

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">9 October 2023</p>	
<p><b>Report of:</b> Steve Halsey, Chief Executive</p>	<p><b>Classification:</b> [Unrestricted or Exempt]</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Mayor's Community Grants Programme 2023-2027</b></p>	

### **Executive Summary**

This report presents proposals for funding 110 projects provided by voluntary and community sector organisations through the Mayor's Community Grants Programme (MCGP).

The MCGP will run between 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2027 and will provide £11.96m of funding to the VCS over the 41 months period.

Despite many councils reducing their funding for the voluntary and community sector, Tower Hamlets has increased the level of spending on the sector through the corporate grants programme by nearly £1m per year, across three key grants programmes as agreed by Cabinet in March 2023.

The Mayor's Community Grants Programme was established with an annual budget of £3.5m. Despite the high level of funding available the programme was significantly oversubscribed. We received 308 project applications from 170 organisations totalling nearly £11.3m per year. This is over three times the available budget and has meant some strong bids have not been recommended for funding. The grant programme has been subject to rigorous external assurance and internal challenge by senior officers of the Council and overseen by the Chief Executive. Lessons learned have been captured and will be used to inform future grant initiatives.

### **Recommendations:**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Note and comment on the attached report and appendices.