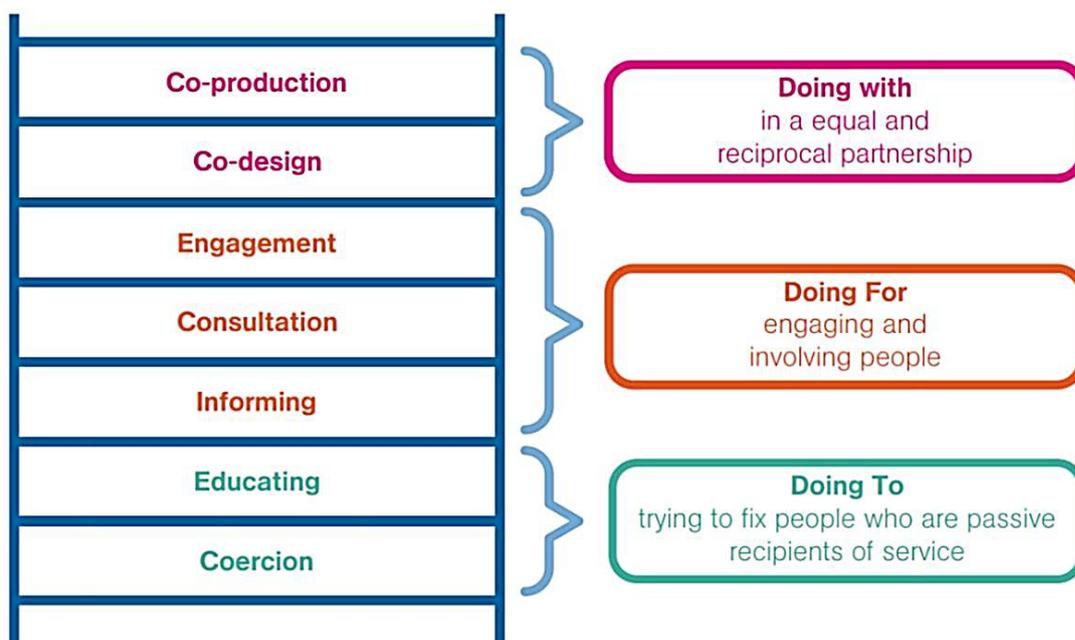


## Co-Production and Consultation

### Developing the Programme

A range of local stakeholders, including staff, trustees, volunteers and service users of voluntary and community sector organisations, council and NHS colleagues and local residents were invited to take part in a programme of co-design for the new Local Community Fund, starting in January 2018.

As outlined in the council’s coproduction framework, co-design involves working with stakeholders to develop ideas together.



Whilst it wouldn't be accurate to say that the programme was co-designed, we have utilised co-design principles throughout the development phase. The main stages of this work are summarised below:

### Phase 1 – Framework and Priorities, Spring 2018

The priorities and overarching framework for what was then the ‘Community Commissioning’ programme were developed in a series of events co-facilitated by Carney Green and the New Economics Foundation. In addition to a number of internal workshops, 6 public events were held:

- Community Commissioning: Shaping the Framework. Two workshops looking at priorities, needs and target groups, attended by 77 voluntary sector contacts and 20+ council staff
- Community Commissioning 'You said, we did' workshop to assess the emerging priorities - 44 attendees
- Presentation of headline outcomes, 12<sup>th</sup> March - 50 attendees
- Theory of Change 27<sup>th</sup> March - 49 attendees
- Theory of Change, 16 April - 52 attendees

This phase had 272 total attendances, many of which were organisations attending multiple sessions.

## **Phase 2 – Outcomes Development, Winter 2018/19**

One of the clear messages from the first phase of co-design was that many voluntary and community sector organisations were uncomfortable with the shift from grants to commissioning and concerned that the tendering process would be difficult for smaller organisations to navigate successfully. Concern was also expressed that external organisations with limited knowledge or networks in Tower Hamlets might be more likely to bid at the expense of community-led provision.

Following these discussions, development of Community Commissioning was paused and the Mainstream Grant programme extended to allow more time to develop the new programme. At the end of 2018 the council re-started work on the new Local Community Fund, running six thematic workshops to develop some headline outcomes.

### **Outcomes workshops:**

- Inclusion Health and Wellbeing, 23<sup>rd</sup> November and 10<sup>th</sup> December – 72 attendees
- Digital Inclusion, 14<sup>th</sup> November -17 attendees
- Advice, 26<sup>th</sup> November – 40 attendees
- Employment and Skills, 30<sup>th</sup> November – 40 attendees
- Community Safety, 12<sup>th</sup> December – 15 attendees
- Drop in, 18<sup>th</sup> December – 8 attendees

Each workshop started with the priorities agreed by Cabinet after phase 1 and asked participants to come up with more detailed sub-outcomes and ideas for potential activities. Participants were also asked for questions and comments about the themes and schemes as a whole and about the LCF process, all of which helped to inform the development of the programme.

All of the workshops led to changes that helped to broaden and clarify the final LCF specifications. In some there was broad agreement with the overarching priorities and principles but the group wanted to clarify the language and add more detail. For example, in the two workshops for the Inclusion Health and Wellbeing theme, the groups wanted to reframe the negatively focussed outcome of *'fewer older people feel lonely, less often'* so turned it into *'older people have more opportunities to socialise and interact with others'*. Further comments in these workshops stressed importance of intergenerational work, further refining the outcomes to the final published version of outcome 3 under Scheme B: *'Older people feel more included and integrated in their communities and are able to mix with people of different ages and from different backgrounds to increase the sharing of skills, experience and knowledge both amongst older people, and between different generations'*

The Digital Inclusion theme changed to acknowledge the concerns and needs of different populations in Tower Hamlets. Discussions started out with separate high level priorities covering access to ICT support and training for older people, children and young people's safety online and digital skills development for children and young people, but the group questioned the way these headline outcomes were each focussed on particular age groups. Participants pointed out that young people learn about ICT, including coding, in school, whereas working age adults, particularly those with limited English and those who are disabled and/or older, might not have had access to the same learning and are at risk of being digitally excluded. Similarly, the group agreed that online safety is not just a concern for children and young people, and may be part of the reason that older people are reticent to go online or participate in ICT training.

The revised versions of these schemes therefore became 2B, Online Safety, with the outcomes focused on residents as a whole, older people, and younger people and their families, and 1B, ICT Skills and Digital Careers, with outcomes focussed on 'working age residents' and 'residents with limited digital/ICT skills, particularly older residents, disabled residents, those with English as a second language or other barriers to digital inclusion.'

Following the redrafting and circulation of the updated outcomes, the council then ran a summary workshop to re-look at the draft schemes outcomes a final time. The programme concluded with a prospectus workshop, where colleagues from the voluntary sector gave input give input on the assessment criteria for the LCF and the weighting applied to the different sections of the application process.

- Outcomes Workshop, 21<sup>st</sup> Jan - 48
- Prospectus workshop, 6<sup>th</sup> February – 80

124 organisations came to these events a total of 320 times between them, with a number of groups attending a range of sessions to help develop meaningful outcomes for the programme.

One concern raised in the development of the co-design programme was that organisations might only attend the sessions if they intended to apply for the funding, limiting the range of ideas and suggestions and potentially steering the discussion to suit the interests of those present, rather than what might be needed by the wider borough. Analysis of attendance shows that this wasn't the case, however; nearly half of the co-design participants did not apply to the Local Community Fund; the inference being that a large proportion of attendees helped to shape the programme without intending to receive funding from it

