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| <p style="text-align: center;">Cabinet</p> <p style="text-align: center;">20 March 2018</p> |  |
| Report of: Zena Cooke Corporate Director, Resources | Classification: Unrestricted |
| Community Commissioning Programme Framework Report | |

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| Lead Member | Mayor John Biggs |
| Originating Officer(s) | Elvis Langley, Senior Strategy Policy and Performance Officer |
| Wards affected | All |
| Key Decision? | No |
| Community Plan Theme | All themes |

Executive Summary

The Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Strategy agreed in 2016, sets out the Council's approach to funding the VCS, which is principally through commissioned services funded through contracts. In line with this strategic commitment to commissioning services, a new commissioned service co-produced with the voluntary sector (currently called 'the Community Commissioning Programme') will succeed the Mainstream Grants programme (MSG) when it ends in March 2019.

This paper presents the framework rationale and approach for the Community Commissioning programme, which has been developed in co-production with the VCS. A corporate approach to the programme is outlined. This will underpin the second wider phase of co-production which will develop the detail of the programme themes (delivery areas) and processes to administer the programme. It is anticipated the second report will be brought back to Cabinet in the summer.

Selected output from the co-production workshops and information on the development of the framework is attached (Appendix 1) for information.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Agree the programme rationale and approach for a Community Commissioning programme, and
2. Instruct officers to develop detailed proposals for a Community Commissioning programme, to be launched in time for a proposed programme delivery start date of April 2019.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Strategy 2016-19, sets out an approach to supporting the VCS, based on the co-production of services commissioned with the VCS rather than traditional grants programmes.
- 1.2 This report brings forward proposals for a specific policy framework that would help achieve this commitment.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 A key consideration for recommendations is that the timetable for the Community Commissioning programme, allows little room for change without delaying services starting on 1st April 2019.
- 2.2 The Council could decide not to have a funded scheme, alternatively the council could extend the Mainstream Grants programme. In both cases the Council would fail to meet commitments from the VCS Strategy.
- 2.3 The Council could not recommend the current proposals in favour of waiting to agree the more detailed programme in the final report around June. Without approving the initial framework agreements the Council risks perception that nothing is being done. Given the input that has been received from the VCS and the need to acknowledge a programme of funding beyond existing Mainstream Grants it is necessary to signal a clear commitment to a programme of funding and the key principles that will underpin it.
- 2.4 Alternative approaches that could be taken without a gap in provision of VCS funding, could be to develop a 'stepped' commissioning cycle and provide transitional arrangements (e.g. through providing shorter term grant funding in the interim, under the new Council Grants Policy) in some programme areas. Benefits to this approach would be to give VCS organisations longer to adapt to the shift from grants to commissioning and to develop ideas for responding to the final outcomes framework developed for the programme. This approach may also be initially less demanding on council service resources to procure the programme. However this would prevent commissioning being coordinated into a single programme and would require a second procurement process, once transitional arrangements expire which would be onerous for both VCS and Council.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

- 3.1 The VCS Strategy (2016-19) outlines a commitment to ensure that all council funding to the VCS is contributing to priority outcomes, with a general preference for commissioning rather than grants and to maximise economic and social benefits through procurement.

- 3.2 It is specified that as far as possible, the commissioning approach will be a collaborative one, taking into account procurement and other legal requirements.
- 3.3 There is a commitment in the VCS strategy to delivering this change through co-production with the VCS, as well as adopting co-production as a service design and delivery approach for commissioned services.
- 3.4 As well as an overall shift to outcomes based commissioning, the specific commitments from the VCS Strategy are to review council commissioning processes, so that:
- the advantages of commissioning the VCS are valued and understood
 - the ability of the VCS to participate in the commissioning process is maximised
 - processes minimise bureaucracy and are pragmatic
 - requirements of tenderers and contractors are more proportionate to the levels of funding and complexity of the service
 - small organisations are able to benefit from commissioning opportunities, including through consortia and sub-contracting
 - processes promote a more sustainable VCS by using longer funding terms where appropriate and taking into account external income generation
- 3.5 The VCS Strategy also states there should be capacity building support for VCS organisations in the skills necessary to bid for and take on commissioned services. This should also include elements to ensure that VCS services are resilient and less reliant on funding from the council.
- 3.6 In 2017 Carney Green and the New Economics Foundation were commissioned to deliver an evaluation of the current and previous Mainstream Grants programmes. The July 2017 evaluation report includes recommendations to:
- Co-produce an outcomes based framework for the successor to Mainstream Grants to drive innovation in the sector
 - Link programme outcomes to Strategic Plan and Community Plan priorities and outcomes.
 - Focus on building relationships and trust between the VCS and council in relation to commissioning contracts
 - Develop a sound Theory of Change and ensuring continuity of approach between different programme priorities
 - Consider the commissioning mechanism through which the programme would be offered, to encourage local applications

- Deliver capacity building support to the local VCS, to enable them to respond to tenders
- Adopt a more proportionate 'tailored' approach to the application process and monitoring of services

- 3.7 Work has been ongoing to develop the policy framework for Community Commissioning, with internal / public co-production workshop sessions facilitated by Carney Green and the New Economics Foundation since the start of January 2018. (See Appendix 1: Community Commissioning Workshop Output Document, for details of the co-production process and development of the framework rationale and approach for the Community Commissioning programme).
- 3.8 The focus of the first stage of co-production is on impact and outcomes, with further work in March and April 2018, to develop programme themes and the detail of what will be delivered against budget allocations.

Community Commissioning Programme - Key Principles

- 3.9 The Community Commissioning programme will be a new programme of services funded by the Council and co-produced with the VCS. The time available before the new programme starts allows an opportunity to ensure the new programme takes into account good practice and learning from current MSG provision in deciding what should be funded in future under the new programme.
- 3.10 Community Commissioning will as far as possible, operate as a single coordinated programme, with a coherent approach to commissioning and common approach to the programme's outputs and outcomes across the different programme themes for delivery.
- 3.11 The programme is being developed with consideration of the new Council Grants Policy and existing commissioning and strategic priorities. This maximises impact and avoids funding overlap, as well as supporting the delivery of the Community Plan and Strategic Plan
- 3.12 The proposed new Community Commissioning programme will fit with the Council's wider Commissioning Framework and Co-production Framework recommendations, currently being developed.
- 3.13 Community Commissioning will adopt an outcomes based approach, allowing organisations to build on local knowledge, skills and expertise and have the flexibility to undertake the activities which have the most impact.
- 3.14 The proposed new programme is intended to stimulate greater and more effective support in tackling local issues. This principle will inform the determination of the programme budget.
- 3.15 The tender process will be transparent and fair.

Programme Recommendations

- 3.17 The new Community commissioning requires a framework that will be aligned with relevant existing outcomes frameworks and commissioning priorities. This will be balanced with creating a flexible programme that is responsive to local need and can deliver local impact.
- 3.18 The programme will be managed by services alongside existing priorities and therefore needs to avoid duplication of services, delivering impact where it is most needed. It also needs to build on what commissioned organisations are best placed to deliver in order to maximise impact.
- 3.19 In consideration of this, the co-production workshops so far were undertaken with a focus on outcome areas and impact first and will later move toward consideration of grouping these into programme themes and strands that specify the areas of activity that will be funded and the allocation of funding to them.
- 3.20 There are three areas in which recommendations are made
- A. Management of the Programme
 - B. Cross-Cutting Principles of Delivery
 - C. Initial Outcome Areas

A. Management of the Programme

- 3.21 Feedback from the co-production process broadly aligned to the commitments in the VCS Strategy and the recommendations of the MSG evaluation for:
- Streamlined application and monitoring, proportionate to the size of the contract
 - A focus on commissioning for outcomes, with greater flexibility in design and delivery as to how these are achieved, in order to encourage innovation and creativity and value local solutions, knowledge and expertise.
 - Commissioning outcomes should be co-designed
 - Valuing partnership work, but not requiring it
 - A supportive and collaborative monitoring process
 - A transparent tendering process that weights toward local knowledge and expertise, as well as other factors
 - Reasonable timelines to respond to tenders
 - Capacity building for the sector to be able to effectively respond to tenders
 - A programme that works in synergy with existing commissioning and strategic priorities

- Building evidence for local need and the impact of the approaches developed - commissioned organisations will be expected to evidence the impact of their approaches to address an evidenced need in the borough.

B. Cross-Cutting Principles of Delivery

- 3.22 Specifically, the co-production process identified cross cutting principles to be applied across all programme themes. These will be reflected in the final tender process:

All themes/delivery areas will be expected to contribute to the following outcome areas, (quotes represent suggestions for wording from the Carney Green report, based on input from workshops, Appendix 1):

Empowerment and Community Cohesion – Services should work toward cohesion and individual empowerment, including improved understanding and tolerance of people, active involvement in local communities, decreased isolation and the development of positive relationships between people. ‘Creation of a cohesive society which works towards the wellbeing of all members of the community, breaks down barriers to exclusion and marginalisation, creates a sense of belonging, and promotes trust. Individuals are empowered to harness local resources and expertise, for the greater good of their community.’

Reducing Poverty – This included employment and addressing skills gaps, as well as tackling in-work poverty and increasing prosperity. There was a feedback that the final priority will need to be phrased positively. ‘Individuals and communities are empowered to prevent or delay negative impacts on health, promote/improve quality of life, and to create healthy and supportive environments.’

All themes/delivery areas will be expected to take these approaches to delivering outcomes:

Preventative approaches - There was widespread agreement that early intervention and addressing need at the earliest stage would lead to significant change and that this approach would apply to all areas of provision (for example, sports, criminal justice, arts approaches), as well as provide sustainability and value for money. ‘Everyone in Tower Hamlets has the opportunity to lead a healthy and secure life. They are not marginalised or discriminated as a result of financial circumstances.’ This approach will be need to be embedded into the design of all commissioned services.

Co-production - An overall focus on co-production with the community at service design and delivery level was identified as an important route to encouraging innovation and a community response to local need. ‘Individuals and communities in Tower Hamlets are consulted and empowered to inform the delivery of services that they engage with. Community and voluntary sector organisations support one another to deliver effective services.’ Projects will be designed, delivered and evaluated using co-produced and co-designed approaches, and will be expected to show development and improvement over the project lifetime.

- 3.23 The implication of principles like these that exist across all themes, is a common commissioning approach that can be applied in different services with different supplemental outcomes according to service priorities. Using this approach will allow the development of a common 'theory of change' and a set of template questions that will be scored during the tendering process, while allowing services to add specific questions linked to established commissioning outcomes and strategic priorities.

C. Initial Outcome Areas

- 3.24 In addition to these common principles a number of specific outcome areas were identified, which will be part of the information used to inform the development of distinct themes/delivery areas for the programme:
- Inclusion
 - Health and wellbeing
 - Accessibility
 - IT and digital connectivity
 - Employment and skills
 - Reduction in waste
 - Community safety, crime and anti-social behaviour
 - A vibrant and successful place
 - Social value
 - Encouraging innovation
 - Empowerment
 - Increasing capacity
- 3.25 These emerging outcome areas are not exhaustive. Appendix 1 of this report details input from the co-production process to develop the emerging outcomes. Further work to develop themes from these outcomes areas, aligned to existing outcomes frameworks and the Community and Strategic Plans will be carried out in March and April of 2018. These must also be informed by decisions made in relation to funding allocations to the programme. Initial work to consider these outcome areas against proposals for the new Council Grants Policy and Strategic priorities is detailed in Appendix 1 and will continue during the second stage of co-production, detailed below.
- 3.26 The final themes under which delivery will be commissioned will be developed according to a wider consideration of needs and priorities. There may also be opportunities to bring other community commissioning under the remit of this programme.

Development of Themes/Delivery Areas

- 3.27 Work so far has focussed on co-producing an initial rationale, approach and identifying outcomes areas that can be developed into a Community Commissioning programme
- 3.28 More detailed discussion of priorities and outcomes, development of an outcomes framework, monitoring framework, finalisation of application and decision making

process and development of the programme into final themes or areas of delivery is required.

- 3.29 A capacity building programme, delivered in partnership with Carney Green and New Economics Foundation has been agreed. This will be vital to ensure local VCS organisations have the opportunity to develop the required skills and governance to respond to tender requirements. Support will include training on the specifics of the tender process, technical details and governance requirements. The programme of support will be delivered during the run up to the July 2018 launch of the new scheme, in addition to extra infrastructure support, funded in advance of the programme, to start in April 2019.
- 3.30 The timetable is linked to the parallel but separate development of the new Grants Policy, and the developing proposals for a new corporate commissioning framework, and development of a Co-production Framework. Development of the programme will align with these.
- 3.31 This timetable assumes that all themes and strands of Community Commissioning will be fully developed and approved by July 2018 and that all services will be commissioned to start in April 2019.

Timetable

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| 2018 | January | Co-design with the VCS of rationale, approach and outcome areas for the programme |
| | March – June | Co-design with the VCS of programme themes, theory of change and final policy framework |
| | March | Cabinet paper detailing programme rationale, approach and outcome areas |
| | April | Internal discussion and process on themes and detailed programme arrangements |
| | March - June | Capacity building programme (internal and external) |
| | June | Final cabinet approval of themes and detailed programme arrangements |
| | July – March 2019 | Community Commissioning procurement process by services |
| 2019 | April | Community Commissioning provision of services commences |

4. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from the specific recommendations in this report.
- 4.2 However, the recommendations within this report have been informed by the work done by Carney Green and New Economics Foundation in evaluating the current MSG programme. The cost of this was approximately £36k and will be funded from the £300k reserve allocated for developing the VCS strategy.

- 4.3 Any further costs to develop and implement the community commissioning strategy will be met through a combination of existing staffing resources and remaining VCS strategy funds. Should that not be sufficient, officers will be obliged to seek appropriate financial approval before committing additional financial resources.

5. LEGAL COMMENTS

- 5.1 This report is seeking for the programme rationale and approach for a Community Commissioning programme to be agreed and for officers to develop detailed proposals for a Community Commissioning programme. This will replace the Mainstream Grants Programme.
- 5.2 The Tower Hamlets Community Plan sets out the vision and priorities for the Borough which has been set by the Council and its partners. Having regard to the Community Plan, the Council has developed the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Strategy 2016-19 and this Strategy sets out an approach to supporting the VCS, based on the co-production of services commissioned with the VCS rather than traditional grants programmes.
- 5.3 Moving to a commissioning model means that the resulting agreement is substantively different from a grant agreement. The key differences are that:
- 5.3.1 the payment of money by the Council may now include a profit element
 - 5.3.2 the Council is obliged to pay for the services tendered regardless of whether continuing funding has been made available which means the budget needs to be more structured and forward planned and
 - 5.3.3 the application process is replaced by a tendering process where offers received are to meet a pre-stated technical specification.
- 5.4 Therefore, the new commissioning model means that each expenditure must be subject to a competitive tendering procedure which must include the publication of pre-advertised evaluation criteria against which received tenders will be measured. The evaluation criteria must be non-discriminatory and the scoring system based upon a mixture of quality and price. However, in doing so the Council will automatically be complying with its Best Value duty under section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 provided that the performance of the contractor is monitored to ensure the contractual requirements are actually delivered.
- 5.5 In considering the recommendations in this report, 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 discharge the duty and information relevant to this is contained in the One Tower Hamlets section of the report

6. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 Consideration of impacts on equality via a full Equalities Assessment will be built into the final Community Commissioning framework report and any appropriate and reasonable mitigation to adverse impacts will be considered.
- 6.2 At this stage, before detailed themes and strands have been developed, an initial Equalities Analysis check does not suggest specific adverse effects. However it is important in respect of the Council's equalities duties to ensure there are appropriate funding arrangements in place to avoid a disproportionate impact on people with protected characteristics and organisations which represent them.
- 6.3 These organisations are often small and can struggle to find the resources to compete for funding through formal tendering. The Community Commissioning capacity building programme will be considered as part of the strategy to ensure the council meets equalities duties.
- 6.4 It is understood that the proposed grants arrangements in the draft Council Grants Policy will help ensure that the council's funding arrangements do meet equalities duties in these cases. Therefore a full equality analysis will also consider proposals for the grants programme.
- 6.5 There are also accessibility issues to consider in terms of the final application and monitoring processes used.

7. BEST VALUE (BV) IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Recent legislation, particularly the Localism Act 2010, has emphasised the role of communities working in partnership with local authorities to help achieve more effective and less costly services to local people. The process of co-production of services delivered by local voluntary and community organisations is a tool now widely recognised as a means to achieving this outcome.

8. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 8.1 There are no specific implications with regard to sustainability arising from this report.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Given different commissioning resources, there is a possibility that some services may not be able to complete procurement on time, leading to a gap in provision. Mitigating factors include developing clear responsibility within services for procurement and the internal capacity building programme commissioned from Carney Green.
- 9.2 Each theme of the Community commissioning programme will be managed within existing services alongside related service delivery. There is a risk that contract management capacity will be exceeded. It is intended that the programme is designed to take into account existing contract management capacity and to reflect

realistic contract management and monitoring arrangements therefore mitigation of this risk should be built in from the start.

- 9.3 The next stage of the development of the Community Commissioning programme will include governance requirements and other measures to manage risk which may arise.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no specific implications for crime and disorder reduction arising from this report. However, it is anticipated that there may be organisations supported by the Council through the new funding programmes whose activities will contribute towards crime and disorder reduction.

11. SAFEGUARDING IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no specific safeguarding implications arising from this report. However, ensuring appropriate consideration is given to safeguarding will be addressed in the development of the Community Commissioning programme, both through governance requirements and in the capacity building programme for the sector proposed.
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Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Carney Green Community Commissioning Outcomes 31-01-18

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

- None.

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A

Appendix 1



Community Commissioning Workshops Output document

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

January 2018

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Appendices

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| Appendix I | Emerging outcomes |
| Appendix II | “You said, we did” Workshop, 24 January 2018, Workshop write-up |

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1. Overview

Activities completed to date

- 1.1 To inform the rationale for Community Commissioning, the following three initial workshops have been delivered in January 2018:
 - Community Commissioning Workshop (12 January 2018) with heads of service at the LBTH Council ('Workshop 1')
 - Community Commissioning Workshop: Shaping the Framework (16 and 18 January) with members of the VCS. This workshop was delivered twice to maximise engagement with the sector ('Workshop 2' and 'Workshop 3').
- 1.2 The objective of these workshops were to:
 - Develop a shared understanding of the rationale for the new Community Commissioning programme co-produced with the Community and Voluntary Sector.
- 1.3 Specifically, this involved answering the following research question: *"What will the new Community Commissioning programme try to achieve?"*
- 1.4 The outputs from these workshops were consolidated and reported back to the VCS and heads of service through a 'You said, we did' workshop on 24 January ('Workshop 4'). The output of the Workshop 4 can be found in Appendix II.

2. Workshops findings

2.1 This section presents the findings from Workshops 1 to 4.

Best practice

2.2 Attendees of the 'Shaping the Framework' workshops (Workshops 2 and 3) were asked to identify what has worked well, what has not worked well, and what best practice should be taken forward in the Community Commissioning programme based on MSG and other grants programmes they had delivered. Examples of recommendations to inform future delivery of Community Commissioning included:

- Streamlined application and monitoring, proportionate to the size of the contract
- A focus on outcomes, with greater flexibility in how these are achieved, in order to encourage innovation
- Valuing partnership work, but not requiring it
- A supportive and collaborative monitoring process
- A transparent tendering process that weights toward local knowledge and expertise, as well as other factors
- Reasonable timelines to respond to tenders
- Capacity building for the sector to be able to effectively respond to tenders
- A programme that works in synergy with existing commissioning and strategic priorities
- Services should build evidence for local need and the impact of the approaches developed

Defining Community Commissioning

2.3 During the workshops, it was identified that Community Commissioning would be a specific approach to commissioning that capitalises on local knowledge and creative solutions to outcomes. Each project funded should be able to demonstrate how their approach is an early intervention to address an evidenced need in the borough. Community Commissioning projects should allow enough flexibility to progress and adapt what has already been achieved through grants and other previous work, but should be based on evidenced approaches that can be shown to have impact. Consideration needs to be given to set-out how evidence of need and impact will be gathered and presented.

2.4 Although Community Commissioning will require a higher level of governance than grants, it will enable the longer-term delivery of projects (typically four years, in comparison to one

year or less for traditional grants. Organisations will also be able to bid for larger amounts of funding than traditional grants.

Who is Community Commissioning for?

- 2.5 During the first three workshops, attendees were asked to identify which service users should be targeted through Community Commissioning. This led to attendees either identifying specific groups (examples included: women, unemployed, BME groups, elderly people, young people, people suffering with mental health, and those with multiple needs), or attendees having the view that there should a move away for the delivery of targeted services. These attendees felt that services should be universal, and therefore accessible to all, and felt that this approach would encourage creativity in service design.
- 2.6 This was readdressed in the 'You said, we did' workshop, where attendees were asked whether:
- Community Commissioning outcomes should be targeted at specific groups; or
 - Community Commissioning should be universal (e.g. not prescribe different outcomes for different groups)
- 2.7 Attendees felt that Community Commissioning should allow both approaches to be used, based on evidence of need. Priorities should not be group specific (instead they should be universal), enabling bidding organisations to have the opportunity groups to target where necessary. However, it was recognised that there was a risk that the most vulnerable may be excluded if priorities were too generic. It was suggested that partnership and joint working, could help expand the reach of projects and deliver to those most in need.

Outcomes

- 2.8 Consolidating the outcomes from the three workshops, led to the identification of emerging long-list outcome areas. These included:
- Community resilience and cohesion
 - Inclusion
 - Health and wellbeing
 - Accessibility
 - IT and digital connectivity
 - Employment and skills
 - Tackling poverty
 - Reduction in waste

- Community safety, crime and anti-social behaviour
- Prevention agenda
- Vibrant and successful place
- Social value
- Encouraging innovation
- Coproduction
- Empowerment
- Increasing capacity
- Housing

2.9 These emerging outcome areas were used to group together priority outcomes that had been identified by attendees at the workshops (see Appendix I for the priority outcomes grouped under emerging outcome areas).

2.10 From the emerging outcome areas, five draft priority areas were identified which could be used to frame the Community Commissioning approach.

Reducing poverty

2.11 This priority focus area was defined as:

Everyone in Tower Hamlets has the opportunity to lead a healthy and secure life. They are not marginalised or discriminated as a result of financial circumstances.

2.12 Examples of outcomes, identified by workshop attendees (Workshops 1-3), that could be framed under this priority included:

- Individuals have access to the right entitlement
- Individuals are supported to maximise income
- Individuals are not excluded as a result of poverty
- Effective welfare advice is accessible
- Families are supported to lead financially sustainable lives
- There is a reduced reliance on benefits

Promotion social cohesion and resilience

2.13 This priority focus area was defined as:

Creation of a cohesive society which works towards the wellbeing of all members of the community, breaks down barriers to exclusion and marginalisation, creates a sense of belonging, and promotes trust. Individuals are empowered to harness local resources and expertise, for the greater good of their community.

2.14 Examples of outcomes, identified by workshop attendees (Workshops 1-3), that could be framed under this priority included:

- Community cohesion
- Access to services is universal
- Bringing together people with shared experiences
- Promoting curiosity and opportunities to learn
- Sense of connectedness
- Reducing perceived geographic barriers
- Bringing together people with shared experiences
- Understanding individual value

Prevention

2.15 This priority focus area was defined as:

Individuals and communities are empowered to prevent or delay negative impacts on health, promote/improve quality of life, and to create healthy and supportive environments.

2.16 Examples of outcomes, identified by workshop attendees (Workshops 1-3), that could be framed under this priority included:

- Individuals develop self-reliance
- Creation of networks of support
- Increase in self-management
- Services focused on early intervention

Empowerment and identity

2.17 This priority focus area was defined as:

Individuals feel empowered to make a change and have a sense of belonging to the community.

2.18 Examples of outcomes, identified by workshop attendees (Workshops 1-3), that could be framed under this priority included:

- Everyone in Tower Hamlets knows their place in the world
- Increased opportunities for socialisation
- Increased opportunities for engagement
- Development of inclusive environments
- Individuals are better able to access services
- Increased community voice in commissioning
- Better representation of marginalised groups
- Individuals have agency to change their lives.

Co-production

2.19 This priority focus area was defined as:

Individuals and communities in Tower Hamlets are consulted and empowered to inform the delivery of services that they engage with. Community and voluntary sector organisations support one another to deliver effective services.

2.20 Examples of outcomes, identified by workshop attendees (Workshops 1-3), that could be framed under this priority included:

- Services are co-delivered with citizens
- Vision for TH shared between the community, council, and CVS
- Facilitating community leadership
- Communities are not told what to do
- Services are joined up

Feedback on priorities

2.21 Workshop attendees were provided with the opportunity to critique the priority areas. Headline findings from these discussions are listed below:

- **Co-production:**
 - is a process not an outcome and should inform the overall delivery of projects;
 - should also include co-design; and

- consideration should be given to the level of co-production that can be incorporated into project design and delivery will be dependent on the capacity of the CVS.
- **Reducing poverty:**
 - the definition should be amended to explicitly refer to improving the financial situation of those in Tower Hamlets;
 - should also makes link to addressing skills deprivation in LBTH, tackling in-work poverty, and housing challenges; and
 - there was consensus that reducing poverty should be a priority informing outcomes, particularly as LBTH has recently been announced as having the highest rate of child poverty in the UK.
- **Promoting social cohesion and resilience:**
 - too many similarities with empowerment and identity;
 - cohesion was seen as a key priority for LBTH (reservations regarding the use of resilience); and
 - should be focused on bringing people together and enabling them to share different experiences.
- **Prevention:**
 - considered to be an approach/principle for Community Commissioning projects – organisations should be asked to show how their intervention addresses need at the earliest stage;
 - also linked to empowerment and identify, as people are given the tools to deliver change;
 - should refer to prevention and early intervention; and
 - more guidance to be provided about the difference areas this could be applied to.
- **Empowerment and identity:**
 - Unsure on the identity element of this priority area (seems too individualised);
 - Empowerment was viewed as important but recognition of its overlap with social cohesion and resilience; and
 - Understanding rights and asserting rights cuts across numerous service areas.

2.22 In addition to the above, attendees were asked to identify whether they felt any priority areas were missing. Two potential additional areas were identified:

- Improved health and wellbeing (health inequality was seen to be a key issue that needs to be addressed)
- A good place to live (this could link to housing, social value, creating a vibrant and successful place and reducing waste – covering off other outcome areas also viewed as priorities).

Programme rationale and approach

2.23 Based on the above, it was recognised that the five priority areas could be consolidated into four:

- Reducing poverty
- Empowerment and social cohesion (combining two priority areas, and removing the reference to identity and community resilience - focusing on the areas that resonated best with attendees)
- Coproduction
- Prevention

2.24 At the current position, the aim of Community Commissioning is to:

'Deliver a new approach to commissioning focused on outcomes which are co-produced within the community. Outcomes should provide commissioned organisations with autonomy to be flexible in design and delivery, supporting innovation and creativity, as well as valuing local solutions, knowledge and expertise. Projects should be designed, delivered and evaluated using co-produced and co-designed approaches, and will be expected to show development and improvement over the project lifetime. Prevention and early intervention should be embedded in the design of projects, with commissioned organisations evidencing the impact of their approaches to address an evidenced need in LBTH.'

2.25 This aim will be further developed, and agreement of definition between the LBTH Council and the VCS will be sought.

2.26 There was consensus that the priority areas should be separated into priority outcome areas, and priority approaches. Reducing poverty, and empowerment and social cohesion were viewed as priority outcome priorities; whilst co-production, and prevention were viewed as approaches that should be characteristics of projects delivered under Community Commissioning.

2.27 Therefore, as it stands, the current overarching priorities for Community Commissioning are:

- **Reducing poverty**

- Definition has been adapted based on Workshop 4 feedback to: *Everyone in Tower Hamlets has the opportunity to lead a healthy and secure life. Skills deprivation is reduced, housing and employment outcomes are improved, and in-work poverty tackled. As a result, those in need within Tower Hamlets, will experience an improvement in their financial situation.*

- **Empowerment and social cohesion**

- Definition has been adapted based on Workshop 4 feedback, and as a result of the consolidation of two priority outcomes to: *Creation of a cohesive society which works towards the wellbeing of all members of the community, breaks down barriers to exclusion and marginalisation, creates a sense of belonging, and promotes trust. Individuals are empowered to become active and empowered citizens, who understand their rights and how to assert them, and want to make a positive difference in Tower Hamlets.*

- 2.28 Further exploration is required into the inclusion of health and wellbeing and creation of a good place to live (recognition that this could be built into empowerment and social cohesion).

Fit of emerging priorities

- 2.29 The sections below explore the fit of emerging priorities with delivery of the LBTH Council Grants and Traditional Commissioning.

Grants Policy Framework

- 2.30 The VCS Strategy outlines how although the future direction for supporting VCS activities will be through co-produced, commissioned services funded through contracts, it also states that there continues to be a role for supporting the VCS through grants in limited and specific circumstances. The LBTH Grants Policy Framework 2018-22, currently in draft format and due to be submitted for Cabinet approval the end of March 2018, sets out the circumstances where the Council will consider support for VCS activity which will underpin the development of a new VCS grants programme. The principle objective for the new grants programme is:

“...to harness the distinctive characteristics of grants to promote sustainable and resilient communities and help enable the VCS continue to make its unique contribution towards achieving the outcomes for the community set out in the Tower Hamlets Community Plan.”

- 2.31 The framework outlines the grant themes which will structure the programme. The initial grant themes are:

- Innovation: to encourage innovation or pilot something new, especially where there is a gap.
 - Prevention: to promote grass roots activity to reduce the need for statutory services;
 - Neighbourhood action: to promote local neighbourhood initiatives
 - Community cohesion: to develop community resilience, promote cultural opportunities and reduce social isolation
 - Capacity building: to enable smaller organisations to become more sustainable, where appropriate providing core funding to lever in other resources.
 - Partnership working: making the sector more effective through closer partnership working within the sector and across sectors.
- 2.32 There will also be two cross cutting themes which all projects funded through the programme will be assessed against. These are:
- Community cohesion: developing community resilience, promoting cultural opportunities and reducing social isolation in the context of the theme; and
 - Equality and diversity: demonstrating how people with protected equalities characteristics will be included.
- 2.33 The proposals for Community Commissioning were reviewed in light of the draft Grants Policy Framework as part of the co-production process, as well as review of existing commissioning priorities, to inform the ongoing development of Community Commissioning. The Community Commissioning proposals and subsequent outcomes framework will stand alone from the Grants Policy Framework.

Existing commissioning

- 2.34 There are a number of service specific outcome frameworks to inform service delivery within LBTH. Two examples are the: youth services outcome framework, and the community cohesion outcome framework. Greater awareness/understanding of other frameworks informing service design and delivery is required within LBTH. However, comparisons can be made with the outcome frameworks that are available.
- 2.35 For example, the vision for the Youth Outcomes framework is:
- By 2020, all young people in Tower Hamlets will be inspired to take ownership of their lives and their futures, and to effect positive change in their communities.*
- 2.36 This is underpinned by a series of outcomes:
- Young people will have an increased sense of agency in their lives and their communities

- Young people feel more optimistic about their futures
 - Young people are better able to access holistic and supportive opportunities across the borough of Tower Hamlets
 - Young people increase their critical thinking skills
- 2.37 The vision for Community cohesion outcome framework has four overarching outcome areas. These are:
- Community vision and a sense of belonging
 - Diversity of people's backgrounds and different circumstances are appreciated
 - Strong and positive relationships are developed between different people
 - Those from different backgrounds have similar opportunities

Emerging priorities overlap

- 2.38 The overlap of priorities between the Grants Framework and other existing frameworks within the Council was highlighted to attendees of the 'You said, we did' workshops (see Figure 2.1 below – note this was prior to consolidation of priorities). The overlaps related to prevention in grants and Community Commissioning, and Community Cohesion in grants, and promoting social cohesion and resilience.
- 2.39 On the whole, attendees viewed the overlap of priorities as a benefit rather than concern, as it enabled the VCS to have flexibility in the delivery of services. In particular, grants may be more suitable for smaller organisations and act as a 'stepping stone' to Community Commissioning, i.e. once they had tested approaches, developed capacity, and built evidence of need.

Figure 2.1: Comparing grants, Community Commissioning, and traditional commissioning

| Grants | Community Commissioning | Traditional Commissioning |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| Innovation | Reducing poverty | Service specific outcome Frameworks e.g.: youth service, and community cohesion |
| Prevention | Prevention | |
| Neighbourhood action | Identity and empowerment | |
| Community cohesion | Promoting social cohesion | |

| | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|--|
| | and resilience | |
| Capacity building | Co-production | |
| Partnership working | | |

2.40 Based on the emerging priorities, there a link between Community Cohesion and the Youth Outcomes framework, particularly around empowerment. This is particularly apparent in the following outcomes from the Youth Outcomes framework:

- Young people will have an increased sense of agency in their lives and their communities
- Young people are better able to access holistic and supportive opportunities across the borough of Tower Hamlets

2.41 Again, the overlap with empowerment is strong in the Community Cohesion Outcome framework, particularly in the following outcome: those from different backgrounds have similar opportunities. As well as a clear link with social cohesion. Although reducing poverty can be linked to the Youth Outcomes framework and Community Cohesion, the overlap is less pronounced.

3. Next steps

- 3.1 The next step for Community Commissioning is to establish a clear ToC for the new programme. This will set out how and why the programme will achieve its intended change. Specifically, the ToC will answer the following research questions:
- What is the context within which the Community Commissioning programme will be commissioned?
 - What is the Community Commissioning programme trying to achieve (What is its aim?)
 - What are the required activities to deliver the Community Commissioning programme's intended change?
 - How do these activities link to short, medium and longer-term outcomes for the Community Commissioning programme?
 - What are the key barriers and enablers to be addressed by the Community Commissioning programme?
- 3.2 In order to have a clear understanding of the context, it is crucial that findings of the MSG evaluations are disseminated to the VCS, so that learning can be built into the coproduction of Community Commissioning. In addition, there have been numerous requests from Community organisations at the workshops that the Council share data on need within the borough, as well as the data that they have collated from the delivery of MSG to support evidence of need.
- 3.3 Further exploratory work is required to link the emerging outcomes (Appendix I) to programme themes and the LBTH Strategic Plan and Community Plan. It is likely that these will include a focus on health and wellbeing and creation of a good place to live. The links between these priorities and how they could support the overall achievement of the Community Commissioning aim will be reviewed.
- 3.4 Delivery of these outcomes will be viewed within the current context of LBTH commissioning and VCS good practice, in order to understand what the short-, mid-, and long-term outcomes will need to be achieved to enable the aim to be reached co-produced with the community and voluntary sector. Examples of activities that could support achievement of these outcomes to be achieved will then be considered in order to guide VCS organisations interested in bidding to the programme, without being overly prescriptive. Potential enablers and barriers of outcome achievement will also be identified to pre-empt any challenges and inform assessment of risks so that mitigations can be put in place.

- 3.5 These activities will result in a full ToC for the Community Commissioning programme which will underpin the development of an Evaluation Framework. The activities informing the ToC will be undertaken between late February and early March.

Appendix I: Emerging outcomes

The table below is the collation of the emerging outcome areas from Workshop 1 to 3. The text is a direct representation of what was captured on post-it notes and posters (these have not been edited). Some of the headings were identified by workshop attendees and were used to group post-it notes together, whilst others were identified by the facilitation team.

| Community resilience and cohesion |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community cohesion (cross-cutting theme), new developments and new people living in the area; connecting people with wider community • Increase community cohesion: through 'connectedness' • Activity to mitigate the negative impact of gentrification; reduce silos (e.g. Idea Stores, Children's Centres) • Increased levels of empathy; linked to connectedness, emotional intelligence, community cohesion • Encouraging volunteering (central body to encourage and support volunteering – may already be being delivered) • Increasing community resilience • Creating accessible services • Treating people as assets and being active participants in the community (supporting delivery of services) • Community services being universal • Reducing perceived geographic boundaries (e.g. gang territories) • Connectedness, re: social isolation, e.g. older people and new parents • Resilience • Bring together people with shared experience – e.g. parents, carers • Cases being able to build resilience – network of support, young, elderly, carers • Communities are more integrated and embrace diversity • People understand their communities better • Increased individual and community resilience • Social justice • Understanding and accepting others in their community – through learning • Increased conversations between different groups – bring people together • Value each other – beyond too fixed labels • Integration (people mixing) – accepted – feels part of the community – increased opportunity • More people understand that making connections is good for them – learning about themselves and others – <u>curiosity</u> – “we have a greater curiosity about the world” • Youth involved in community groups and volunteering • People are able to prosper in TH – not needing to leave the borough • Increased cohesion/integration |
| Inclusion |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing isolation particularly for BME communities |

- Increasing opportunities for socialisation
- People feel Tower Hamlets is more inclusive
- Social interactions increased
- Increased contributions to communities
- Increase in 55-75 years old accessing activities
- Social isolation and identity
- Identity – everyone in TH ‘knows their place in the world’
- Working with the whole community
- People can participate at the level they want

Health and Wellbeing

- Increased connectedness and reduced social isolation: young mothers, disabled people, older people, young professionals, people with English as a second language (connectedness links to groups interacting with each other.)
- Improving joint working (e.g. physical activity being prescribed)
- Improved physical health and wellbeing (public health activities, physical activity, diet, healthy lifestyles)
- Arts and contribution to physical and mental health
- Health – keeping people out of care
- Increasing active travel (e.g. walking, cycling), links with physical health, feeling safe (connectedness)
- Preventative health (difficult to measure outputs)
- Improving emotional wellbeing
- Physical and emotional wellbeing
- Healthier population (JSNA as possible measure)
- Wellbeing activities, e.g. reduced isolation

Accessibility

- Improved access to youth services and facilities
- Services unable to communicate with disadvantaged groups especially EAL (English as an Additional Language) communities who become easy to ignore because of a lack of cultural competency in healthcare, education – informal conversations among disadvantaged groups don’t get through to service providers.
- Increased uptake of existing services (especially under-represented groups)
- Information systems need to be joined up – ‘No front door’ – system issue
- Accessibility to help with support
- Free up local facilities for local use
- Review PFI contract with school facilities – most schools unusable after school hours
- Review who is using the council’s leisure centres – to understand who are not accessing these services

IT and Digital connectivity

- Increase use of digital technology for vulnerable people (links with employment, skills, connectedness, social isolation, prevention and health)
- Enabling digital
- Improved access to IT

- Focus on people digitally disadvantaged
- Digital engagement
- Improved access to services and information on services (online) – reducing need to travel
- Creation of accessible digital services

Employment and skills

- Reduce inequality (literacy in boys, services targeted at White British children and young people who have poorest outcomes, raising aspirations in the face of a massive rich-poor divide)
- Transfer to employment
- Raising aspirations in the borough
- Employment and skills (all sections of the community)
- Employer engagement (job brokerage)
- Support progression
- Inspiration – linked to skills
- Build aspirations
- Employment and skills training programme, more apprenticeship/vocational training
- Improving access and quality of life skills and opportunities
- Employment gained, wages improved
- Local people get skills and qualifications
- School attendance improved – positive PRU exits increase

Tackling poverty

- Support people to access the right entitlement
- Welfare reform
- Income maximisation and poverty
- Poverty
- Lack of household income
- Support in accessing welfare – maximising income
- Reducing poverty
- Children and older people excluded by poverty
- Access to benefits – impact of change to universal credit
- Access to effective welfare advice
- Access to case-work support for appeals
- Reducing poverty
- Income inequality
- Tackling poverty and social welfare
- Social justice
- Poverty
- Families can live sustainably financially
- Reduced reliance on benefits
- Offering more resources to reduce poverty – e.g. better recycled clothes
- Everyone has enough money to live well
- Reduced poverty

Reduction in waste

- Reduce food waste (will improve health and reduce poverty)

- Increase re-use/ up-cycle (have a framework for re-use – links with poverty, behaviour challenge, increase skills and employment)

Community safety, crime and anti-social behaviour

- Increase the extent to which people feel safe
- Focus on young me aged 18-25 for support, crime, substance misuse
- Keeping people safe in their own homes and communities (making adjustments in the home)
- People safe to be who they are anywhere in Tower Hamlets
- People feel secure in being able to stay in housing and having a steady income
- Quick access to temporary accommodation for those fleeing domestic abuse
- Reduction in violent crime
- Reduction in fear
- People safe from violence and prosecution
- Reduction in repeat victimisation
- Gang exit
- Reduced offending and reoffending
- Young people more informed re knife crime etc
- Reduction in knife carrying

Prevention agenda

- Focus on early intervention
- Early intervention
- Increase in self-management
- Have prevention measures as outcomes
- Smarter demand management (e.g. smarter tools, e-delivery, engaging people to help themselves)

Vibrant and successful place

- Focus: evidence or opportunity to collect evidence of need (pockets of need that are perhaps not evidenced currently)
- Delivery informed by evidence and need and impact (as well as what works)
- Reduction in grant reliance
- Increase the percentage of social housing and size of housing available

Social value

- Understanding and embedding ideal social value
- Increase in volunteering

Encouraging innovation

- Adding value linked to Council's main priorities (in community plan and strategic plan)
- Community organisation becoming more sustainable and self-sufficient (i.e. adopt a bottom-up approach)

Co-production

- Codelivery with citizens
- Facilitate consortia bidding (Need for adequate time and skills)
- Leverage additional resource to support long-term sustainability of community organisations

- Political challenge (co-production and democratic processes) – take members with you
- Facilitating community leadership (community organised events) – user led
- Joined up services
- Network and effective referral mechanism – follow-up support
- Not doing it to them.... What are we working towards?
- Not telling them what to do... - links with Arts programme – develop confidence etc

Empowerment

- Self-reliance, Empowerment, Independence – life skills, manage money, independent travel (link to youth framework)
- To be better able to access services (community safety, being able to navigate the system)
- Fear to go outside or talk to people
- Self- confidence – better outcomes in education and attainment – health and wellbeing
- Women feel empowered
- Transforming how people see themselves
- People feel that they can make change
- People feel they have the agency to change their lives
- The experiences of people are recorded and passed on at a policy level
- People feel they can shape services and activity in their community
- Platforms are created for people to have a voice at the council and government level.
- Life management
- Communities support each other
- Increased confidence
- Incidents of confidence, self-advocacy and peer support
- Increased community voice in commissioning
- Better/increased representation of marginalised groups in shaping services
- *“Able to be themselves in the world”* and understand their own value”
- Empowered and confidence and self-worth
- Community delivering change in the borough
- Citizens understand their rights and responsibilities and act on them
- Deliver coach education programme for local residents
- More opportunities for young people age – all ages, all locations
- Engaging people to realise their potential

Increasing capacity

- Health and welling of workforce
- Increased capacity
- Training workshop to improve capacity
- Capacity building and upskilling
- Improving health and wellbeing of workforce
- Add value funding to existing projects as funding is limited
- Maintaining core activity

Housing

- Decent homes for everyone

Appendix II: “You said, we did” Workshop write-up

The tables below capture the output from the workshop session. The text in the tables is a direct representation of what was captured on post-it notes and posters (these have not been edited).

Discussion 1

Attendees were asked:

1. Should Community Commissioning outcomes be targeted at specific groups?

Or

2. Should Community Commissioning be universal? (e.g. not prescribe different outcomes for different groups)

- Both – e.g. early help universal, traditionally targeted
- Targeted – smaller pots
- Some areas need to be targeted
- Overarching theme (outcome fleshed out) e.g. fear from violence or identity
- Form partnerships

- Contracts could be about bringing different groups together
- Targeting to address barriers, e.g. BME women employment or women and physical activity
- Some targeted and some universal – open to contractors to specify
- Say would like to see application for specific groups e.g. older people to reduce loneliness and isolation
- Need to make universal to promote cohesion otherwise creates resentment
- Need focus on youths e.g. for ASB

- Can do both – it’s about getting the balance right
- Services open to everybody
- Universal outcomes but groups could target
- However, if outcomes are too generic certain disadvantaged groups may get ignored.
- Child poverty is particularly high in Tower Hamlets.
- Some groups are more disadvantaged than others
- Cross-cutting theme could be improving health and wellbeing.
- Also need to consider changing needs, as new communities move in.
- Disability does not seem to be on the radar
- Creativity could be a criteria
- Joint working could help support expanding reach
- Important not to duplicate what is already being delivered – this could be reduced through a partnership approach.
- Inequality will show in the data – council need to share data on need
- MSG evaluation findings – want this to be fed back in order to inform this process

Discussion 2

Attendees were asked:

1. *Do you agree with the scope of the emerging priority areas?*
2. *Are there any priority areas missing?*
3. *Do the changes that your organisation is trying to make in Tower Hamlets fit within the emerging priority areas?*

Co-production

- Co-production difficult for VCS (Particularly for smaller organisations – would need council as an enabler)
- Process not outcome – part of everything else – needs to be empowering
- Approach not a priority area
- Council's expectations need to be clear, allow creativity
- Co-design should be mentioned under co-production – not always co-production, co-design can be sufficient in some cases
- Increasing capacity for delivery organisations across all themes
- Why co-production as a theme? Should be a priority of how all these projects work
- Empowerment – have a voice in the delivery
- It's a process not an outcome
- More about understanding need (co-production is another way of doing this)
- Vague concept – council using it as a fig leaf as resources are reducing
- Shouldn't be penalised if organisations can't coproduce (needs to be on a project by project basis)
- Needs to be funded adequately
- Service design should be informed by those receiving the support (this should be a given)
- Not appropriate for all services (e.g. IAG)
- Legal advice – challenge to think about coproduction

Reducing poverty

- Arts and welfare organisations can fit with this – others maybe less so e.g. cycling projects
- Training and education + building financial capability
- Entitlement is an important word + relates to welfare advice + being supported through bureaucracy – structural support
- Also need to emphasise the things we can do locally – realistic
- Poverty definition should be direct – i.e. enough money to have food, shelter + financial security
- Should be explicit that this what it is about
- No.1 priority
- More about addressing skills gaps – addressing the skill deprivation as an outcome to measure
- Tackling in-work poverty (people in employment but still having to use foodbanks)
- Housing – lack of access and issues with the private rental sector
- Social outcomes should be expressed positively – e.g. everyone in Tower Hamlets has a positive standard of living
- Getting people into work – improving opportunities into employment (should be framed under

reducing poverty)

- Improving financial situation – reducing poverty needs to be stronger in the definition
- Impact policy – these are London-wide issues
- Reducing poverty – yes theme to be tackled
- Tower Hamlets – Child poverty highest rate in the UK
- Employment and skills are key – most go under poverty

Promoting social cohesion and resilience

- Cannot give data to providers who can bring ideas
- Sense of identity, empowerment, and cohesion too connected
- Inclusion and cohesion – very closely related
- Changing hearts and minds – e.g. local people integrate with homeless people through gardening – may change peoples' actions at a higher level – that may move to political engagement
- Cohesion for what – not just bringing people together but being inclusive - addressing social issues.
- Inclusion could be a separate theme but very close to community cohesion
- Promoting conversations and co-operation between neighbours
- Some people are more marginalised than others – e.g. homeless
- Resilience is a loaded word – perhaps we need to re-think the word
- Cohesion is about groups and communities – empowerment and identity is about individuals
- Combining themes – the theme should be “empowerment and community cohesion”
- The word promoting should be taken out, since we want to do it, not promote it.
- Discussed how this links to partnership bids – these are good, but shouldn't be imposed
- Bring people together in common cause, e.g. fighting crime
- Social cohesion – yes should be a theme
- Our organisation fits – yes!
- Building a shared identity/interest between different people
- Tackling the wealth divide – responsibility communities have to each other - bring them together
- Barriers overcoming (cultural)
- People sharing with the community e.g. famous local alumni
- People recognised and understood
- Engagement infrastructure in borough that is accessible to all
- Bringing people together and enabling people to share different experiences
- Feels like an approach more than an outcome
- How to measure? Difficult to measure feelings
- Breaking down loneliness and isolation
- Loneliness is a big theme currently
- Accessible delivery
- Important to bring local people together
- Also comes under health and wellbeing – approach to achieving this.
- Hard to measure (quite nebulous)
- Links to empowerment (expressions of active citizenship) – sit together – also links with co-production.

Prevention

- It's about addressing the need at the earliest stage – question could be “how can you show that your approach addresses need at the earliest stage?”
- “Most significant change” approach – user feedback
- Logic modelling – inputs, outcomes, outputs, indicators – a capacity building need
- Re: evidence – it could be national/local evidence of need available publicly, but also evidence held by organisations
- Prevention is linked to the empowerment and identity theme
- Environmental focus is important in prevention (parks, public areas) it should stay here
- Health approaches and sport fit
- Prevention provides value for money
- Yes it should be a priority
- Prevention works with criminal justice – works with families and kids for example
- More of an approach
- There should be something with the priority about early intervention
- How organisations evidence prevention key – at ITT and monitoring level
- More specific about what we are trying to prevent, e.g. health support for families etc
- MH resilience, young people and resilience
- Financial prevention
- Support for parents to prevent
- Health – self-management (?) + wellbeing including mental health
- Early years
- Prevention – more definition of whether stand alone theme or crosscutting
- Prevention – how to have as a theme as all themes concern it in someway
- Prevention – not a theme, is a principle for almost all projects
- Or early intervention?
- Within arts organisations this definitely fits with what we do
- Prevention + early intervention
- Mental health

Empowerment and identity

- Group feel positive about this theme
- Poverty – lack confidence to participate in society – create places where people can come together
- Influencing service improvement
- Understanding rights and asserting rights (cuts across a lot of service areas)
- Includes a lot of groups – but still allows room for targeted provision
- Does this overlap with social cohesion and resilience?
- Celebrating Tower Hamlets
- Entrepreneurship and empowering people to innovate, take notice, and be more creative
- We don't like people 'knowing their place'
- Aspiration of young people in the borough
- Agree, look at change within community and change in identity
- New builds, people losing sense of identity
- Access to services should be a cross cutting theme
- Possible separate theme of 'empowerment and inclusion'?
- Empowerment – cross-cutting not a standalone theme?

- Empowering families as well as individuals
- Identity is also a difficult word – take it out. Identity can be about certain groups

Missing themes

- Consensus result: combined priority “*empowerment and community cohesion*” (merge 2 priorities – cross cutting theme).
- Consolidation of the five themes, into three:
 - Decent standard of living
 - Healthy individuals and communities (social cohesion and resilience fits here)
 - Active and empowered citizens

(All organisations present in the group felt they could deliver their outcomes/the change they are trying to deliver through these outcomes).

Prevention can go across all areas

Co-production, cohesion and resilience and prevention are more approaches which should cut across outcomes.

A fourth theme was added by another groups: A good place to live.

Improving health and wellbeing was seen to be key – health inequality is a key issue that needs to be addressed.
- Access to services comes up many times – should it be its own theme?
- Happiness and good environment
- Sustainability – it’s a discussion point
- Improved health and well-being
- More partnership between corporate and voluntary sectors in coproduction (approach)

Discussion 3

Attendees were asked:

1. *What is the VCS best placed to deliver through Community Commissioning?
(consider overlap)*
2. *Is it okay for priorities to overlap between grants, Community Commissioning, and traditional commissioning?*

- Grants – short term and less governance of organisation
 - More stringent monitoring and accountability than grants in community commissioning – community commissioning needs to minimise process of traditional commissioning – PQQ
 - Grants – smaller organisations – grants progress into follow-up community commissioning – community commissioning enables continuation and roll-out
 - Grants to test model and new ideas
 - Grants should not be for what people have always done – core funding of organisations – core funding i.e. overheads and staffing – community commissioning but also sustainability so not dependent
 - Community commissioning needs to link to other commissioning (+ to grants)
 - Innovation should be more accountable and transparent
 - Traditional commissioning – big services
 - Grants to be less onerous + more flexible
-
- Projects that are for “hard to reach groups”
 - What does co-production mean in community commissioning?
 - Overlap is good
 - Local organisations have track record and experience – Advantage
-
- More about appropriate approaches
 - Local area knowledge is key, as well as expertise and relationships
 - Community Commissioning allows more freedom to be innovative (more of partnership with council) – co-production with council and commissioned organisations – release constraints on the commissioned organisations
 - Priorities should overlap – allows greater flexibility
 - Traditional commissioning is prescriptive, whereas Community Commissioning should have broader outcomes to allow for creativity and innovation
 - Not clear on differences between grants, community commissioning and traditional commissioning and how they will work alongside each other. This needs to be better communicated by the Council.
-
- Nothing wrong with overlap in broad areas
 - Grants can be more experimental, e.g. deliver events

-
- Community Commissioning delivering services
 - Commission things that have tangible outputs
 - Need for capacity building
 - Call it what it is – commissioning
-
- Shared learning as we go along – what is working and what isn't
 - Innovation should be in the community commissioning column
 - Contract review and variations are possible – there should be some devolution of decision making on this in council and some flexibility
 - Coproduction is important – should stay with the programme... being iterative with outputs – achieving outcomes in different ways through the 4 years of the programme
 - The added value for the programme is the coproduction with the VCS. This allows you to determine realistic approaches
 - Its fine for priorities to overlap, but there needs to be differentiation if they do...in terms of approach



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