


<p align="center">Grants Determination (Cabinet) Sub-Committee</p> <p align="center">Wednesday, 26 June 2024</p>	
<p>Report of: Robin Beattie, Acting Director of Strategy, Improvement & Transformation</p>	<p>Classification: Open (Unrestricted)</p>
<p align="center">Mayor's Community Grant Programme (MCGP) Performance Report – Nov 23 – Mar 24</p>	

Executive Summary

This performance report provides the Committee with an update on the council-funded Mayor's Community Grants Programme (MCGP) for the voluntary and community sector for the period November 2023 to March 2023, including an overview of activities and performance for the five themes of the programme. The Project Summary (Appendix 3.1 – 3.5) gives an update by each project.

As this report covers the 2023/24 year up to March 2024 (all be it only 5 months) this report will also include an Equalities breakdown that will be included on an annual basis following the March returns. Subsequent Annual updates will also include a focus on Outcomes achieved.

Key elements of the first five months include:

The completion of the mobilisation period. All 110 projects have a Funding Agreement in place including key performance indicator targets.

Following the review of Monitoring Returns covering the Nov 23 – Mar 24 period 103 of the 110 projects classed as GREEN, 6 classed as AMBER and 1 classed as RED

Recommendations:

The Grants Determination Sub Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the performance of the Mayor's Community Grants Programme for November 2023 – March 2024, as set out in 3.3 and 3.4 and Appendices 3.1 – 3.5.
2. Note the arrangements for administering the programme as set out in section 3.2 and Appendix 1

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Grants Determination Sub Committee (GDSC) Terms of Reference sets out the need to provide performance reporting to the Committee.
- 1.2 Regular performance updates ensure that the MCGP themes and individual projects are on track to achieve the targeted outcomes. Any issues that arise can be addressed and appropriate remedial actions agreed. Where necessary, this could include the reduction, withdrawal or reallocation of funds to ensure that the overall Programme is making the most effective use of resources and maximising the potential achievement of agreed aims and objectives.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Information relating to various aspects of project and monitoring activity is contained within the report to provide Grants Determination Sub-Committee (GDSC) with an overall understanding of how projects and organisations have performed against the key elements of their Funding Agreements. This is a constitutional obligation.
- 2.2 GDSC could request further information]

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

3.1 Background

In March 2023 the Council agreed a programme of funding for voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations from 1st November 2023. This programme is called the Mayor's Community Grants Programme (MCGP) with 110 projects awarded funding totalling £11.96m up to 31 March 2027 to deliver activity across five themes:

- Theme 1 Tackling the Cost-of-living crisis
- Theme 2 Accelerate Education
- Theme 3 Culture, Business, Jobs and Skills
- Theme 4 Invest in public services
- Theme 5 Empower communities and fight crime

3.2 Management Arrangements for the Programme - Appendix 1 presents details of the management arrangements for the programme including:

- Reporting – First report covering 5 months, subsequent reports presented quarterly
- Visits – minimum of 1 visit between April – Mar with additional visits depending on circumstances
- Payments – paid quarterly in advance
- Monitoring Returns – one return submitted covering the first 5 months with subsequent returns submitted quarterly

3.3 Overview of November 2023 – March 2024

- (a) Mobilisation: - The decision to award funding to the 110 projects was made on 25 September 2023 by the Chief Executive under delegated authority. This decision was called in and Overview & Scrutiny Committee met on 9 October 2023 to review the decision. The Committee confirmed the decision.

The programme start date of 1 November 2023 did not leave much time to agree the funding agreements setting out the activities and indicators for the projects. Some projects were awarded less funding than applied for which necessitated some refiguration of project activity.

Organisations were able to run at risk prior to signing the funding agreement. Whilst the programme delivery started on 1 November some projects took a few months to have everything in place.

All 110 projects have now signed their funding agreement which have been countersigned by the Corporate Director.

- (b) Project Performance summary (Red / Amber projects)

There is one red rated project, and further details of the organisation and project can be found in **Appendix 5 – RED rated projects**.

RED Project:

Theme 2 – Scheme A

- **Limehouse Welfare Association** – LWA Community Language Bengali and Arabic Support Programme – No delivery took place in Nov 23 – Mar 24 as the project was dealing with challenges around budget and venue hire. The project has been reconfigured and a Funding Agreement has been signed with delivery now expected to begin in June. Ongoing support is being provided by their grant officer.

There are 6 Amber rated projects set out below by Theme / Scheme. Officers are working with the organisations and at this stage are confident that issues will be addressed, and projects will be on track for the next report.

AMBER Projects:

Theme 2 – Scheme A

- **Young and Talented** - Triple Talent Enrichment Programme – the organisation has had some challenges around the venue for the project and this has had an impact on numbers of participants. They are working with Officers to resolve this.

Theme 2 - Scheme B

- **Quaker Social Action** - Made of Money - helping carers to increase their resilience to online financial scams – Delivery started in February impacting mobilisation and setting up partnerships compounded by staff sickness. In addition, a KPI was not able to be reported on due to

an unforeseen change in circumstances. The organisation is working with their Grant Officer to review KPIs and get back on track.

Theme 3 - Scheme B

- **Platform Cricket (Tower Hamlets Youth Sport Foundation)** - Platform Cricket Hubs: Bethnal Green, Bow, Isle of Dogs, Poplar, Stepney, Wapping & Whitechapel – Due to issues during the mobilisation phase the project couldn't deliver certain activities. The organisation is working with the Grant Officer to agree a new date to deliver the activity, currently planned for the Summer.

Theme 4 - Scheme B

- **Council Of Mosques** - Tower Hamlets - Council of Mosque Healthy Mind, Healthy Lifestyle Reach – Rated Amber due to project management including late submission of return and delivery issues. Officer to provide support.
- **Positive East** - One-to-one counselling for residents living with HIV and poor mental health – Issues during the mobilisation phase has impacted the project. Once the project started it became apparent that additional work not already identified in the funding agreement was needed as preparation to achieve the planned KPIs. Officer working with the organisation to review actual delivery and ensure original delivery against agreed KPIs gets back on track.

Theme 5 – Scheme A

- **Council Of Mosques** - Tower Hamlets - CoM Community Empowerment Project - further support planned to help in achieving outstanding targets – Primarily rated Amber due to project management issues including late submission of return. Officer has met with the organisation to provide support.

3.4 Theme Updates

An overall summary of achievements by Theme collated from individual project reports. A summary of progress by project can be found in **Appendices 3.1 – 3.5**.

Theme 1 Tackling the Cost of Living Crisis

Scheme A - Advice, information, and crisis support

VCS advice services delivering services to mitigate and reduce levels of poverty by supporting vulnerable residents and low-income households to access their rights, understand their obligations and maximise their incomes.

6 organisations (6 projects – 6 GREEN) providing services to meet the following priorities:

- Information, advice and representation concerning individuals' legal rights, particularly for vulnerable, marginalised and hard to reach groups, including disabled people
- Immigration/asylum advice and casework
- Debt advice and support with budgeting and financial stability, particularly for vulnerable, marginalised, and hard-to-reach groups
- Support with welfare benefits
- Housing/homelessness advice and casework
- Employment advice
- Income maximisation
- Support for residents in crisis, especially those needing immediate support

No. of participants – 7,295	No. of clients accessing social welfare advice and income from benefits – 6,387	£618,902.83 of debt write offs
No. of successful appeals – 4,840	No. of community organisations supported - 90	

Theme 2 Accelerate Education

Scheme A – Education Attainment and Development of Children and Young People

17 organisations (17 projects – 15 GREEN, 1 AMBER, 1 RED) providing services to meet the following priorities:

- Access to community-based study support
- Access to community language development
- Community-based provision for children with Special Educational Needs
- Wide access to extracurricular activities and after school provision.

No. of participants across the theme – 631	No. of children / young people report improvements in their well-being - 91	No. of young people accessing youth services / activities - 100
No. of SEN children and their families accessing community-based provision - 175		

Scheme B – Lifelong Learning

13 organisations (13 projects – 12 GREEN, 1 AMBER) delivering activities to meet the following priorities:

- Skills for life and lifelong learning
- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
- Digital Inclusion

No. of participants across the Scheme – 367	No. of people reporting improved digital skills - 77	No. of people reporting improved confidence - 93
No. of people reporting improved language proficiency - 93		

Theme 3 Culture, Business, Jobs and Skills

Scheme A - Employment and Skills Opportunities for Socially Excluded Residents

14 organisations (14 projects – 14 GREEN), delivering activities to meet the following priorities:

- Supporting people not in education, employment, or training (NEET)
- Targeted youth outreach
- Access to youth provision
- Promoting enterprise and innovation, particularly the greening of the borough
- Job brokerage by supporting people into work.

No. of participants across the scheme – 453	No. of people into employment - 30	
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Scheme B - Sports, Local Culture and Heritage

14 organisations (14 projects – 13 GREEN, 1 AMBER) delivering activities to meet the following priorities:

- Promoting local culture and heritage
- Promoting sports activity

No. of participants across the scheme – 781	No. of people engaging in physical activities and sport - 185	
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Theme 4 Invest in Public Services

Scheme A - Physical and Mental Health Wellbeing of Older People

15 organisations (15 projects – 15 GREEN) delivering activities to meet the following priorities:

- Supporting older and vulnerable people, including luncheon clubs, meals delivery services and pensioner projects
- Developing community activities aimed at tackling loneliness and inactive lifestyles.

No. of participants across the scheme – 881	No. of older people participating in physical activities - 555	
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Scheme B - Physical and Mental Health of Residents

15 organisations (15 projects – 13 GREEN, 2 AMBER) delivering activities to meet the following priority:

- Promoting health and well-being through tackling inequality.

No. of participants across the scheme – 790	No. of participants reporting improved mental and / or physical health - 79	
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Theme 5 Empower Communities and fight crime

Scheme A - Inequalities Experienced by People and Communities Reflecting Different Equality Groups and Socio-economic Backgrounds

8 organisations (8 projects – 7 GREEN, 1 AMBER) delivering activities to meet the following priorities:

- Addressing inequality for Black Asian & Multi-Ethnic communities and women
- Creating opportunities for people from different backgrounds to come together

	No. of people supported from BAME communities accessing one-to-one
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No. of participants across the scheme – 288	No. of people more engaged in the local community - 33	support to identify barriers and goals - 20
Number of women undertaking leadership training - 19		

Scheme B - Community Safety

8 organisations (8 projects – 8 GREEN) delivering activities to meet the following priorities:

- Tackling drug and alcohol issues
- Promoting safer communities
- Supporting ex-offenders
- Gang intervention and prevention
- Victim support
- Tackling and preventing violence against women and girls

No. of participants across the scheme – 200		
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4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Mayors Community Grants Programme has been designed to promote equality in Tower Hamlets. It was designed using the following principles:

- Funding that supports a wider range of services and groups to ensure all sections of the community benefit from a grants programme and address the challenges facing Tower Hamlets residents.
- Funding that supports services and activities that are inclusive, promote cohesion and designed and delivered with residents.

4.2 In comparing the recommended projects to the previous Grant funding and the identified need in the borough the full equality impact analysis identified a number of specific equalities risks and proposes mitigation for these.

Appendix 4 sets out the Equality Analysis Action Plan with the recommendations and mitigation.

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

5.2 **Best Value Implications** - The Council is required to ensure it achieves statutory Best Value in the delivery of its functions. Grants form part of that statutory framework and the monitoring of the use of the grant and achieved outcomes assists in compliance with the Best Value duty. The structure and process pathways of the Mayors Community Grants Programme were developed to meet the Councils best value duty. QC advice was secured confirming that the approach taken complied with the Best Value Duty.

5.3 **Risk Management** - The Mayors Community Grant Scheme is subject to independent external audit and internal challenge by a panel of senior officers resulting in learning and improvement actions as necessary.

5.4 **Safeguarding** arrangements are addressed as part of the grant application evaluation process.

5.5 There are no other specific statutory implications relevant to consideration of this report.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

6.1 There are no direct financial implications of this report. Appendix 3 details the projects and programmes allocated within the overall grant budget.

6.2 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) includes the cost of the grants programme. The programme is funded through the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) and Public Health Grant.

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

7.1 The GDSC terms of reference require a report to be brought to the subcommittee detailing the use of any delegation of authority from the

subcommittee since the previous reporting period. This report demonstrates conformity with the terms of reference.

- 7.2 The Council is required to demonstrate that the Grants represent Best Value in terms of economy efficiency and effectiveness. The report demonstrates the Council's monitoring process whereby delivery is being measured against the agreed grants terms. The report identifies schemes that are red and amber being schemes where delivery does not match the agreed grant outcomes. This will assist the Council to determine appropriate action in order to ensure delivery achieves the agreed outcomes or any alternative action necessary to protect council resources.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- List any linked reports
- State NONE if none.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Mayor's Community Grants Programme (MCGP) Programme Management Arrangements
- Appendix 2 – November 2023-March 2024 - Profile Of Beneficiaries
- Appendix 3 – MCGP Project Summary November 2022 – March 2024
 - Appendix 3.1 – Theme 1 Project Summary
 - Appendix 3.2 – Theme 2 Project Summary
 - Appendix 3.3 - Theme 3 Project Summary
 - Appendix 3.4 – Theme 4 Project Summary
 - Appendix 3.5 – Theme 5 Project Summary
- Appendix 4 – Equality Analysis Action Plan update
- Appendix 5 – RED rated projects – Organisation and Project details

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

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A