

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**

**MINUTES OF THE GRANTS DETERMINATION (CABINET) SUB-COMMITTEE**

**HELD AT 5.30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 12 JANUARY 2022**

**COMMITTEE ROOM ONE - TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE CRESCENT, LONDON, E14 2BG**

**Members Present:**

Councillor Candida Ronald (Chair)	(Cabinet Member for Resources and the Voluntary Sector)
Councillor Kahar Chowdhury (Substitute for Councillor Sirajul Islam)	Cabinet Member for Highways and Public Realm – (Job Share post as part of Social Inclusion and Public Realm portfolio)
Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman (Substitute for Councillor Asma Begum)	(Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Work, Economic Growth and Faith)

**Other Councillors Present:**

Councillor Leema Qureshi*	(Scrutiny Lead, Resources)
---------------------------	----------------------------

**Officers Present:**

Awo Ahmed*	(Programme Assessment and Monitoring Officer, Corporate Strategy & Policy, Communities Team, Governance)
Afraa Ali*	(Regeneration Manager, Strategic Planning, Place)
Yasmin Ali*	(Development Project Manager, Place)
Honora Brinkley*	(Project Manager, Smarter Together Programme)
Terry Bryan*	(Service Head (Pupil Access and School Sufficiency))
Charlie Carter	(Assistant Project Manager, Town Hall Project)
David Esdaile*	(Environmental Sustainability Officer, Place)
Emily Fieran-Reed	(Senior Strategy and Policy Manager, Corporate Strategy & Policy, Communities Team, Governance)
Aelswith Frayne*	(Head of Employment and Skills)
Jonathan Fox	(Principal Contracts Lawyer, Legal Services Governance)
Dominic Hinde*	(Tackling Poverty Team, Leader)
Abdul Khan*	(Environmental Sustainability Officer, Place)
Duduzile Moyo*	(Infrastructure Planning Officer, Place)
Adam Richards*	(Regeneration Project Manager)

Sarah Wilks\* (Infrastructure Planning Team Leader, Place)  
Anna Zucchelli (Heritage at Risk Projects Officer, Place)  
Vincent Wood (Food Security Office, Place)

Zoe Folley (Democratic Services Officer, Committees, Governance)

\* Remote attendee

## 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- Mayor John Biggs
- Councillor Asma Begum (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Children, Youth Services, Education and Equalities (Statutory Deputy Mayor)
- Councillor Sirajul Islam, Cabinet Member for Community Safety.
- Councillor Sabina Akhtar (Cabinet Member for Culture, Arts and Sports)

The following Councillors were deputising:

- Councillor Kahar Chowdhury (Cabinet Member for Highways and Public Realm)
- Councillor Motin Uz – Zaman (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Work, Economic Growth and Faith)
- 

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillors Kahar Chowdhury, Motin Uz – Zaman and Leema Qureshi declared a non DPI interest in agenda items relating to applications/projects in their ward. In particular, in relation to 6.12 VCS Funding Awarded Under Delegated Authority Councillor Chowdhury highlighted two applications Phase Two Chrisp Street Community Cycles, and Boxing for the Community in London that had received funding and were in his ward.

## 3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

### RESOLVED:

1. The minutes of the meeting of the Sub – Committee held on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2021 be approved as a correct record of the proceedings.

## 4. CONSIDERATION OF PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

There were none.

## 5. EXERCISE OF MAYORAL DISCRETIONS

There were none.

## **6. REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **6.1 Grant Payment for St Anne's Catholic Primary School Expansion**

Terry Bryan, Pupil Services (Admissions, Exclusions) Education and Partnerships) and Honora Brinkley (Senior Capital Client Officer) presented the report. It was noted that a budget of £1.3M was approved by Cabinet for the expansion of St Anne's school in September 2020 – following the closure of the Guardian Angels Catholic Primary school. This report seeks approval to pay this allocated budget, as a grant, to The Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster to support timely delivery of the expansion project. This was subject to compliance with the funding conditions.

The report also set out the arrangements for securing the council's position in relation to the LBTH part of land at Guardian Angels. A formal offer will only be made once a grant agreement had been entered into with the Diocese to ensure matters regarding the land had been completed to its satisfaction.

The Sub – Committee noted the questions submitted on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the following:

- Mitigations for the reduction in reception places in the catchment area by 30 – officers highlighted the background to the expansion plans. There has been a separate consultation on the closure of the school and the Mayor in Cabinet has approved this. The affected pupils had opted to move to St Anne's school and places had been provided for. The closure had been offset.
- Plans to reimburse the costs of the works. Assurances were sought regarding the completion of an inspection to ensure it was satisfactory. In response, Officers referred to the Legal grant agreement, which set out how the works will be inspected, including the plans for a project closure report. It was confirmed that grant will only be released on receipt of satisfactory evidence of completion of works.

The Committee discussed a number of issues as set out below:

- Impact of school closures. It was noted that Officers were mindful of the need to increased capacity of schools following closures. They gave assurances about the contingency plans in place in the event of unforeseen issues.
- The Grants conditions. Officers confirmed that payment will only be made once matters regarding the ownership and proceeds from the sale of the land at the former Guardian Angels School have been completed to the council's satisfaction. The Council will ultimately be re-imbursed for the sale of the land, following a Section 77 application to the DfE.

**RESOLVED:**

1. Authorise the Corporate Director of Children and Culture to issue a formal offer of grant to the Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster to a maximum of £1.3M towards the costs for the expansion of St Anne's Catholic Primary School
2. Delegate the Corporate Director of Children and Culture the power to authorise the execution of any agreements necessary to give effect to resolution 1

**6.2 Grant offer to Toynbee Hall to support the production of an updated Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan (CAAMP) for the Wentworth Street Conservation Area**

Anna Zucchelli (Heritage at Risk Projects Officer, Place) presented the report. The report sought permission for the Council to release the grant from Historic England to Toynbee Hall to work collaboratively with the local community to update the Plan -as part of the Petticoat Lane High Street Heritage Action Zone,

The Sub – Committee noted the key features of the scheme including:

- The aims of the Petticoat Lane High Street Heritage Action Zone, to deliver improvements to run in conjunction with the Middlesex Street Regeneration Programme.
- Details of the proposed approach to updating the plan and managing the work, including the work with the Community Appraisers and the plans to recruit a new member of staff at Toynbee Hall to support the project
- Merits of the proposals for local people in terms of raising awareness and education in relation to heritage issues.

The Sub – Committee noted the questions submitted on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the following issues :

- Lessons learnt from the previous engagement exercises, particularly in relation to engagement with a wider demographic profile of the borough and schools. It was noted that Toynbee Hall had, at early stage developed a plan for community engagement and carried out an extensive amount of outreach work. They were also mindful of the need and worked hard to engage with a wide range of ages including young people and school pupils. Recent initiatives included the development of a project called 'walk to school' involving school children, aimed at providing opportunities for them to observe local history.

- The opportunities to involve Council's WorkPath agency in the project and help with potential employment/ apprenticeship opportunities for Community Appraisers. Officers undertook to look further into this.

The Committee discussed a number of issues as set out below:

- The monitoring of the objectives – the Council's role in measuring this.
- In response, Members were advised of the Council's work in relation to this. The Council held monthly meetings with Toynbee Hall and they regularly submit a return in accordance with Historic England requirements
- The engagement with the Council's Town Centre Team in delivering this project. It was confirmed that the Officers worked closely and collaborated with the team in delivering this and on the Middlesex Street Regeneration Programme, in carrying out and coordinating work.
- The timescale for allocating the budget. It was confirmed that most of the funding would be allocated in the next couple of years, given the nature of the funding.
- A Member requested that Officers work with the Council's WorkPath team in relation to employment opportunities.

**RESOLVED:**

1. Authorise the Corporate Director Place to enter into a third-party grant agreement with Toynbee Hall for £40,324 to support the production of an updated Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for the Wentworth Street Conservation Area.

**6.3 London Square (New Town Hall) - CIL**

Charlie Carter – Assistant Project Manager (Town Hall) presented the report.

The report sought permission to use £1,486,800 of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding to deliver the London Square (working title) project on behalf of Barts NHS Trust (Barts) and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH).

Officers highlighted the aims of the project, which remained consistent with the PID, which sought to:

- To provide a civic setting for the new town hall development;
- To provide strong visual amenity for the local area in between two commercially dense (employment) sites;
- To build accessible routes through the Whitechapel Masterplan area

The Sub – Committee noted the questions submitted on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the following:

Reassurances were sought about a number of issues as summarised below:

- In view the land ownership issues (primarily owned by Barts) whether the £1,486,800 equated to 20% of the expenditure or the total? It was confirmed that this was the total costs, and that this will be funded by the Council in line with the Cabinet decision. The Council were keen to see this square come forward given the benefits of the plans.
- Match funding from Barts. It was noted none was proposed.
- The long term responsibility for maintenance of this land and costs. The Council were engaged in discussions with Barts about future arrangements. The Council have proposed to pay for the costs of maintaining the square and Barts would repay the Council on a 80/20 basis, however this has not been finalised.

The Committee discussed a number of issues as set out below:

- Members welcomed the proposals and supported the Council's ambitions for the London square, especially given the benefits.
- They were keen to see that it was completed in conjunction with the Town Hall development.

#### **RESOLVED:**

1. Authorise the use £1,486,800 of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding to deliver the London Square (working title) project on behalf of Barts NHS Trust (Barts) and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH);
2. Delegate the Corporate Director Place the power to authorise the execution of any agreements necessary to give effect to resolution 1.

#### **6.4 Food Pantry Programme Funding – Family Action**

Vincent Wood, (Food Security Officer) and Dominic Hinde, (Tackling Poverty Team Leader) presented the report.

This report relates to the approval of a grant of £96,364 to Family Action to fund the provision of six food pantries in Tower Hamlets from the Mayor's Covid Recovery Fund.

The officers highlighted the key features of the scheme including:

- An overview of the food pantry model
- The key benefits of the proposals to tackle food poverty as well as bolster other forms of support that should help combat poverty and combat isolation.

- It was proposed to that the pantries would open in two cohorts, with three ready to launch immediately.
- The appendix detailed the proposed pantry locations.
- It was proposed to select Family Action to deliver the project for the reasons highlighted in the report - relating to Family Action's existing provision in the borough and the scalability of their model.
- This will make up the first phase of the rollout of the pantry programme, with the rest of sites to be offered to local voluntary organisations as part of an open bidding process.

The Sub – Committee noted the questions submitted on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the following:

- The approach to the bidding process. Officers explained in further details the reasons for selecting Family Action (due to for example to the fact they already ran successful sites in the Borough/their track record/sustainability and cost issues, as well as other issues)
- Contingency arrangements – in case of an oversubscription. Officers advised that they were mindful of these issues. They will continue to work with relevant groups, to identify residents that needed support and should be referred, and it was hoped in the long term to increase the capacity of the service to cater for more people.

The Committee discussed a number of issues as set out below:

- The referrals process. Members noted the plans to work with such groups as Mosques. Clarity was sought on the Comms plan so that those most in need were aware of the support and could be referred. In response, it was noted that the sites would be locally based with a strong focus on engaging with the local community. They would 'tap into' local assets. The Council also collected poverty data from a dash board and may make referrals based on this.
- Lessons learnt from the pandemic and the data gained so far on the success of the project. It was noted that the pilots showed that the projects had been very successful in reducing poverty and debt. Officers were also looking at developing a new monitoring system for tracking the success of scheme.
- The sustainability of the project and the risks to the Council. Officers advised of the benefits of the proposed funding arrangements including the proposals to charge a membership fee. It was also noted that Family Action will also seek external funding and would fundraise themselves if necessary to fully cover the provision and would work to ensure that the project was delivered on time. They had agreed to this.

#### **RESOLVED:**

1. Authorise the Corporate Director Place to issue a formal offer of grant to Family Action to a maximum of £96,364 to fund the provision of six food pantries to run for a period of at least 2.5 years;

2. Delegate the Corporate Director Place the power to authorise the execution of any agreements necessary to give effect to resolution 1;
3. Note the specific equalities considerations as set out in Section 4 of the report

## 6.5 Community Gardens Programme

Adam Richards (Project Manager, Regeneration) presented the report.

It was noted that the Community Gardens Programme will deliver food growing, allotments and other forms of green community infrastructure at specific locations in LIF Areas 1, 2, 3 and 4.

This report presents the approach to distribute Local Infrastructure Funding via a grants process to community groups and other organisations to enable them to deliver community gardens across the Borough.

In particularly, the Committee noted:

- Details of the two phases of the scheme. The report related to the approach and the merits of Phase 2. It was noted that the Council will carry out a competitive procurement process to appoint a third party grant giving organisation.
- Benefits to delivering the grants programme as proposed – around staffing, expertise and capacity.
- Timetable for the project

The Committee also noted a correction to recommendation 4.

The Committee discussed a number of issues as set out below:

- The proposals to create new garden sites. Assurances were sought about the ongoing substantiable of these new site in the long term.
- The measures to keep the fees affordable. Assurances were sought on the checks and balances to ensure costs to residents were kept low.
- In response, Officers advised of the safeguards that will be put in place to ensure this, (including requesting that a maintenance and management plan be submitted). All these issues would be carefully assessed and the appropriate due diligence checks would be carried out throughout the process,
- Members welcomed the project and felt it was important to make clear this was a Council initiative.

### RESOLVED:

1. Note the availability of funding for the project.



2. Approve the process for inviting application for the Community Gardens Programme.
3. Agree the process for awarding grant funding, and subsequent monitoring arrangements
4. Authorise the Corporate Director Place to approve the individual award of grants made under this scheme

## **6.6 Connecting Communities - Digital Inclusion**

Aelswith Frayne, (Head of Employment & Skills) presented the report.

The report sought a £50,000 financial contribution towards the Connecting Communities Digital Inclusion Programme.

It was noted that this was a partnership project (between the East End Community Foundation, Tower Hamlets Council, social housing provider Poplar Harca and education provider, the Letta Trust).

The project seeks to tackle digital exclusion through the provision of free digital devices and subsidised broadband connections to low-income households with primary school aged children.

The Sub – Committee were also advised of the following:

- Achievements to date. - the project has been delivering since June 2020. It has supported 240+ low-income families to-date in learning and access to job search, training, employment and social engagement resources, showing very positive results
- The longer term aims of the project.
- The fundraising activities to support the programme.
- Work with Housing Providers to engage them with the programme.
- Work with broadband providers, and their contributions to the project.
- Benefits of the project in terms significantly improving attainment at school level.

The Sub – Committee noted the questions submitted on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the following:

- The proposals for the next phase of the programme – in terms of the targets. It was confirmed that overall the scheme sought to provide £10M in support
- The thresholds for support and the support for large families of children. It was confirmed that the families were selected by schools on the basis of free school meals.

The Committee discussed a number of issues as set out below:

The Committee welcomed this project, including the involvement of the Housing Associations in the process. It was requested that the project Steering Group should look at ways of pursuing the project and should continue to work to lobby for the provision of free broadband.

**RESOLVED:**

1. Note the contents of the report and the outcomes of the Connecting Communities Digital Inclusion project outcomes to-date.
2. To approve a grant of £50k from the Mayor's Priority Reserve to the Connecting Communities Digital Inclusion.

**6.7 Community Centres Local Infrastructure Fund (LIF) Capital Grant Programme**

Sarah Wilks (Infrastructure Programmes Manager) and Duduzile Moyo (Principal Infrastructure Programme Officer) presented the report.

The Committee noted the key features of the proposal including the following:

- The purpose of the report is to seek approval for the establishment of the Community Centres Local Infrastructure Fund (LIF) capital grant programme as a grant.
- The funding allocation is to be set up as a grant to enable local community centres in the borough to apply for grants ranging between £10,000 - £60,000 from the LIF programme for capital improvements.
- The grants will be awarded by the selected external grant management partner in compliance with the eligibility and selection criteria established by the Council.

The Committee welcomed the proposals.

**RESOLVED:**

1. Note the funding allocation of £1.6m approved by the Mayor in Cabinet in September 2020 and October 2021;
2. Authorise the use of up to £1.6m of the allocated funding for the refurbishment and enhancement of community centres in the borough as detailed in this report, to be administered through a grant process;
3. Delegate the Corporate Director Place via the LIF Working Group the power to undertake appropriate actions in respect of all matters concerning the management and monitoring of the grant;

4. Delegate the Corporate Director Place the power to authorise the execution of any agreements necessary to give effect to recommendation 2 and 3.
5. Note the specific equalities considerations as set out in Section 4.

## 6.8 Whitechapel Levelling up fund

Afraa Ali, (Regeneration Manager) presented the report.

It was noted that following the Council's successful bid, this report seeks approval to grant £1,072,087 from the Levelling up funding to TfL to deliver the Property Repair Project. This was on behalf of the businesses and complements works already planned by TfL

The Sub – Committee were also advised of the following:

- Nature of the proposed work – providing an opportunity to repair properties along the railway track, to improve the overall quality of the built environment,
- That TfL were best placed to deliver the project for a number of reasons which were noted as set out in the report. They were in a position to deliver the works by the funding deadline.

The Sub – Committee noted the questions submitted on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the following:

- The delivery of the project given TfL's financial challenges. It was confirmed that TfL had secured the funding for the programme and that it was necessary for them to carry out the work to properties for health and safety reasons.
- Whether the costs reflected or mirror that of TfL?. It was noted that TfL had worked with surveyors to assess and identify costs of repair, and they have given assurances that the work can be delivered in accordance with this estimates.
- The return on the investment for the Council. A business case had been put together, including the value for money assessment. Officers stated that they could share this with Members.

The Committee discussed a number of issues as set out below:

- They thanked officers for the amount of work they had put in to get the bid.
- Members also sought assurances regarding compliance with the article of memorandum before the funding was released.
- Risk management issues. Assurances were sought about disruption of local businesses and the, arrangement for managing that. It was noted that TfL have engaged with them and businesses were aware of the

bid. TfL have set up a dedicated unit where they can discuss this issues with business, ensuring continuous engagement.

**RESOLVED:**

1. Approve the grant funding of £1,072,087 to TfL to deliver the Whitechapel Property Repair Project.
2. Authorise the Corporate Director Place to enter into grant agreements and make any associated decisions in order to award the funding to TfL in accordance with this report.
3. Authorise the Corporate Director Place to nominate a Council Officer or Officers to sign on behalf of the Council any grant agreements necessary for the fulfilment of this scheme.

**6.9 Carbon Reduction Community Grants Programme**

David Esdaile and Abdul Khan (Environmental Sustainability Officers) presented the report, highlighting the key points

It was noted that the proposals are for 3 types of grants to stimulate action and the delivery of the adopted Net Zero Carbon Partnership Plan

These were as stated in paragraph 3.6.

- The proposals are for 3 types of grants:
- Low carbon heating and energy generating technologies – up to £30,000 per grant (allocation up to £300,000 to support 10 installations)
- Energy Efficiency Retrofit – up to £15,000 per grant (allocation up to £180,000 to support 12 retrofits)
- Learning and behavioural change projects – up to £10,000 (allocation up to £180,000 to support 18 knowledge share initiatives)

The Sub – Committee noted the questions submitted on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the following:

- The measures to ensure that there is some level of equity and that the wider community benefits from this?. Officers stated that they were mindful of the need for the community to be fully involved in the project. Reassurances were provided that steps will be taken to ensure this.
- Lessons learnt from the previous phases. Officers drew attention to the similar Council projects, with Schools and SMEs. Officers have gained valuable experience from this about the management of projects and identifying which would have best returns.

The Committee discussed:

- The sustainability of the initiatives. It was noted that the onus would be on the organisations to maintain them. The grant funding would make it clear that they would have responsibility for this.
- Clarification was sought on some of the figures in the report.
- The Sub – Committee welcomed the project

**RESOLVED:**

1. Approve the grant funding of £700,000 to deliver the Carbon Reduction Community Grants Programme.
2. Authorise the Service Manager for Energy, Sustainability & Private Sector Housing and Environmental Sustainability Officer to enter into grant agreements and make any associated decisions in order to distribute the funding

**6.10 Local Community Fund (LCF) Performance and Annual Update Report Oct 20 – Sep 21**

Emily Fieran-Reed, (Senior Strategy and Policy Manager) presented the report, highlighting the key features of the report including:

- Amount of grants that had been awarded.
- This reported related to the second year of the programme.
- Over 21,000 people had benefited from the programme and many of these were from BME communities.

The Committee were also advised of the amendments to Paragraphs 4.1 to 4.3 of the report as set out below:

- reference to £12,000 in paragraph 4.1 should be changed to £9,000
- reference to £12,000 in paragraph 4.2 should be changed to £9,000
- reference to £18,000 in paragraph 4.3 should be changed to £9,000

The Chair and Members noted the amount of work that had gone into this, and that so many residents had benefit from the various the projects.

They thanked officers and VSC organisations for the work they had done in borough.

**RESOLVED:**

1. Note the performance of the Local Community Fund programme for Oct 20 – Sep 21 as set out in 3.2 to 3.5 below and the Appendices;
2. Note the new arrangements for delivering the Infrastructure & Capacity Building project as referred to in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.4;

3. Delegate the Chief Executive and the Director of Strategy, Improvement and Transformation the decision making authority to agree and undertake appropriate actions in respect of resolution 2

### **6.11 Innovation Fund Update and Next Steps**

Awo Ahmed, (Programme Assessment & Monitoring Officer) presented the report

The purposes of this report are first, to update Grants Determination Sub-Committee on the progress of the Innovation Fund and second, to seek an extension of the current programme for a further year until the end of March 2023.

#### **RESOLVED:**

1. Note the progress and achievements to date of the Innovation Fund Programme.
2. Agree to extend the Innovation Fund grants programme until the end of March 2023, as outlined from para. 3.19 onwards
3. Agree to continue to the end of March 2023 to delegate the power to award innovation fund grants to the Director of Strategy Improvement and Transformation, in liaison with the Chair of this sub-committee.

### **6.12 VCS Funding Awarded Under Delegated Authority**

Awo Ahmed, (Programme Assessment & Monitoring Officer) presented the report

This report provides an update on funding awarded to Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations under delegated authority since the last meeting of the Sub-Committee.

It was noted that the Mayor's Covid Recovery Events Fund had now launched with a focus on reflecting community cohesion and celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, as set out in the report.

In response Members welcomed the update.

#### **RESOLVED:**

1. Note the update on funding awarded to Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations under delegated authority since their last meeting.
2. Note that the cohesion events funded through the Mayor's Covid Recovery Fund have launched a new round of funding to

commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee as detailed in paragraph 3.4 of this report

**7. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT**

There was none

The meeting ended at 7.30 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Candida Ronald  
Grants Determination (Cabinet) Sub-Committee

This page is intentionally left blank