

<b>Cabinet</b>  31 October 2018	 <b>TOWER HAMLETS</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Zena Cooke, Corporate Director of Resources	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted
<b>Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Programme</b>	

<b>Lead Member</b>	<b>John Biggs, The Mayor Councillor Candida Ronald, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector</b>
<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	<b>David Freeman</b> Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy Manager
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No
<b>Forward Plan Notice Published</b>	28 September 2018
<b>Reason for Key Decision</b>	n/a
<b>Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome</b>	<b>All</b>

### **Executive Summary**

This report sets out the new corporate grants programme which will complement the Community Commissioning Programme (elsewhere on the agenda) to replace the Council's current grants programmes including the current Mainstream Grants programme.

The policy framework for the grants programme was agreed by the Mayor in Cabinet in March 2018. This report presents the programme in detail, which had been co-produced with voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations.

### **Recommendations:**

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Agree the VCS Grants Programme as set out in the report and the draft prospectus at Appendix A
2. Agree the proposal set out in paras 3.14 to 3.21 to retain the administration of the Capacity Building theme in house and seek a third party provider to administer the remaining themes as a small grants programme
3. Note the specific equalities considerations as set out in Paragraph 4

## **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 The VCS Strategy acknowledges there remains a role for grants and makes a commitment to continue to provide grants in limited and very specific circumstances. This report brings forward proposals for a VCS Grants Programme which would help achieve this commitment.

## **2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 2.1 The Council could decide not to go ahead with the proposed grants programme and cease giving grants. However, this would go against the commitments made in the VCS Strategy and also by the Mayor in agreeing the Grants Policy Framework in March 2018. Without a grants programme the Council would rely solely on commissioned contracts as a means of supporting voluntary and community organisations in the borough, potentially limiting the funding opportunities that would be attractive to many smaller and less well established organisations and community groups.
- 2.2 The Council could just retain the existing small grants funds but, as they are focussed on specific service areas, many smaller voluntary and community sector organisations would continue to be excluded from Council support.

## **3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT**

### **Background**

- 3.1 In March 2018, the Mayor in Cabinet agreed a new voluntary and community sector (VCS) grants policy framework to form the basis of a new grants programme to sit alongside the new Community Commissioning programme as part of the VCS funding arrangements. These arrangements will succeed the current Mainstream Grants Programme, scheduled to come to an end on 30 September 2019, and other, smaller, grants programmes including the Events Fund and Ageing Well Fund.
- 3.2 The future direction of travel for the Council's support for the VCS was set out in the VCS Strategy agreed in 2016. The VCS Strategy determined that future VCS funding would be predominantly through commissioned contracts but that there was a place for grants in limited circumstances where grants could be shown to be a more appropriate funding mechanism. The VCS Grants Policy Framework agreed in March set out the key characteristics of grants to assist in determining whether an activity would be better suited to funding through a grant rather than commissioning.

3.3 The VCS Policy Framework also defined six initial themes where activities would be suited to funding through grants. It also set out principles for eligibility criteria, funding levels and other elements of the future grants programme. The agreed VCS Policy Framework is attached at Appendix 1

### **Proposals**

3.4 A new voluntary and community sector grants programme is proposed with six individual funding themes reflecting different areas of VCS activity which meet the Council's criteria for funding through grants rather than commissioned contracts as set out in the attached policy framework document.

3.5 This programme has been developed through a process of co-production with VCS organisations as described below in paragraph 3.12.

3.6 The grants programme will support VCS activities which can demonstrate they meet clear priorities and outcomes set out for each funding theme that link to the priorities and outcomes of the Tower Hamlets Plan and the Council's Strategic Plan. The priorities and outcomes for each theme have been developed to ensure funding is targeted towards activities that VCS organisations are best placed to deliver in the community.

3.7 The detail of the programme is set out in the draft prospectus set out at appendix A. This prospectus sets out:

- The purpose of the programme and what the Council is seeking to achieve through it;
- The cross cutting themes relating to community cohesion and equality which will apply to the whole programme;
- Common criteria which apply to all funding themes, and
- Detailed schemes for each of the six funding themes

3.8 The new programme will be launched early in the New Year and publicised through the various established VCS networks as well as through the Council's normal communications channels. In addition there will be specific campaigns to target smaller community groups and organisations that may not have previously sought funding from the Council or which may be outside the more established funding networks. This might include TRAs and informal resident's' groups, groups supported by other housing providers and local community centres, and groups linked to sports and arts networks which are looking to develop wider community activities.

3.9 Training and support will be offered to prospective applicants. Training on the application process may be offered in house but support in developing the

content of applications will be provided by external organisations such as Tower Hamlets Council for Voluntary Service.

3.10 As noted in the report to Cabinet on 20 March 2018 setting out the proposed policy framework for the new grants programme, capacity building and infrastructure support, currently funded through MSG, should remain an activity which is supported through grants rather than through Community Commissioning. Capacity building is therefore a discreet theme in the grants programme as set out in the attached prospectus at appendix A. It is suggested that this theme is launched in advance of the main programme. The reasons for this are:

- To ensure there are support services in place before the end of MSG to support organisations which have not sought or been successful in gaining funding through the new Community Commissioning Programme as they seek to make any necessary adjustments, and
- To allow local infrastructure organisations to submit their own future funding bids at an early stage so that they can then focus resources on supporting other organisations through the Community Commissioning process.

3.11 Appropriate processes and procedures are already in place proportionate to the likely levels of funding for infrastructure support and capacity building services. The recommendations of this report therefore propose that applications for this theme are invited from Monday 12<sup>th</sup> November.

### **Consultation**

3.12 The grants programme has been developed through a process of co-production with voluntary and community organisations through:

- Six workshop sessions;
- Two on line surveys;
- Two one to one surgery sessions;
- Discussions at three VCS network groups, and
- Individual conversations with VCS organisations.

3.13 The co-production process has been conducted in co-operation with THCVS. Details of the events and feedback from the process can be found on the THCVS website at <https://www.thcvs.org.uk/help-create-councils-new-grants-policy>.

### **Implementation Proposals**

3.14 As detailed above, it is proposed that the Capacity Building Theme is launched in advance of the rest of the programme with funding commencing from 1 October 2019. This theme sits alongside the Council's strategic VCS policy functions and will therefore be administered centrally within the Council.

3.15 The five other themes all focus on providing small grants to achieve their respective outcomes. While the Council may decide to administer the programme itself there are some benefits both for the Council and for the VCS in considering engaging a third party already engaged in grant giving to administer the Council's programme.

3.16 For VCS organisations the main benefits may include:

- A range of funding programmes available from one point of access enabling organisations to find the most appropriate programme or combination of programmes to meet their needs;
- Common application processes, normally proportionate to the level of funding requested;
- Dedicated support staff available to assist with applications, and
- Access to non-financial resources.

3.17 For the Council the main benefits may include:

- Greater value for money through the added value provided by complementary funding programmes;
- Wider reach to smaller community organisations that do not normally engage with the Council;
- Lower administrative costs through economies of scale

3.18 There are successful models such as the longstanding partnership between Lambeth Council and the London Community Foundation. Other local authorities such as Redbridge have also successfully engaged with community foundations to administer their grants programmes.

3.19 It is therefore proposed that the Council seeks a third party provider to administer the small grants element of the new programme, initially £200,000 per annum, retaining only the Capacity Building theme which will be larger grants tied in closely to the Council's strategic objectives in supporting the wider VCS.

### **Governance and Reporting Requirements**

3.20 In order to provide good governance, openness and transparency the Council would require of a potential third party provider;

- a. A recognised quality assurance standard;
- b. Open, fair, transparent and accessible procedures;
- c. Proportionate monitoring and evaluation of grants made
- d. Funding conditions which include minimum standards and include safeguarding, data protection and other statutory requirements;
- e. Council representation on the grant decision making committee or equivalent;
- f. Regular reporting of decisions made with reasons, and

g. An annual report and evaluation of the programme

- 3.21 It is proposed that the third party provider is engaged for an initial period of two years. The Council may then review the outcome of the arrangements and decide whether the administration of funding should remain through a third party or returned to in house management.
- 3.22 The new grants programme will replace exiting grants programmes from 1 October 2019. MSG and the existing small grants funds, the Events Fund and Ageing Well grants, will therefore continue to until 30 September 2019. There will be a period of overlap where activities funded through the existing small grants schemes continue after the new programme is live. No new activities will be funded through the Events Fund and Ageing Well grants after 1 October 2019.

### Budget

- 3.23 Existing small grants budgets will be included in the new grants programme. These include the Events Fund and Ageing Well grants. The current Emergency Fund – funds to support existing funded organisations in urgent need of one off support – and Innovation Fund – funds to support crowd funding initiatives – will not be included in the budget. Both of these funds are one off revenue budgets which have stablished processes and procedures and will continue to be administered in house.
- 3.24 The grants programme will also include areas of work currently funded by the MSG budget. These areas of work are third sector development and community cohesion.

Table 1 below sets out the budgets which will make up the new grants programme budget..

Table 1

<b>Budget (18/19)</b>	<b>Directorate</b>	<b>£,000s</b>
Third Sector Development	Resources (MSG)	260
Community Cohesion	Governance	105
Events Fund	Children's	53
Ageing Well Grants	HAC	20
<b>Total</b>		<b>438</b>

- 3.25 This budget may be subject to change as the budget making for 2019/20 proceeds. Where decisions are made in the future to fund activities through grants rather than commissioned contracts or new grant schemes are developed, these will be incorporated into this Grants Programme and the funding included in the programme budget.

- 3.26 £260,000 will be retained to fund the Capacity Building theme as discussed in paragraphs 3.14 and 3.19 above.
- 3.27 £178,000 will be passed to the third party provider to fund the five small grants themes. Allocations have not been made to individual themes within the programme in order to retain flexibility and allow funds to move between themes during the year should the need arise. However, indicative allocations may be agreed to provide a balanced programme.
- 3.28 The cost of the administrative fees charged by the third party provider, estimated at 10-12% of the fund value, will be funded separately.

#### **4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The proposed structure of the grants programme provides opportunities to fund services and activities for people with protected equalities characteristics previously supported by MSG services. At this stage no disproportionate negative impact has been identified. The cross cutting theme of community cohesion should ensure that, as individual applications are assessed, opportunities for a positive impact for people with protected equalities characteristics are maximised.
- 4.2 Until decisions are made on funding specific services it is not possible to predict precisely the impact of the change from MSG funding to Community Commissioning and the new grants programme. However, it is inevitable that in any change there are winners and losers. It is therefore important to have measures in place to mitigate any potential disproportionate negative impact. The measures planned are:
- a) A programme of support for VCS organisations available in advance of the end of MSG to help organisations in the transition from MSG to either alternative funding or an orderly change in the level of service delivered;
  - b) Potential funding through the new grants programme, and
  - c) Potential support from the Council's Emergency Fund.
- 4.3 A continuous process of impact analysis will be carried out as funding decisions are made.

#### **5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

##### **5.1 Best Value**

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

## 5.2 Crime Reduction

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.

## 5.3 Safeguarding

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 VCS Grants Programme, both through governance requirements and in the capacity building programme for the sector proposed.

## **6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

6.1 The grants programme being proposed in this report will be funded through existing budgets that are detailed in section 3.16 and 3.17 above.

6.2 Details on how the programme will be managed and administered will need to be finalised and funding for this will need to be agreed.

## **7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES**

7.1 The Council has the legal powers to implement this scheme and to make individual grants under it.

7.2 However, the decision making ability in respect of any subsequent grant had been vested in the Grants Determination Sub-Committee by virtue of directions of the Secretary of State. However, at the current point these directions have just been agreed to be removed. Therefore, the decision to give any grant to a particular organisation may be subject to some sort of further approval the format of which is to be determined.

7.3 The overall scheme and the revised VCS policy is a matter for and falls under the decision making power of the Executive generally and therefore, is properly a matter to be decided by the Mayor in Cabinet

7.4 The Council is legally obliged to ensure that any grants it makes represent Best Value with reference to economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

7.5 The Council is also legally obliged to treat all applicants in an open, fair and transparent way.



- 7.6 The scheme as set down indicates that there will be an application procedure in respect of each of the 6 themes with clearly determined evaluation criteria which will be applied to all applicants in the same way. Therefore, the scheme complies with these duties.
- 7.7 The scheme will be subject to the same levels of equality analysis as are present with the existing MSG which will satisfy the Council's legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010
- 

## **Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents**

### **Linked Report**

- Cabinet 20 March 2018 'Corporate Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Policy'

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 - VCS Grants Programme 2019-23
- Appendix 2 - Voluntary and Community Sector organisations as defined by the VCS Strategy 2016-19

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

- None.

### **Officer contact details for documents:**

N/A

# London Borough of Tower Hamlets

## VCS Grants Programme 2019-23



# **Contents**

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Page 1</b>
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Page 1</b>
<b>Characteristics of Grants</b>	<b>Page 1</b>
<b>Grant Themes</b>	<b>Page 2</b>
<b>Principles – Eligibility</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>Principles – Funding</b>	<b>Page 4</b>
<b>Decision Making and Accountability</b>	<b>Page 4</b>
<b>Appendix A – Funding Themes</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>Appendix B – Voluntary Organisation Structures</b>	<b>Page 18</b>

## **Introduction**

The VCS Strategy agreed by the Council in 2016 sets out the unique strengths of the VCS and the need for the Council to continue to support, empower and build the future capacity of the VCS for the sector to be able to continue respond to complex issues spanning a range of areas including welfare, unemployment and housing.

While the future direction for supporting VCS activities will be through co-produced, commissioned services funded through contracts, the Strategy states there continues to be a role for supporting the VCS through grants in limited and specific circumstances. The purpose of this policy framework document is to set out the circumstances where the Council will consider support for VCS activity through grants and underpins the development of a new corporate VCS grants programme.

This policy framework has been co-produced with the VCS and represents a shared vision of the future of grants from the Council. This document states what the Council and the VCS are seeking to achieve through the corporate grants programme, the initial grant themes, principles of eligibility and funding, decision making and accountability. The more detailed scheme and outcomes for each grant theme will be developed through a further co-production process with the VCS.

## **Objectives**

The Council's principal objective in developing a new corporate 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 Plan.

The Council will assess to what extent it is achieving the objective of the corporate grants programme through an annual appraisal, drawing on the monitoring and evaluation of individual projects, which will be made public, and a full review and refresh in four years' time.

## **Characteristics of Grants**

Grants are essentially responsive, dependent on the community generating and bringing forward ideas and proposals for activities to achieve positive outcomes rather than responding to a more prescriptive tendering process. It is the responsive nature of grants which sets it apart as the most appropriate mechanism for funding some types of activity. The Council is committed to a process of co-production for services delivered by the VCS whether funded through grants or contracts. The increasing involvement of the sector and service users in the design and delivery of services to some extent blurs what was the clear distinction between grants and contracts. However, the Council accepts an important distinction remains.

Supporting VCS activity through grants has a number of other characteristics which distinguish it from contractual funding mechanisms. These can be summarised as:

- **Empowerment** provides the financial means for communities to do things for themselves
- **Innovation** responsive to new and emerging needs
- **Flexibility** can adjust to meet changing needs
- **Reach** can be accessible to groups which would not otherwise be able to get funding through contractual arrangements
- **Risk** shares the risk of new innovation between the provider and the funder
- **Cost effective** can lever in other resources to support community activity

In deciding whether a grant or a contract is the most appropriate method of supporting an area of VCS activity, the Council must decide how important the distinct characteristics of grants are to the successful achievement of the desired outcomes.

## Grant themes

The grants programme will be delivered through a number of different grant themes. The VCS Strategy and the co-production work which has developed this policy framework have determined an initial set of grant themes set out below where the distinct characteristics of grants are important to achieving the desired outcomes. However, the purpose of this programme is to facilitate all grant making from the Council to the VCS. Where new grant themes are set up, including those where the Council is acting as an agent for external funds from, for instance, national government, it is intended that they will be administered through the corporate grants 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, and

- **Partnership working** making the sector more effective through closer partnership working within the sector and across sectors.

In addition, there will be two cross cutting themes which all projects funded through the corporate grants 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

## Principles - Eligibility

The programme has common eligibility criteria for all grant themes. Some grant themes may need to include additional criteria

**Not for Profit** The grants programme will only support activities run by groups which can demonstrate they are set up as not for profit groups. The types of organisation which the Council considers to be not for profit is set out in the VCS Strategy and included in this policy framework at appendix B. Individuals will not be eligible.

**Locally based** The grants programme is intended to support the local VCS and community activity. The eligibility criteria for all grant themes reflect this principle. Organisations based outside the borough are not excluded from eligibility but they must show very clear connections to Tower Hamlets either through existing activity or local leadership of the proposed project. Applications will be encouraged from organisations based across the borough.

**Good governance** Organisations will be expected to achieve an acceptable level of governance with appropriate policies for the activities they propose to undertake. The acceptable level will be proportionate to the size of organisation and type of activity. The Council will accept applications from organisations in the process of developing appropriate policies but funding will not be paid until they are in place.

Proposals from un-constituted groups will be accepted but these should be supported by an organisation with appropriate levels of governance which will act as the 'accountable body' for any funds awarded.

**Size** Some grant themes may give priority to smaller groups but the programme will be open to all not for profit organisations

## Principles – Funding

**Individual limits** The programme will not prescribe a limit to individual grants subject to the budget available. However, it may be appropriate because of the nature of the grant theme or external funder requirements to limit the maximum level of individual grants in some themes. In the initial grant themes the maximum individual award will be £5,000 except capacity building and community cohesion.

**Funding period** The programme may provide grants which are one off project funding or revenue funding for a stated period subject to annual review if more than a year. The normal period for revenue funding would be a maximum of two years. Each grant theme will define an appropriate funding period for the type of activity it is supporting.

**Other resources** One of the principal characteristics of grants is that they unlock other resources either in cash or in kind. All grants themes will therefore require that a quantifiable contribution is made to the proposed activity either in cash or in kind. However, prescribed levels of match funding will not be required.

**Other funding** The grants programme will not exclude organisations which already receive support from the Council or other public bodies. However, where appropriate, some grants themes, such as Innovation, may give priority to groups which are not already funded.

## **Decision Making and Accountability**

The distinctive characteristics of grants include being responsive and flexible. In order to achieve this, the Council will establish robust processes to ensure that decision making is proportionate and appropriate to the levels of funding and type of activity to be funded.

# London Borough of Tower Hamlets

## VCS Grants Programme 2019-23

### Draft Schemes





## LB Tower Hamlets VCS Grants Programme

# Innovation Theme

To encourage innovation or pilot something new, especially where there is a gap.

This theme will focus on start up or seed corn projects that may be scaled up or provide a model which can be replicated. It will also encourage developing new ways of engaging diverse communities.

Projects funded under this scheme do not have to be entirely new or innovative overall. However, they should be a different way of doing things for your organisation trying out new approaches, methods or working with new client groups.

### Rationale for grant funding

Empowerment	responsive to new and emerging needs
Innovation	provides the financial means for communities to do things for themselves
Flexibility	can adjust to meet changing needs
Reach	can be accessible to groups which would not otherwise be able to get funding through contractual arrangements
Risk	shares the risk of new innovation between the provider and the funder
Cost effective	can lever in other resources to support community activity

Meets all six criteria for grants, in particular:

- **Innovation**
- **Flexibility**

### Tower Hamlets Plan and Strategic Plan Priorities

C1	Strong, resilient and safe communities	
C2	Better health and wellbeing	
C3	Good jobs and employment	
C4	A better deal for young people – aspiration, education and skills	
S1	People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities	
S2	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in	
S3	A dynamic outcomes-based Council using digital innovation and partnership working to respond to the changing needs of our borough	

### Theme priorities

1. New ways of working with young people and helping them make their voices heard (C4)
2. Better family support networks and good parenting (C2)
3. Business start-up (C3)
4. Isolation in ageing communities (C2)
5. Peer group support (S3)
6. Young people mentoring (C4)
7. Community involvement events and community champions (C1)

### Theme outcomes

1. **Greater reach.** Extend the reach of the grants programme to community groups and organisations working in priority areas of activity which do not already receive public funds
2. **Reduce gaps** in service in priority areas of activity to meet unmet needs
3. **Sharing practice and expertise.** Increasing joint working and sharing good practice to develop new and innovative solutions

### Examples of projects and activities

- Installing a composting toilet on an allotment site to make this activity more accessible to older and less mobile people
- Guided riding project to encourage greater participation in cycle riding
- Trialling extended opening hours for a youth club so that young dads can stay on or drop in for tailored support sessions

### Eligibility

1. This theme will give priority to organisations with a turnover of less than £30,000 per annum and projects submitted by larger organisations which demonstrate strong involvement of local people such as projects where an established organisation is supporting a new or un-constituted group.
2. Priority will be given to new groups and groups which have not previously been funded by the Council.

### Levels of Funding Available

1. Up to £1,000 – one off
2. Over £1,000 up to £5,000 – up to one year with potential extension for second year

### Monitoring arrangements

1. Up to £1,000 – end of project report
2. Over £1,000 up to £5,000 – Six month progress report and annual/end of project report and visit.

## LB Tower Hamlets VCS Grants Programme

# Prevention Theme

**Promoting grass roots activity to reduce the need for statutory services.**

This theme has a particular focus on activity organised at a local level which addresses issues that affect residents and communities before they become serious problems. Activities supported in this theme should aim to build on the skills, experience and other resources that already exist in local communities to make them more resilient and less likely to need to rely on statutory services to meet their needs.

### Rationale for grant funding

Empowerment	responsive to new and emerging needs
Innovation	provides the financial means for communities to do things for themselves
Flexibility	can adjust to meet changing needs
Reach	can be accessible to groups which would not otherwise be able to get funding through contractual arrangements
Risk	shares the risk of new innovation between the provider and the funder
Cost effective	can lever in other resources to support community activity

Meets all six criteria for grants, in particular:

- **Innovation**
- **Flexibility**
- **Reach**

### Tower Hamlets Plan and Strategic Plan Priorities

C1	Strong, resilient and safe communities	
C2	Better health and wellbeing	
C3	Good jobs and employment	
C4	A better deal for young people – aspiration, education and skills	
S1	People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities	
S2	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in	
S3	A dynamic outcomes-based Council using digital innovation and partnership working to respond to the changing needs of our borough	

### Theme priorities

1. Helping people care for one another's health and wellbeing (C2)
2. Helping older people maintain physical health (C2)
3. Social prescribing (particularly mental health) (C2)
4. Supporting individuals and families affected by welfare reforms (S1)
5. Reducing extremist behaviour (C1)
6. Youth mentoring (C4)
7. More activities or awareness of what is youth (C4)

### **Theme outcomes**

- 1. Reduce the demand for public services**
- 2. Improved health and wellbeing.** Increase the proportion of people who feel their health and welfare needs can be met within the community

### **Examples of projects and activities**

- Peer group support for fathers to improve parenting skills and enhance relationships with children
- Gateway advice service organised by and for a particular community
- Chair aerobics classes for older people

### **Eligibility**

1. This theme will give priority to organisations with a turnover of less than £30,000 per annum and projects submitted by larger organisations which demonstrate strong involvement of local people such as projects where an established organisation is supporting a new or un-constituted group.

### **Levels of Funding Available**

1. Up to £1,000 – one off
2. Over £1,000 up to £5,000 – up to one year with potential extension for second year

### **Monitoring arrangements**

1. Up to £1,000 – end of project report
2. Over £1,000 up to £5,000 – Six month progress report and annual/end of project report and visit.

## LB Tower Hamlets VCS Grants Programme

# Neighbourhood Action Theme

### Promoting local neighbourhood initiatives.

This theme focuses on supporting local people to get together, get organised and get things done in their local neighbourhoods. This may be physical such as some sort of neighbourhood improvement or it may be to promote the interests of the local neighbourhood through a campaign on a specific issue of local concern or group to promote the interests of the local area.

Projects seeking funds in this theme will focus on a geographic locality, will be inclusive and open to anyone in that area and managed by local people. In this theme the Council is particularly keen to hear from local groups which may not be fully constituted yet but either intend to become formal organisations or are working in partnership with an established voluntary organisation.

### Rationale for grant funding

Empowerment	responsive to new and emerging needs
Innovation	provides the financial means for communities to do things for themselves
Flexibility	can adjust to meet changing needs
Reach	can be accessible to groups which would not otherwise be able to get funding through contractual arrangements
Risk	shares the risk of new innovation between the provider and the funder
Cost effective	can lever in other resources to support community activity

Meets all six criteria for grants, in particular:

- **Empowerment**
- **Innovation**
- **Reach**

### Tower Hamlets Plan and Strategic Plan Priorities

C1	Strong, resilient and safe communities	
C2	Better health and wellbeing	
C3	Good jobs and employment	
C4	A better deal for young people – aspiration, education and skills	
S1	People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities	
S2	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in	
S3	A dynamic outcomes-based Council using digital innovation and partnership working to respond to the changing needs of our borough	

### Theme priorities

1. Supporting neighbourhood events (S2)
2. Creating social spaces for a cross section of the community (C1)
3. Local 'Clean ups' and environmental improvements (S2)
4. Alternatives to crime reduction and reducing ASB (C1)
5. Promoting local opportunities for volunteering and community action (C1)

### **Theme outcomes**

1. Increased resident voice and participation Increase the proportion of local residents who feel their views are heard by policy makers
2. More active citizens Increase the proportion of local residents who participate in local community activities
3. Increased neighbourhood resilience
4. Improved safety/sense of security Increase the proportion of local residents who feel their community is a safe and secure place to live

### **Examples of projects and activities**

- Restoration of a local amenity by community
- Food growing and skills sharing project on 'landlocked' unused plot
- Project to increase public participation in the development of a new community facility
- Speed dating in local areas to encourage volunteering
- Community notice boards up to date as well as on line

### **Eligibility**

1. This theme will give priority to organisations with a turnover of less than £30,000 per annum and projects submitted by larger organisations which demonstrate strong involvement of local people such as projects where an established organisation is supporting a new or un-constituted group.
2. Priority will be given to new groups and groups which have not previously been funded by the Council.

### **Levels of Funding Available**

1. Up to £1,000 – one off
2. Over £1,000 up to £5,000 – up to one year with potential extension for second year

### **Monitoring arrangements**

1. Up to £1,000 – end of project report
2. Over £1,000 up to £5,000 – Six month progress report and annual/end of project report and visit.

## LB Tower Hamlets VCS Grants Programme

# Community Cohesion Theme

Developing community resilience, promoting cultural opportunities and reducing social isolation.

This theme provides funding for projects and activities which will help make Tower Hamlets a place where people feel they belong, where diversity and difference is appreciated, where there are strong relationships between people and those from different backgrounds have similar opportunities.

### Rationale for grant funding

Empowerment	responsive to new and emerging needs
Innovation	provides the financial means for communities to do things for themselves
Flexibility	can adjust to meet changing needs
Reach	can be accessible to groups which would not otherwise be able to get funding through contractual arrangements
Risk	shares the risk of new innovation between the provider and the funder
Cost effective	can lever in other resources to support community activity

Meets all six criteria for grants, in particular:

- **Innovation**
- **Reach**

### Tower Hamlets Plan and Strategic Plan Priorities

C1	Strong, resilient and safe communities	
C2	Better health and wellbeing	
C3	Good jobs and employment	
C4	A better deal for young people – aspiration, education and skills	
S1	People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities	
S2	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in	
S3	A dynamic outcomes-based Council using digital innovation and partnership working to respond to the changing needs of our borough	

### Theme priorities

1. Encouraging local pride and belonging (S2)
2. Encouraging volunteering through celebrating the history and culture of the borough (S2)
3. Families and isolated adults sharing experience (C2)
4. Providing opportunities for different communities and groups to come together (C1)
5. Raising awareness and encouraging reporting of hate crime (C1)
6. Intergenerational activity(C1)
7. Events (S2)
8. New ways of engaging with diverse communities (C1)

### Theme outcomes (from Community Cohesion outcomes framework)

1. **Increased participation.** Finding and taking up more opportunities to play a role in the community and volunteering
2. **More social connections.** Diverse people come together overcoming divisions, eg intergenerational, racial, gender and sexual orientation.
3. **Better understanding of each other.** Improved understanding and tolerance of difference, acknowledging shared value
4. **Increased knowledge and skills,** eg equalities, rights, language, communication and leadership.

### Examples of projects and activities

- Food festival
- Intergenerational project supporting young people working with older people to improve their ICT skills
- Photography project to document and celebrate the history and cultural of a community
- Regular monthly 'open door' community events

### Eligibility

There are no special restrictions on eligibility for this theme.

### Levels of Funding Available

1. Up to £1,000 – one off
2. Over £1,000 up to £5,000 – up to one year with potential extension for second year
3. Over £5,000 to £20,000 – up to two years with potential extension for third year

### Monitoring arrangements

1. Up to £1,000 – end of project report
2. Over £1,000 up to £5,000 – Six month progress report and annual/end of project report and visit.
3. Over £5,000 to £20,000 – Six month progress report and project visit



## LB Tower Hamlets VCS Grants Programme

# Partnership Theme

**Making the sector more effective through closer partnership working within the sector and across sectors.**

This theme provides funding for organisations to come together to form networks and partnership arrangements which will,

1. Help give VCS organisations a stronger voice in borough wide discussions with other sectors particularly through the Tower Hamlets Partnership, the local strategic partnership which brings together the public, voluntary and private sectors to achieve the objectives of the Tower Hamlets Plan, and/or
2. Bring organisations together where they share a common purpose or deliver complementary services to share best practice or contribute in other ways to increase the effectiveness and impact of each other's work in the community.

### Rationale for grant funding

Empowerment	responsive to new and emerging needs
Innovation	provides the financial means for communities to do things for themselves
Flexibility	can adjust to meet changing needs
Reach	can be accessible to groups which would not otherwise be able to get funding through contractual arrangements
Risk	shares the risk of new innovation between the provider and the funder
Cost effective	can lever in other resources to support community activity

Meets all six criteria for grants, in particular:

- **Reach**
- **Cost effective**

### Tower Hamlets Plan and Strategic Plan Priorities

C1	Strong, resilient and safe communities	
C2	Better health and wellbeing	
C3	Good jobs and employment	
C4	A better deal for young people – aspiration, education and skills	
S1	People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities	
S2	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in	
S3	A dynamic outcomes-based Council using digital innovation and partnership working to respond to the changing needs of our borough	

### Theme priorities

1. Improving effectiveness through peer group support, mentoring and networking (All)
2. Cross sector working - supporting the local strategic partnership (S1)
3. Partnerships in back office support and procurement (S3)

### **Theme outcomes**

1. Greater meaningful engagement with strategic structures and LSP
2. Reduction of duplication of service
3. Consolidation within the sector to reduce costs and improve sustainability
4. Improved cooperation within the sector and between sectors
5. Successful and sustainable partnerships (and other collaborative arrangements) between a range of organisations

### **Examples of projects and activities**

- Support for a network of community organisations to work with the local strategic partnership
- Creation and adoption of partnership related agreements
- Mediation and facilitation for partnership meetings and/or disputes
- Set up costs for a peer group support network to share best practice and improve effectiveness across a specific service area
- 'Speed dating' to improve co-operation between providers

### **Eligibility**

1. There are no special restrictions on eligibility for this theme.

### **Levels of Funding Available**

1. Up to £1,000 – one off
2. Over £1,000 up to £5,000 – up to one year with potential extension for second year

### **Monitoring**

1. Up to £1,000 – end of project report
2. Over £1,000 up to £5,000 – Six month progress report and annual/end of project report and visit.

## LB Tower Hamlets VCS Grants Programme

# Capacity Building Theme

**To enable smaller organisations to become more sustainable, where appropriate providing core funding to lever in other resources, and to support infrastructure organisations.**

Projects supported through this theme will focus on building the capacity of local voluntary and community sector organisations. Capacity building could mean programmes of support (for example training and other workforce development activity, organisational advice or consultancy) delivered by local infrastructure organisations or support to individual organisations for projects to help them to develop their own capacity.

This theme may also include support for core costs where there is a clear and evidence based case to demonstrate core funding from the Council may generate significant external funding or other support for an organisation's work where, without core funding from the Council, these additional resources would not be available. 'Core costs' in this context could be running costs, such as staff salaries or premises costs, or one off costs, such as ICT or other equipment, or a mixture of the two.

### Rationale for grant funding

Empowerment	responsive to new and emerging needs
Innovation	provides the financial means for communities to do things for themselves
Flexibility	can adjust to meet changing needs
Reach	can be accessible to groups which would not otherwise be able to get funding through contractual arrangements
Risk	shares the risk of new innovation between the provider and the funder
Cost effective	can lever in other resources to support community activity

Meets all six criteria for grants, in particular:

- **Reach**
- **Cost effective**

### Tower Hamlets Plan and Strategic Plan Priorities

C1	Strong, resilient and safe communities	
C2	Better health and wellbeing	
C3	Good jobs and employment	
C4	A better deal for young people – aspiration, education and skills	
S1	People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities	
S2	A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in	
S3	A dynamic outcomes-based Council using digital innovation and partnership working to respond to the changing needs of our borough	

### Theme priorities

1. Supporting core costs to facilitate/access other resources (All)
2. Skills exchange and accessible training (All)

3. Making organisations commissioning ready (All)
4. Fundraising support for smaller, volunteer led organisations without staff (All)
5. Developing quality assurance (All)
6. Managing assets for community benefit (C1)
7. Developing resilience and supporting organisations through periods of transition.

#### **Theme outcomes**

1. Broader pool of organisations accessing public service contracts
2. Increased proportion of organisations achieving recognised quality assurance standards
3. VCS more resilient with more sustainable funding base
4. Organisations support each other

#### **Examples of projects and activities**

- Programme of support for local community groups to develop quality assurance
- Feasibility study of bringing disused grade II listed building back into use as a community building

#### **Eligibility**

2. There are no special restrictions on eligibility for this theme.

#### **Levels of Funding Available**

3. Up to £1,000 – one off
4. Over £1,000 up to £5,000 – up to one year with potential extension for second year
5. Over £5,000 – up to two years with potential extension for third year

#### **Monitoring arrangements**

3. Up to £1,000 – end of project report
4. Over £1,000 up to £5,000 – Six month progress report and annual/end of project report and visit.
5. Over £5,000 – Six month progress report and project visit

## Appendix B

Voluntary and Community Sector organisations as defined by the VCS Strategy 2016-19 are

- Registered charities
- Community groups
- Community associations
- Tenants and residents groups
- Green Spaces Friends Groups
- Co-operatives and social enterprises
- School/parent groups
- Faith organisations
- Sports, environmental, arts and heritage organisations
- Grant making trusts
- Housing associations
- Non-constituted groups of residents working together to make a difference in their local communities