

<p style="text-align: center;">Grants Determination Sub Committee</p> <p style="text-align: center;">08 November 2023</p>	
<p>Report of: Robin Beattie, Interim Director of Strategy, Improvement & Transformation</p>	<p>Classification: [Unrestricted or Exempt]</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Small Grants Prospectus and award decision making</p>	

Executive Summary

Cabinet approved a new Grants Policy & Outcomes Framework in March 2023. This included the development of a new Small Grants Programme that will provide £800,000 of annual grant funding to the voluntary and community sector across five themes between November 2023 – March 2027.

Officers in Corporate Strategy & Communities Service and Young Tower Hamlets have developed a prospectus for each of the Small Grants themes. The prospectus has been approved under delegated decision making by the Chief Executive.

The Small Grants Programme will have multiple rounds per year. To ensure timely decision making we are requesting the Grants-Determination Sub-Committee to delegate decision-making authority on grant awards to the Corporate Director of Resources.

Recommendations:

The Grants Determination Sub Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the Small Grants prospectus in appendix 1-5.
2. Delegate decision-making authority to the Corporate Director of Resources on grant awards in consultation with the Mayor.

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 Cabinet delegated decision-making authority on the Small Grants prospectus to the Chief Executive in March 2023.
- 1.2 To ensure the Council can make timely decisions on grant awards to the voluntary and community sector this report is seeking delegated decision making to the Corporate Director of Resources.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 To not approve delegated decision making to the Corporate Director of Resources. This will mean the Small Grants award decisions will need to be made by the Grants Determination Sub-Committee. This would delay decision making and mean that voluntary and community sector organisations may not be able to access funds when they require them to be able to deliver services and activities.

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 The Council has a vision to support a thriving and diverse voluntary and community sector that improves outcomes for communities. In March 2023 Cabinet approved a new Grants Policy & Outcomes. This consists of three funds: Mayor's Community Grants Programme, Small Grants Programme and Emergency Grant Fund.
- 3.2 The Small Grants Programme will provide £800,000 of annual funding to the voluntary and community sector across five different themes. The table below outlines the grants and budgets.

Grant	Annual Budget	Maximum amount per award	Number of awards per year
Mayor & Young Mayors - Youth Empowerment Fund – Support young people to design, bid and deliver projects for their peers	£250,000	£3,500	1
Mayor's Positive Activities for Young People – Support activities during school holidays	£250,000	£6,000	1
Community events – Support events that brings communities together, celebrate our diversity, national and regional celebrations	£100,000	£2,500	1
Mayor's Capacity Building Programme – Support organisational development which strengthens local organisations' ability to deliver services	£100,000	£2,500	1

Community chest - Very small grants to support community events and activities	£100,000	£500	2
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- 3.3 In March 2023 Cabinet delegated decision-making authority of the Small Grants prospectus to the Chief Executive Officer. Officers have developed a prospectus for each of the Small Grants themes and the Chief Executive has approved them. These can be viewed in appendix 1-5. The prospectus includes information on eligibility, how much funding is available, what the funding can be used for, bidding process and assessment process.
- 3.4 This report asks for the Grants Determination Sub-Committee to note the approval of the prospectus. The Small Grants Programme will have multiple rounds per year. Four of the grants will have 3 rounds per year, and Community Chest will have 6 rounds per year.
- 3.5 It is important to be able to make timely decisions on grant awards otherwise voluntary and community sector organisations may not be able to access the funding they have been awarded in time to deliver services.
- 3.6 The council recently finished its assessment and awards process for the Mayor's Community Grants Programme. This included an external audit and internal review process. We have gathered the good practice and lessons learned from this process, which will be applied to the delivery of Small Grants Programme.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct equality implications arising from the report. Once the new grant is launched it will be important to ensure a diverse range of VCS organisations are accessing the fund. As part of the communication and promotion we will use a diverse range of mediums. It will also be important the grant benefits a diverse range of our residents and these will be monitored through the monitoring process.
- 4.2 Please see Appendix 6 Equalities Impact Analysis Screening Tool.

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no statutory implications.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 The report seeks delegated power to make grant awards within the already approved budget for the small grants programme, as such there are no direct financial implications of this report.

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 The Council has the legal power to undertake the activities referred to in this report.
- 7.2 The Council has a legal duty to achieve Best Value in terms of economy efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of its functions. The prospectus determines the criteria and scoring against which applications will be assessed. This shows the areas which are important to the Council. The Council has a wide discretion to determine what represents Best Value and adherence to the scoring mechanism will ensure only the applications that align with the Council's view of Best Value will achieve funding.
- 7.3 Each grant will also be supported by a grant agreement which will support the Council's grant monitoring activities. This will mean that the Council will be able to ensure that the grant funds are only used for the reasons they have been given. This will assist the Council to demonstrate the achievement of Best Value.
- 7.4 The grants are also likely to be categorised as subsidies for the purposes of the Subsidy Control Act 2022. However, it is unlikely that the grants themselves will exceed the de minimis threshold of £315,000 although the Council will also require the grants applicants to disclose any other funding received for similar activities. Also the Council will apply the Subsidy Control Principles and not award any grant which fails the principles.
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Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Community Events Prospectus
- Appendix 2: Community Chest Prospectus
- Appendix 3: Mayors Capacity Building Programme Prospectus
- Appendix 4: Mayor & Young Mayors Youth Empowerment Fund Prospectus
- Appendix 5: Mayors Positive Activities for Young People Prospectus
- Appendix 6: Equalities Screening Form

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

- None

Officer contact details for documents:

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