities Event Participants' Equalities Data is also attached [Appendix K].

7. BEST VALUE (BV) IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The conditions of the Event Fund state that it cannot be the sole source of funding so in all cases it helps to lever in other funding and assistance in kind for community activity. It supports valuable community led activity supporting a range of key strategic objectives of the Council in a cost effective manner which would otherwise be unlikely to take place (annually it supports circa 40 – 50 community events).
- 7.2 The event fund budget of £52,500 formed part of a total of £597,000 in kind and cash budgets for the 42 events which have submitted their evaluation forms, meaning that the Council benefited from £597,000 worth of arts activity for a cost of £52,500

8. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

N/A

9. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Council retains a proportion of grant which is offered on receipt of monitoring information. Any group not providing required information would lose their second payment and may not be eligible for future funding. The Grant process is audited as determined by corporate risk management arrangements.
- 9.2 The assessment and approval process for awards is robust, 3 Officers assess and make recommendations for funding, followed by input from Head of Service and final award agreement.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Free community events help to promote community cohesion which in turn helps to reduce crime and disorder, particularly where young people are engaged in volunteering and supporting local events.
- 10.2 Priority is given to arts events which involve young people, encourage personal responsibility and making a positive contribution to the community.

11. SAFEGUARDING IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no specific safeguarding implications
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Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report N/A

Appendices

- Appendix A: EF1 Event Fund Application and Criteria 1516
- Appendix B: Assessment Questions 1516
- Appendix C: Applications Monitoring 1516
- Appendix D: Photomonth Venues 1516
- Appendix E: Women's History Month Venues 1516
- Appendix F: EF Awards Log 1516
- Appendix G: Event Fund Evaluation Form 1516
- Appendix H: Evaluation Results Event Fund – Annual Report 1516
- Appendix I: Strategic Alignment
- Appendix J: Equality Analysis
- Appendix K: Event Participants' Equalities Data
- [Appendix L: Equality Analysis Quality Assurance Check List](#)
- [Appendix M: Event Fund Assessment Score Sheet](#)
- [Appendix N: Unsuccessful Applications to the Event Fund 1516](#)

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

- None

Officer contact details for documents:

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