

APPENDIX 2: Grove Park Community Group

Main Grants 2017-18 recommendation report

Name of organisation	Grove Park Community Group (GPCG)
Date of meeting	08 September 2016
Names and positions of attendees	Chris Blake – Chair GPCG Sonja Aldengard – Treasurer Christine Ball – Community Development Officer (CDO) GPCG Petra Marshall – Community Resources Manager LBL Paul Gale – Local Assemblies Manager LBL

Group Name:	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total funding received 2015-16	£18,000	N/A	£6,000	£6,000	£6,000
Total funding to be received 2016-17	£24,000	£6,000	£6,000	£6,000	

Outcomes	Support
	1. Bringing the community together
	2. Providing recreational activities to encourage social engagement, improve confidence in accessing services and reduce isolation and loneliness
	3. Increasing physical health and well-being through activities and promoting a healthier life style for all ages
	4. Aiding rehabilitation for those in need
	Special Conditions: 1. Further detail around the scope of the Community Engagement Officer role 2. Must work as part of the Community Development Consortium with other Neighbourhood

	funded Groups and other stakeholders.									
Outputs:	2015-16 Target	2015-16 Q2	2015-16 Q3	2015-16 Q4	2015-16 Total	% Achieved	2016-17 Target	2016-17 Q1	2016-17 Q2	% Achieved TD
1.1 With the completion of our two new Shed Heaven workshops and the patio, which includes an outdoor stage, there will be a range of social events organised for the whole community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor concert • Summer fairs and/or similar events • Weekly community café • Cultural food festival • Heritage and literary trail • The Big Lunch • Cultural film performance • Astronomy night • User display celebration (number of attendees)	1122	327	526	697	1550	138%	2170	489		22%
1.2 Continue to facilitate a range of social activities on a regular basis. Increase community integration, including multicultural and cross- generational, through the Shed Heaven wood work and musical workshops, as well as the bicycle repair shop. This will give all ages the opportunity to socialise while sharing skills and learning new ones Continue to facilitate the Community Choir and Folk Music Workshop Continue to promote the once weekly "Take a Break" community café to include more themed events and international food days Provide three Stay & Play sessions and one Art & Craft session per week for children under 5 (under 8 in school holidays) and their parent cares. This will encourage children's	2967	971	896	1189	3056	102%	3400	869		26%

development and communication skills while their carers socialise and make new friends while sharing parenting skills (number of users)										
1.3 Continue to facilitate and increase the varied range of exercise classes to suit different ages and abilities – yoga, Pilates, special rehabilitation classes, walking, cycling and Indian dance classes Increase the number of Outdoor Adventure weeks / days for children, which involve literacy skills and applied mathematics while giving them a chance to experience all aspects of the outdoors from leaning about animals and insects, building shelters using shrubs and trees, to cooking on an open fire (number of attendees)	2488	900	987	902	2789	112%	2660	826		31%
1.4 Special rehabilitation exercises Potted History Reminiscence Outdoor Adventure weeks / days Nature Classrooms Community Garden / woodlands (number of attendees)	330	121	49	61	231	70%	590	250		42%
1.5 Develop a Community Neighbourhood post, employing a worker to work across the ward. Community engagement is the involvement of citizens, through locally based representative bodies, in influencing and shaping decisions which directly impact on their local environment and the quality of their daily life.	Employ a community development worker				Worker not employed	0%	Replaced by 1.6 for 16-17			
FROM Q1 16-17 1.6 Continue to build on the Community Engagement Role, Establish a community development consortium including • local residents, • Ward Assembly	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	100 Introductory letters 25 Visits to	Community Development worker employed		0%

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer Neighbourhood team • service providers, WG Grace, Grove Park Community Library, Marvels Lane Boys Club, Burnt Ash Methodist Church, etc. • Businesses, • Pre- Schools / Nurseries, Burnt Ash, Little Stars, Marvels Lane, Grove park, Valeswood & Little Pumpkins Nurseries. • Schools, Marvels Lane, Coopers lane, Baring Road (Primary). Knights Academy (Secondary). • Housing Associations, London & Quadrant, Phoenix Housing, • NHS, IAP, Bromley & Lewisham Mind • Faith, BME and other hard to reach groups. <p>Complete a mapping exercise to identity gaps. Holding quarterly focus groups to ensure it is kept up to date.</p> <p>Identify areas of need, look at funding opportunities to support new groups and community organisations.</p> <p>Through the Ward Profile identify how to engage with hard to reach groups ensuring ALL residents have an opportunity to have their say and access services. Cross ward engagement partnership working, Catford South, Downham & Whitefoot. Become a member of the ChART Committee to offer support.</p>							<p>service providers</p> <p>2 Bi-Monthly ward meetings</p> <p>1 Community Development consortium meeting</p> <p>1 Community Showcase event</p>	<p>d in April 16</p> <p>No measurable monitoring data supplied for the rest of this output</p>		
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1. Remove funding from under-performing groups/those performing least well

Have you achieved at least 90% of the agreed reporting outputs and outcomes in all quarters since the start of the programme?

Grove Park Community Group (GPCG) have delivered against the majority of their outputs, however, the key output (1.5 in 15-16 and 1.6 in 16-17) plus the special condition number 1 has not been delivered at all.

Output 1.5, Develop a Community Neighbourhood Post – This is an integral part of the grants award. There are clear issues with this output with no work taking place outside of the Ringway Centre and no progress in 15-16 against an agreed set of actions as evidenced below.

Output 1.4 - This is referral based and has not met its target figure. Numbers are lower than expected due to fewer referrals. It has been recommended that the organisation that provide these sessions link into Community Connections rather than just GP referrals. Regardless of the fact this service is not directly provided by GPCG it is still an output and needs to be addressed. GPCG are looking at other projects around rehabilitation. GPCG state that the refurbishment of some meeting rooms at the Ringway Centre has caused some issues, but the work is now complete.

Good performance on outputs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and exceeding target. However, the vast majority of these activities preceded the grant award.

Have you achieved all of the wider outcomes outlined in the initial grant application?

The wider outcomes and the essence of the grant theme have not been delivered. Bringing the Community Together - this is an integral part of grant and GPCG has been provided with the opportunity to create partnerships and share best practice with other groups from the local area. This has not happened and no evidence of work outside of the Ringway Centre has been provided.

A Community Development Officer to work in Grove Park ward formed part of the agreement, however this did not start until 1st April 2016. GPCG states that the Officer was already doing this work and felt that this was a continuation of work taking place at the Ringway Centre.

GPCG states that they have tried to develop the consortium as agreed, but they have been unable to do this due to a lack of responses from other stakeholders. It was pointed out that this has not been evidenced and that the Development Officer who also covers the Grove Park Assembly received no invitation. Therefore, GPCG were asked to send through evidence of the planned meeting, this has not been received.

There is very little evidence of work taking place outside of the Ringway Centre for 2015-16. GPCG Community Engagement Officer (CDO) stated that she does go out and has met with other wards such as Catford South, Downham and Whitefoot and has met local groups at the WG Grace Centre.

GPCG admits that it does not evidence work as well as it should.

The agreed outcome of bringing the community together has not been delivered.

If no to either of the above:

- what are the mitigating factors?
- what plans are in place for improving performance?
- what progress has been made against actions agreed with your Development Officer?

GPCG stated that initially they did not realise that part of the role was to deliver work outside of the centre and that they interpreted the agreement differently thinking that it was a continuation of work at the Centre. GPCG admit that this was their error.

In February 2016 the Monitoring Officer met with GPCG and suggested that they do the following as part of their neighbourhood development:

- Grove Park Steering Group / Consortium – See above, not taken place or evidenced
- Mapping exercise in Grove Park – Work started, but no apparent progress since Q3 15-16
- Identify new Groups & Community Orgs – No evidence of this in 2015-16
- More work outside of the Ringway Centre – No evidence supplied from 2015-16 or Q1 16-17
- Initiate a Development Plan for Grove Park – Not started
- Crowdfunding Project for Grove Park– GPCG says that it attended the workshop, however no Crowdfunding projects identified.

GPCG state that the CDO is now working on occasion outside of the Ringway Centre and meeting local groups, they stated that they are:

- In contact with 55 plus Group at Library
- Working with Chinbrook Dog Show
- Working with SCALE Projects on a 16-24 Employment Programme
- Working in partnership with a new group delivering healthy walks

GPCG was asked about its relationship with ChART (Chinbrook Action Residents Team), they responded that this is more difficult and they have recently planned two meetings but both had been cancelled. GPCG state that not a great deal has happened with ChART until now. However, there have been developments at ChART including the employment of staff to deliver their priorities and a Launch Day on 27 August 2016.

It appears that no new work has taken place outside of what they were already delivering and GPCG cannot provide detail as to how the grant is being spent. GPCG were asked what the added value is as the outputs were already being delivered prior to the grant. GPCG were unable to provide any detail regarding the spend.

A key element of this grant is to work in partnership with the Local Assembly, ChART, the Community Library and other local organisations to bring the community together. This can be done in a variety of ways, such as: sharing resources, identifying good practice, joined events, local Steering Groups and signposting. Little or no evidence has been observed of this taking place in Grove Park ward with no leadership provided by GPCG.

What local support/evidence of need can you identify for the work you are undertaking?

GPCG was unable to evidence a need for community development work to take place and all the evidence provided related to the need for a community centre. A mapping exercise would have enabled GPCG to identify need within the ward.

GPCG state that they are working in partnership with other groups / services and providing free accommodation for them at the Centre including the IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapy). HTC (Horndean Technology College) have been providing teacher training for unemployed people and have been charged a 50% rate for this. HTC have delivered three of these sessions.

GPCG works with Warmer Homes and is now referring people. Potted History and Wide Horizons use the Centre as does Bromley College who use the Music Studio, they will be doing a Robotic Session on Saturday. GPCG stated that they did invite all the local colleges, but only Bromley College expressed an interest.

Hyde Housing are carrying out an employment initiative and this was relayed to ChART via the Employment, Training and Skills Coordinator at ChART. Lewisham Cyclists, Dark Skies and Men in Sheds also use the centre. GPCG is working with a new Muslim Women's Group and a Muslim Girls Group, these are not formal Groups as yet.

The Centre also attracts quite a few people with learning difficulties who attend events including Open Mic Night, Folk Group and the Friday Café, people often visit with their Carers.

GPCG works with Community Connections who refer people. GPCG state that evidence is from other Groups and Service users and from physically meeting people.

2. Negotiate reductions and seek alternative funding streams

Are there any proposals that you can put forward that will deliver significant saving against current expenditure? This can include capital investment to change your delivery/business model.

GPCG are financially stable and their reserves are increasing.

GPCG stated that the Ringway Centre is experiencing increased demand for room hire, in addition to this they are seeing more demand for use of the garden. This has resulted in increased income. Rates have been the same for four years so there is an opportunity to increase the hire charge and increase revenue as a result of this.

GPCG has volunteer led workshops in all the musical activities, all attendees pay £2 and this now adding up. There is an opportunity with the Music Studio to become more professional as at present it is just local / smaller groups that use it, but they are reluctant to do this due to the VAT threshold.

GPCG stated that the Ringway Centre is used as a polling station with revenue received from this.

There are no opportunities for significant savings against expenditure.

What alternative funding streams are you already pursuing?

GPCG stated that over the past year the main effort has been towards making the best use of the Centre and its facilities / equipment that it received funding for, with the aim being to maximise potential.

GPCG has funding from L&Q for Community Events, this is now £3,000 having been reduced from £5,000, GPCG is meeting them to discuss a new grant.

GPCG has been running the under 5's stay and play sessions at the building next to the library and spent a large amount of money repairing the building. This has now moved to the Ringway and is linked to the £2 a family scheme. This is now a 5 day pre-school due to demand for local childcare.

The pre-school has received funding from the Ward Assembly to run under 5 activities on a Saturday for families that have a child or children with a special educational need. GPCG cannot formalise an agreement with pre-school until the lease extension is sorted, the lease is until the end of March 2017, but GPCG want to extend for a further three years, GPCG is currently in negotiations regarding this.

GPCG is still working on London Marathon Project, the money was for a multi-use games area.

GPCG did state that they continue to look at fundraising opportunities to provide funding for a community toilet / disabled toilet which will be separate from the two buildings and their meeting rooms. GPCG is looking at crowdfunding for this with the cost being around £16,000.

Other than the L&Q application no other funding bids are in place.

Are there any other funding streams that you can identify that the council can support you to access?

No requirement for support was identified.

3. Work with groups to consider mergers or asset sharing

Are there any organisations doing similar work to you in the borough who you may consider sharing resources or merging with? Who have you considered/approached?

Potential partner organisations would be ChART and Grove Park Community Library and it is clear that GPCG is not working as closely with these organisations as it should.

GPCG stated that the best that they can hope for is cooperation with other Groups. There are almost two parts to Grove Park these are Chinbrook and the area around the Ringway Centre including the town centre.

GPCG does share information and has lent equipment to other Groups such as a gazebo and a projector.

Potted History are applying to the Lottery and GPCG is part of this, if successful Potted History will have a space at the Ringway Centre and go out into the community to do gardening activities. They have office space in the north of the borough but want an office in the south.

GPCG are concerned about duplication of projects within the ward with other Groups seeming to replicate activities at the Ringway Centre. GPCG state that people from the WG Grace Centre will not come to the Ringway Centre and this is an historical issue that they need to address. Officers pointed out that the mapping exercise would help to negate the issue of duplication of activities and understand need across the ward.

GPCG want to work with the other groups to unite together for a Grove Park Festival.

GPCG are concerned about lack of youth provision within the ward.

Are there other groups in the local area that you could share resources with even if they are delivering a different type of service? Again, who have you considered/approached?

The only other local groups with potential for this are Grove Park Library and ChART, discussions have not taken place over sharing of resources and at present the relationships are not in place for this to happen.

What support might you need to move these suggestions forward?

N/A

4. Pro-rata reductions across all groups

What would a 25% cut in your grants look like in service delivery terms? What are the wider impacts?

It was quite evident that GPCG have failed to achieve the key outputs 1.5 and 1.6. Therefore a 25% cut was not discussed and GPCG were advised that the recommendation would be to stop funding GPCG under the main grants programme. Whilst officers acknowledge that there has been some improvement this year, it is felt that this would have little impact as GPCG has been unable to demonstrate the added value of this funding award.

In response to this GPCG stated that they wanted to carry on and do their best and that they would need to re-invent themselves. They expressed concerns about the future of the Ringway Centre site. Officers told GPCG that it is a core community facility and at present there is considered a need for this site to maintain a community provision role. The officers advised GPCG that there is a need to formalise their tenure arrangement.

Have you modelled this cut and developed an action plan for its implementation?

This was not discussed, as above.

Conclusion

Any other comments / areas discussed

GPCG were advised about the decision process and the Mayor and Cabinet decision on 7 December.

Conclusion and recommendation

It is evident that GPCG have failed to grasp the community development side of the grant with little work taking place until Q1 of 2016-17. This has been despite meetings with the monitoring officer and an agreed set of actions put in place. Outcome 1.5 was an integral part of GPCG's application and the failure to make any progress across the four quarters is not acceptable.

GPCG continues to perform well on other agreed outputs, however, these were being delivered prior to the grant and will continue to be delivered if the grant were to be removed.

The recommendation is that Grove Park Community Group no longer receive Main Grants Funding.

Equalities groups disproportionately impacted by recommendations

Ethnicity:		Pregnancy / Maternity:	
Gender:		Marriage & Civil Partnerships:	
Age:		Sexual orientation:	
Disability:		Gender reassignment:	
Religion / Belief:			

Commentary and potential mitigations:

As the main grant funding awarded to Grove Park Community Group is to benefit the wider community in the ward, no particular equalities groups will be disproportionately impacted by the proposed removal of funding.



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31st October 2016

Dear Chris,

Re: MAIN GRANTS – draft 2017/18 and 2018/19 funding recommendation and notice of proposed change to funding

I am writing to inform you of the draft recommendation for your 2017/18 and 2018/19 Main Grant funding.

As you will be aware, the overall Main Grants budget is being reduced by £1m from 1 April 2017, equating to a reduction of just over 25%. Following consultation in May and June 2016, it was agreed by the Mayor and Cabinet to realise these savings using four approaches, in the following order of priority:

1. *Remove funding from under-performing groups/those performing least well*
2. *Negotiate reductions and seek alternative funding streams*
3. *Work with groups to consider mergers or asset sharing*
4. *Pro-rata reductions across all groups*

Officers have now met with all Main Grant funded organisations and sought to realise as much in the way of savings from the top 3 approaches as possible to reduce the impact of a pro-rata reduction to all remaining groups.

We discussed in the meeting with you in September that whilst GPCG have performed well against a number of outputs no work has taken place against the main output (and indeed the essence of the grant award) of community development in the wider ward. Whilst we understand that a community development worker is now in place little evidence has been provided of what has been delivered in 2016/17 so far.

As such officers will be recommending the ending of Main Grant funding from 31 March 2017. Your recommendation report is attached.

If you would like to query anything in the report or highlight any factual errors please contact your Lead Officer as soon as possible. If your queries cannot be addressed and you wish to make a formal appeal against the recommended Grant award please send a submission to main.grants@lewisham.gov.uk.

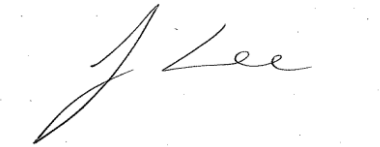
Your submission should be no longer than 2 sides of A4 with the email titled FORMAL APPEAL – (*name of your organisation*).

In order to be considered your appeal must reach us by midnight on Tuesday 15 November 2016. Please be aware that both your submission and our response will be public documents. These representations will be considered at a special meeting of the Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts) on 30 November 2016, 2-6pm. At this meeting you have the opportunity to make a short 3 minute presentation to the Mayor and Cabinet to be considered alongside the written representation. If you would like to speak, please confirm this when you send in your submission.

Following this meeting the final Main Grant recommendations will be presented to Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts) on 7 December 2016 for decision.

Please note that this letter acts as 3 months' notice of a proposed change to your funding. Although the final decision will not be taken until December you should take any necessary steps now required to manage the proposed change to your funding level.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Lee', is written over a faint, light-colored circular stamp or watermark.

James Lee
Head of Cultural and Community Development

FORMAL APPEAL – GROVE PARK COMMUNITY GROUP (GPCG)

Background

GPCG applied for Main Grant funding for the 2015-2018 programme under the 1b. Neighbourhood strand, as the group felt the criteria described for this strand in the guidance document summarised what had been the group's objectives since its foundation in 1972. GPCG has always engaged with the community, it exists for the community's benefit and without it the group would amount to nothing.

Having been awarded the full grant applied for, we continued running the group and our well-established community centre (known as The Ringway) with the addition of managing a former Sure-Start building close to the Centre, after the provision of U5s activities in Grove park run by the Council was removed. GPCG took over the former Sure Start work, catering for some 50+ young children and parents/carers each week. This clearly met what would have been unmet child care need and enabled the Grove Park area to access provision so desperately needed across Lewisham itself.

Some seven months into the programme GPCG met with the Monitoring Officer to be advised that we had not met our obligations under the Main Grant funding provision. Being keen to address this we asked for an explanation as to how, with our large outreach programme, activities for all areas and with an increasing number of groups using the facilities (including working with the Neighbourhood Forum through its chair Stephen Kenny, former Chair of GPCG) alongside other activities such as the work above described with the former Sure Start operation, we had not met the requirements. Unfortunately, a further three months ensued before we received the support we asked for to establish the additional outputs needed for the 'neighbourhood development'. It was unfortunate too that despite being assured that it would be forthcoming, we did not receive, an introductory letter from our Monitoring Officer to add weight to our Community Engagement Officer's work in the community. As a result, despite contact and reminders, the specific work in the community did not start until year two.

Working in the community

Our Community Engagement Officer, engaged in a self-employed capacity by GPCG in 2013, has been instrumental in setting up activity groups for under 5s at the additional premises, as well as paving the way for a holiday play scheme open to all in the ward, supporting Lewisham Young Carers and Wide Horizons in outdoor educational activities at the Ringway site, and catering for a specific age range that GPCG had had less contact with in recent years.

Since formalising the employment status and re-defining the role of our Community Engagement Officer, her work in the community has continued. When the ChART (Chinbrook Action Residents Team) project began, working with Big Local within a defined area, GPCG acted for a time as their Local Trusted Organisation. Following a period when ChART underwent changes in personnel and needed time to re-emerge with a focussed plan, launched in late August 2016, and supported by GPCG personnel, the positive relationship has returned. Further co-operation has been established through key contacts with the three ChART co-ordinators, each with a specific work stream. Indeed, our Community Engagement Officer was actively involved in ChART's Away Day in October.

A further example of GPCG's willingness to work with all other groups, organisations and Grove Park interested parties, is that of our work with the very successful Chinbrook Dog Show group. When the idea of a carnival was mooted, GPCG immediately made contact to advise we would be happy to support and be part of a carnival for the whole of the Grove Park community.

In addition to ChART, our officer has met with many Grove Park organisations and groups with a view to form a closer co-operation, including London & Quadrant, Hyde House, IAPT,

Adult Education and Lewisham Pension Forum. She works closely with Community Connections and the Co-ordinating Group, and she has visited all pre-schools in the area, gathering information for the mapping of Grove Park.

Steering Group/Consortium for Grove Park

Setting up a steering group for Grove Park with many interest groups such as ChART, Grove Park Neighbourhood Forum and the 'saving Grove Park Youth Club movement' already competing for people's time and engagement has proved very difficult. An attempt was made by GPCG in the spring to get a selection of locally based businesses, schools, churches, voluntary groups and other local organisations together for an initial informal meeting, but there was only lukewarm response, and the event had to be cancelled.

Grove Park Community Group is seen by many as an 'umbrella organisation' for the local community. Its constitution allows for representatives of local groups to sit on its committee, e.g. the Neighbourhood Forum and Nature Reserve. We are renewing our efforts in this area by inviting all key organisations to our next AGM requesting that they appoint a representative to join the GPCG committee, and be an additional means of widening the coverage of the Grove park community in so doing.

Our Community Outreach

In addition to annual summer and Christmas fairs, weekly café sessions, often with themed events and guest speakers, GPCG has this year engaged the community in a series of new, inclusive and very different events, appealing to many and different parts of the community:

- The marking of International Women's Day; Easter Egg Hunt in our woodland; an event for World Book Night; The Big Lunch; Afternoon Tea Dances and Sing-along's; a Health & Wellbeing Day for all residents; a Freaky Friday Fright Night and several Astronomy Nights.

- All the above events have brought together people of all ages; our visitors range from 0 to 99+ years. We work to ensure that we are inclusive and recognise diversity, as well as enabling our residents with disabilities to be as involved as possible – e.g. our wheelchair users accessing our dances and adults and children dressing up in in family oriented Hallowe'en event.

- The Ringway garden with adjacent woodland is frequently used for Outdoor Adventure Learning and Forest School activities, as well as being fully utilised by a regular Holiday Play Scheme open to all children - sponsored by GPCG.

- Our musical activities, all run by volunteers, are open to the whole community and take many forms from weekly guitar lessons, live music during café sessions, monthly folk workshops to music studio recording and rehearsal. Open Mic nights have been held twice a month this year, which has meant a new outreach to young and old. Further examples are the Grove Park Community Choir supported by GPCG and percussion workshops.

- Weekly woodwork sessions, run by volunteers, along with popular bicycle Mend & Ride sessions twice monthly. We will also have a complete bike workshop from London Marathon funding.

- The Under 5s Stay & Play Sessions which now run two days a week at the Centre, have been welcomed by local residents. Run by volunteers and costing £2.00 to attend has ensured affordability and once more extended the outreach of GPCG in the community.

In addition to these activities, all led and run by GPCG volunteers, we also sponsor many other groups through providing accommodation at reduced rates. Examples are the University of the Third Age, Lacemakers and the Bobby Dazzlers Over 60s Club. To ensure that we are enabling members of our community to access the facilities some groups attend the centre

completely free of charge, e.g. the Lewisham Young Carers and the weekly Lewisham Healthy Walk group. We also regularly facilitate Neighbourhood Police surgeries.

All these varied and wide-ranging GPCG-run activities engage with the whole of the Grove Park Community in a multitude of ways. There is truly something for all members of the community.

Summary

GPCG has received grant-aid from Lewisham Council for a number of years, and this has been used for the benefit of the local community – that being our paramount focus. For this to be withdrawn will have a huge impact on the work that GPCG does for all and every part of the whole ward and beyond. Ensuring that all our work focuses on inclusion, community engagement and wider involvement, examples from Young Carers to those with disabilities, alongside work with schools, and ChART, to name but a few, have demonstrated how GPCG, its work and role is key to the Grove Park community, and is a huge benefit to many thousands of people every year. Such a loss to the community when it has been at the forefront of recent Council savings would be marking out this ward, and we as a Group have stepped in to support e.g. the former Sure Start provision to ensure that such savings by the Council have been mitigated and show us working with and for the local community.

We appreciate that there are aspects of our work that need enhancing and we have put steps in place to remedy this. We are determined that as has been recognised by officers, the Ringway Centre 'is a core community facility and at present there is considered a need for this site to maintain a community provision role'.

GPCG intends to run, improve and keep this well regarded facility working for and indeed serving its community. We are privileged to have been entrusted to manage the Ringway site on behalf of the Grove Park community which deserves these facilities and opportunities offered not only now but in the future, with the support of LBL to do so.

GROVE PARK COMMUNITY GROUP



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21st November 2016

Dear Chris,

Re: MAIN GRANTS – response to formal appeal

I am writing in response to the formal appeal document that you submitted on 15th November 2016.

You acknowledge in your submission that you considered the grant to be intended to support your existing and on-going work and that you only became aware of the need to widen the scope with a more explicit community development focus 7 months later following a meeting with your Development Officer. You state that for 3 months after this meeting you remained unclear on the objectives and did not receive a letter of introduction to other groups to commence your work.

I would dispute that this is an accurate reflection of our engagement with you over this period. The initial recommendation report sent to you on 30 March 2015 made specific reference to the importance of employing an individual charged with outreach work to avoid the nature of the bid and the project being 'insular'.

Furthermore, the grant funding began on 1 July 2015 and on 12 August I chaired an event for all organisations funded through the Strong and Cohesive Communities (Neighbourhoods) strand to explore this work. This event was attended by a representative of GPCG and officers were very clear that, while community development will look different depending on local factors, the work funded through this grant needed to be outward focused and providing significant added value on top of existing provision.

In addition to this the Development Officer met with you on 11 October 2015, 9 November 2015, 15 December 2015 and 7 January 2016 all within the first seven months of the grant, and subsequently on 24 Feb 2016, 7 March 2016 and 15 March 2016. I am reassured by the Officer that they were very clear with you regarding the requirements of the grant at all of these meetings.

In terms of the introductory letter I understand that this was discussed with your Development Officer but it was agreed that it was overly bureaucratic and would give the impression of the project being too 'council led' and that GPCG needed to work hard to build relationships with local groups rather than having the council 'forcing' them to engage. At no stage was the officer contacted by another group enquiring about GPCG's role and the matter was considered closed.

Beyond this you highlight the positive work that GPCG has undertaken with ChART and the Chinbrook Dog Show as evidence of the community development work funded by the grant.

While I accept that these relationships have improved and are now working well this has only happened relatively recently and during the majority of the grant period these relationships have been strained and unproductive. Indeed, I understand that the relationship with ChART was particularly difficult following the breakdown of the Local Trusted Organisation arrangement. We have undertaken to review performance over the whole of the funded period and, as such, we need to acknowledge that for the majority of the period these relationships were non-existent or poor.

I note the issues that you raise about the difficulty in establishing a local steering group for the community development work. The Development Officer (who also covers Grove Park Assembly) has been extremely keen for this to happen and assures me that at no point did GPCG highlight the apparent lukewarm response or seek any support or assistance from him to get more local support. I understand that the relationship between GPCG and the officer is very good and that he is frequently at the Ringway Centre as part of his Assembly role. I therefore find it slightly odd that you had not sought support from him and/or liaised with him regarding the date. I have been advised that you sent the officer a letter dated March 2016 via email on 16 November 2016 as evidence of planning for a steering group meeting. This was the first he had heard of this and, as far as he is aware, no meeting has ever taken place. I consider this lack of engagement with the Development Officer on this issue as evidence of the lack of priority given to a proactive community development role for GPCG.

Finally, you provide significant details of the work undertaken by GPGC and the activities that take place at the Ringway Centre. I am not disputing the activities that GPCG provide. However, six specific community development actions were agreed with your Development Officer in February (as outlined in the recommendation report) and you have been unable to evidence any progress on four of these. I accept that there has been progress on the remaining two but once again this has not taken place until 2016/17. I understand that your Monitoring Officer was keen for you to conduct a mapping exercise of the existing services, and gaps, in Grove Park ward and that he sent you examples of work carried out in other wards. This exercise would have enabled GPCG to assess local need and provision and avoid duplication (which you have identified as an issue). This mapping exercise would enable GPCG to start the development plan for Grove Park which would have been the focus to increase community support and address the engagement issues that you have highlighted. Overall, the lack of progress against these agreed actions demonstrates the lack of commitment to the community development requirements of the grant.

I would like to reiterate that the council recognises the value of the work undertaken by GPCG and there is no intention to destabilise the organisation through this process. I have reviewed your annual accounts and reassured myself that you are in a strong financial position and your existing work should not be affected by this decision.

As such, given the information contained within your initial report and this letter, it is my intention not to amend the recommendation to Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts) in relation to the grant reduction.


It is not clear in your submission but I assume that you would seek to further challenge this recommendation at the special meeting of the Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts).

If this is the case I can confirm that you will have the opportunity to make a short 3 minute presentation to the Mayor and Cabinet to be considered alongside the written

representation. Your time slot for this presentation is **2:40pm on 30 November 2016. This meeting will take place in Room 2 at Lewisham Civic Suite in Catford.**

If you are satisfied with this response and do not wish to speak please let me know ASAP so you can be removed from the agenda.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Lee', is written over a faint, light-colored grid background.

James Lee
Head of Cultural and Community Development