

APPENDIX 3: IRIE!

Main Grants 2017-18 report

Name of organisation	IRIE!
Date of meeting	27 September 2016
Names and positions of attendees	Beverley Glean - Artistic Director of IRIE! Patrischia Warmington - Chair of IRIE!'s Board Andy Thomas - Cultural Development Manager, London Borough of Lewisham Nancy Stridgen - Cultural and Community Development Officer, London Borough of Lewisham

Group Name: IRIE!	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total funding received 2015-16	36,679 18K neighbh'd 18,679 WATAS	-	12,226	12,226	12,227
Total funding to be received 2016-17	48,905 24K neighbh'd 24,905 WATAS	12,226	12,226	12,227	12,226

Outcomes	<p><u>Neighbourhood Funding</u></p> <p>1.1 Provide practical support to build strong and cohesive communities</p> <p>1.2 Facilitating involvement of residents in the issues which affect their lives and supporting collective action to deliver change</p> <p>1.3 Address gaps in participation locally i.e. Outreach work to sectors of community that are currently not participating in community activities</p> <p>1.4 Provide support to local residents and new groups wishing to develop local activities</p> <p>1.5 Provide access to community space</p> <p>1.6 Identify gaps in youth and community provision in the Ward</p> <p><u>Widening Access to Arts and Sports</u></p> <p>2.1 Provide opportunities for people of all ages to explore and develop their creativity and acquire new skills</p> <p>2.2 Provide opportunities for people of all ages to engage with the arts as active participants and members of an</p>

Outputs:	audience 2.3 Increase awareness and enhance the reputation of Lewisham as a place to spend leisure time									
	2015/16 Target	2015/16 Q2	2015/16 Q3	2015/16 Q4	2015/16 Total	% Achieved	2016/17 Target	2016/17 Q1	Q2	Achieved TD
Neighbourhood										
1. Recruit x 1 Community Cohesion and Engagement Officer (P/T) July 2015	1	1	1	1 (left 4 th March)	1	100%	1	0		0%
2. Join New Cross Assembly Coordinating Group - Attend 2 Assembly Meetings	2	1	3	3	5	150%	2	0		No current Engagem't officer
3. Draft 1 x strategy to support local residents and new groups wishing to develop local activities e.g. Incubating/hot-desking as appropriate August 2015	1	0	0	0	0	0%	1	0		0%
4. Draft 1 x outreach strategy to engage sections of the community that are currently not participating in community bases activities	1	0	0	0	0	0%	1	1		100%
5. Support 2 x local residents/new groups wishing to develop local activities through hot-desking	2	2	3	12	12	600%	0	0		In Quarter 2,3&4
6. Provide community facilities in the form of 5 spaces for hire for 300 users from July 2015 to March 2016	300	219	289	343	343	114%	100	249		249%
7. Host x 1 Assembly meeting for up to 85 people per ward per event	1	0	1	1	1	100%	0	0		Not in this quarter

8. Host x 1 Community meeting for up to 150 people	1	0	0	55	55	M- 100% att - 36%	0	0		Not in this quarter
9. Co-ordinate 1 x consultation event for young people and children addressing Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Drug Issues	1	0	1	1	1	100%	0	0		Not in this quarter
10. Provide 15 activity sessions for 30 older people from July 2015 to March 2016	15	5	10	15	15	100%	5	10		200%
10. Number of older people target 30	30	29	29	29	29	97%	30	23		76%
Widening Access to Arts and Sports										
11. Deliver 20 sessions for children and young people from July 2015 to March 2016	20	2	10	20	20	100%	7	10		142%
12. Reach 150 CYP within the 20 sessions from July 2015 to March 2016	150	17	17	17	17	11%	38	17		44%
13. Deliver 4 x public performances with 20 Young People	4	2	4	4	4	100%	0	0		Activities take place In quarters 3&4
14. Dance Yourself Fit Deliver 30 x sessions	30	10	20	30	30	100%	10	10		100%
15. Dance Yourself Fit Within the 30 sessions reach 80 people	80	25	25	25	25	31%	80	70		87%
16. Deliver 1 x cultural and learning event for 500 people	500	550	0	0	0	110%	125	200		160%
17. Deliver Education Programme for 15 London Borough of Lewisham Schools	15	1	5	7	7	47% (see note)	0	0		Activities take place In quarters 3&4

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?

Neighbourhood

IRIE! received £18,000 Neighbourhood funding for 2015/16 and will receive £24,000 for 2016/17. 64% of outputs were achieved for the period 2015/16.

The organisation was successful in achieving some its output targets which were largely in relation to providing access to the Moonshot centre as follows

- 12 groups were given the opportunity to hot desk against a target of 2 (600%).
- 343 users were given a community space to hire against a target of 300 (114%)
- 29 older people accessed regular provision at the centre against a target of 30 (94%).
- 3 community events were held, including a youth event around the themes of crime and antisocial behaviour and an older people's tea dance.

However the outputs in relation to a wider community development approach have not been achieved. These are particularly in relation to the development and implementation of outreach strategies which would underpin a genuinely outward facing community development presence in the area. One of the strategies has now been completed and approved in the 2016/17 period but overall the organisation has not been able to demonstrate real progress in this area of work.

Widening Access to Arts and Sports

IRIE! received £18,679 widening access to arts funding for 2015/16 and will receive £24,905 for 2016/17.

Impact and Reach

Community Dance

Due to the lack of capacity to recruit, the figures for the adult 'Dance Yourself Fit' were low in this period (25 participants against a target of 80). A new street dance class has been added in 2016/17 and in quarter 1 participation figures have increased to 70.

Youth Classes

17 young people regularly engaged on Saturday youth classes at a subsidised rate. (The target for this group was 150). The organisation is planning increased recruitment via local schools in 2016/17.

Schools

Although IRIE! did not reach their target in 2015/16 for the number of schools engaged (7 against a target of 15). However, it is the view of officers that the target for this output was over ambitious and the fact that 536 children were reached in schools within 20 sessions represents a good achievement. Schools pay a heavily subsidised rate of £50 per workshop.

58% of outputs were achieved for the period 2015/16 but there are mitigating factors that need to be taken into account as can be seen below.

Partnership work in the public realm

Recent work securing audiences outside of a venue has included a free performance by the foundation degree students in Deptford Market square partnering with Midi Music.

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

Neighbourhood

Under the neighbourhood theme there are concerns that the wider community development outcomes have not been achieved. The organisation has not been able to demonstrate significant progress against the following:

- 1.2. Facilitating involvement of residents in the issues which affect their lives and supporting collective action to deliver change
- 1.3. Address gaps in participation locally i.e. Outreach work to sectors of community that are currently not participating in community activities
- 1.6. Identify gaps in youth and community provision in the Ward

Widening Access to Arts and Sports

The 'Widening Access to Arts and Sports' outcomes have been met overall although participant numbers are lower than target across two areas. This requires significant attention but officers feel that IRIE! Is able to address these issues if they refocus their activity on their core business.

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?

Neighbourhood

The organisation has experienced difficulties in recruitment and retention of the Community Engagement Officer. A member of staff was initially recruited but left the post 4 March 2016 and was not replaced successfully. This has clearly made an impact on the ability of the organisation to develop the work around this theme. Some small pieces of work were carried out by a temporary member of staff over the summer and a new recruitment process is currently under way. However it is the view of officers that the organisation should have been able to make more progress with recruitment in the past 7 months.

Widening Access to Arts and Sports

It is the view of officers that outputs have not been reached in this time period due to:

- Reduced staffing at IRIE!, When the initial application was made a project manager was in post and the capacity for marketing fundraising has been reduced.
- Over ambitious participation figures without robust planning for achievement.
- The 'Neighbourhood' funding was a new area of work for IRIE! and it is possible that this has distracted the organisation from its core work.

Meetings have taken place with IRIE! to work on potential solutions to improve performance and allow the organisation to increase capacity and reach its goals.

IRIE! has taken up one of the suggestions for support via the pro-bono 'Enterprise for London, Start and Grow' initiative. This has benefited the organisation with 100 consultant hours to assist in finalising their business plan and financial model.

The application for an asset transfer of the Moonshot centre from Lewisham Council to IRIE! has focused business planning in the last 6 months.

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

Neighbourhood

The organisation stated that the following evidence of need for programming in this area:

- The Moonshot Centre was built specifically for the African and Caribbean communities in New Cross and surrounding areas.
- Provision of affordable well maintained spaces for hire for the local community.
- Need for extra programming to bring in increased numbers of local residents into the Moonshot Centre.

Widening Access to Arts and Sports

The organisation stated that the following evidence of need for programming in this area:

- The largest BAME communities in Lewisham are Black African and Black Caribbean. IRIE!'s mission is to develop, deliver and sustain a range of creative, educational and artistic activity based on stimuli derived from Africa and the Caribbean.
- The Moonshot Centre was built specifically for the African and Caribbean communities in New Cross and surrounding areas with funding made available by the Urban Program funding and local donations.
- Case studies of progression and positive outcomes from IRIE!'s participants
- Need for subsidised programming to allow low income families arts participation opportunities for positive health, wellbeing and progression outcomes.

2. Negotiate reductions and seek alternative funding streams

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

IRIE! has reduced their expenditure significantly over the last 3 years and cut staffing posts, therefore savings cannot be made by reducing staff members.

A new business model has been proposed which grows the staffing team and includes the asset management of the Moonshot centre.

What alternative funding streams are you already pursuing?

Work is being carried out to access the following funding streams:

- Big Lottery - Reaching Communities (tied into the application to asset manage the Moonshot Centre)
- Arts Council England - Grants for the Arts (Widening Access to Arts)
- Increase in earned income via hires (general income)
- Selling services via workshop model, to schools and corporately (Widening Access to Arts)

The Grants for the Arts application would not replace a LBL cut in Main Grant funding as this application is not for community dance and fitness programming.

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

The organisation requested further partnership work to take place in the Big Lottery Reaching Communities application, if the Moonshot Asset transfer takes place. Officers will explore with IRIE! how this support can be provided.

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?

IRIE! do not think it is appropriate to merge with another organisation as its services are unique within the borough and stated that savings could not be realised via this change of model. The organisation is willing to share resources.

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?

Please see above.

What support might you need to move these suggestions forward?

The organisation has requested clarity of the decision on the potential asset transfer for the Moonshot centre. Officers will continue to work with IRIE! to ensure that appropriate support is provided around these issues.

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?

The organisation stated that community arts participation classes may have to close with a 25% cut.

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

The 25% cut was modelled into the business plan for 2017/18 income.

Conclusion

Any other comments / areas discussed

Conclusion and recommendation

Neighbourhood

It is recommended that IRIE! is no longer funded under this theme in 2017/18. Although some positive steps have been taken towards a better connection with the local community and links with the New Cross Assembly, the organisation has not achieved important output targets and has not been able to demonstrate significant progress in this area of work.

Widening Access to Arts and Sports

It is recommended that IRIE! receive a pro-rata cut under this theme.

Although IRIE! has underachieved in its output targets, the organisation has delivered on its outcomes. IRIE! plays an important role in the borough, with its history of delivering African and the Caribbean educational and artistic activity. The Foundation Degree which IRIE! runs from the Moonshot Centre is the only UCAS accredited course in African and Caribbean dance in the UK and there are benefits to residents from this taking place in Lewisham.

Funding only under this theme will encourage a stronger focus on the organisation's core business. Officers will work with IRIE! to develop plans for an increase in participant numbers.

Equalities groups disproportionately impacted by recommendations			
Ethnicity:	X	Pregnancy / Maternity:	
Gender:		Marriage & Civil Partnerships:	
Age:	X	Sexual orientation:	
Disability:		Gender reassignment:	
Religion / Belief:			
<p>Commentary and potential mitigations:</p> <p>The organisation is funded under the neighbourhood theme to deliver generic services and cuts to this funding will not therefore impact disproportionately on any of the equalities groups</p> <p>The organisation is funded under the Widening Access to Arts and Sports to deliver activities particularly for BME communities, children and young people and older adults. Cuts to funding will therefore have a disproportionate effect on these communities. Officers will work with IRiE! on its action plan and the organisation is actively fundraising to mitigate against this impact.</p>			



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31st October 2016

Dear Beverley,

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.

Unfortunately IRIE! has underperformed against the outputs and outcomes agreed under both of your current grant agreement – Widening access to Arts and Sports and Strong and Cohesive Communities (Neighbourhood).

However, given the mitigating factors considered with regard the Widening access to Arts and Sports officers are willing to recommend that the grant in that area is simply subjected to the overall pro-rata cut.

At present this pro-rata cut is expected to be 14.9% which means your recommended award for 2017/18 and 2018/19 will be £21,187.00 per annum.

NB - please note that this recommendation is subject to change following appeals and decision and, as such, the pro-rata cut may increase and your recommended award decrease.

However, the underperformance on the Strong and Cohesive Communities (Neighbourhood) funding is considered to be more fundamental and that this activity may have even contributed to the issues relating to the wider 'core business' of IRIE!. As such officers will be recommending the ending of this funding from 31 March 2017.

Your recommendation reports are attached.

If you would like to query anything in the reports 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*).

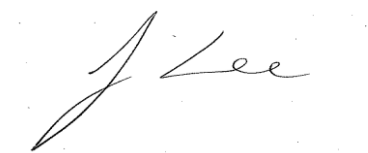
In order to be considered your appeal must reach us by midnight on Tuesday 15 November 2016. Please be aware that both your submission and our response will be public documents. These representations will be considered at a special meeting of the Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts) on 30 November 2016, 2-6pm. 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.

It has been agreed that the Main Grants programme will be extended by 1 further year, until 31 March 2019. However, please note that all council expenditure is subject to annual review, and continued funding will be subject to you agreeing and meeting your outputs and outcomes.

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 any proposed change to your funding level.

Yours sincerely,

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

James Lee
Head of Cultural and Community Development



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Mr James Lee
Head of Cultural and Community Development
London Borough of Lewisham
15th November 2016

Dear Mr Lee

Re: Lewisham (LBL) recommendation to remove funding from under-performing groups/those performing least well

We write to submit a formal appeal against the recommendation to end funding of our Strong and Cohesive Communities (Neighbourhood) grant due to underperformance, based on the following.

IRIE! Performance to date

Neighbourhood - Achieving at least 90%

- 12 groups were given the opportunity to hot desk against a target of 2 (600%)
- 343 users were given a community space to hire against a target of 300 (1145)
- 29 older people accessed regular provision at the centre against a target of 30 (94%)
- 4 community events were held, including a youth event around the themes of crime and antisocial behaviour and, Local Assembly gathering, Family Fun & Wellbeing Day; Local Elders Tea Dance)

In view of the above, the wider community development approach has been achieved as these events produced partnership working/connecting with 42 local organisations, and we also attended events that were put on by the local assemblies. The above outcomes were primarily achieved due to the development and implementation of 2 outreach strategies, namely IRIE! Strategy to support local residents and new groups and IRIE! Outreach Strategy both of which have been submitted. These are live documents and subject to review annually. To say no real progress had been demonstrated in this area is a disservice to the company's hard work and the outcomes achieved.

Widening Access to Arts and Sports (WAAS) - Achieving at least 90%

Whilst we had to deal with loss of the CCEO in post, due to a fractured ankle, which she sustained during her, CCE work out in the field, the organisation was able to swiftly refocus resources to enable the neighbourhood projects to run uninterrupted until the post was filled. This was at the end of June after which we ran 2 recruitment campaigns which did not yield the calibre of worker we required for the post, and was only made more difficult as recruiting in the summer holidays is not the best time of the year. Our current CCEO was appointed in October 2016 after our 3rd recruitment campaign in September 2016. All recruitment was facilitated by the IRIE! Board and the services were maintained with the assistance of the board volunteering in the office and a skeleton staff of freelance workers. Based on the above, to say that there was a lack of capacity to recruit is misguided and is a disservice to the company's hard work in maintaining the delivery of services during this challenging time.

The target for engaging with schools was not over ambitious. The target was to deliver an education Programme 'for '15 London borough of Lewisham schools as opposed to 'to'. IRIE! has a set education programme developed to reach the needs of all the schools in Borough. IRIE! engaged with 15 schools within Lewisham during the year and the programme aimed to reach 450 unique children (maximum of 30 at each workshop). IRIE! exceeded this target by engaging with 536 children, delivering the same to schools in Forest Hill; Brockley; New Cross; Lewisham; Deptford.

Achieving wider outcomes outlined

The impact to the core business and any discussions with the monitoring officer on July 12th 2016 needs to be understood in context. During that time we were in the process of recruiting the post of CCEO, who left on the 29th June 2016 due to her injury (CCEO), and it was a challenging time for all as we needed to maintain the service which we felt we have done given our overachievement in terms of the 90% benchmark in 10/11 outputs. Conversations with the Artistic Director took place at a time when we were considering the reduction of targets. If permitted, in a sensible effort to plan forward for any eventuality but this was not as an indication that the project was failing in any way – however assumptions were made from this by LBL.

In reference to concerns that the organisation has not being able to demonstrate significant progress against point in 2015/2016 we achieved the following:

- 1.2 Attending/Working with local assembly to host & deliver community event 2015/16
- 1.3 Dominoes group (90% Black males ages 60-83); Elders Tea dance 2015/16; Host Friends of Fordham Park AGM 2015/16. 5
- 1.6 Deliver Young People's consultation event 2015/16

IRIE! continues to deliver under these areas. IRIE! experienced challenges when the first CCEO left the post in March 2016 after a personal tragedy. The Board and volunteers provided temporary support until a CCEO was successfully recruited in June 2016. Unfortunately, shortly after starting the post the CCEO had a serious accident and had to leave the organisation. Again temporary cover was put in place and a new appointment was successfully made in October 2016. The post is 100% back on track and we believe that IRIE! should be given the opportunity in light of previous difficulties to continue to effectively deliver on its targets.

IRIE! is totally aware of its core business and have robust plans in place for the significant developments in hand and for the future, and have processes in place to quickly re-evaluate processes and themes. The Board, unequivocally, understands its responsibilities and is ready to meet any challenge going forward as we has done in the past. On 8th November 2016 our current CCEO attended her first assembly meeting, and as such was able to meet with the LBL Officer. They both looked at the role and were able to have a comprehensive look at activities. This is the first time that an LBL officer had gone through the role, and the outcome fed back swiftly to the board as requested by the Officer, so we wonder if the opinions as outlined in the recommendations report could have been averted if communication/clarity between LBL and IRIE! could have been addressed as a priority. If LBL had advised us that there were any issues earlier, we would have been able to make an immediate positive response much sooner, as is our working practice.

Local support/evidence of need for both Neighbourhood and WAAS themes

IRIE! have a coordinated approach to both. Therefore, the evidence of need in the report is relevant to each programme.

- The Moonshot Centre was built specifically for the African and Caribbean communities in New Cross and surrounding areas with funding made available by the Urban Program funding and local donations.
- Lack of affordable well maintained spaces for hire for the local community
- Need for extra programming to bring in increased numbers of local residents into the Moonshot Centre
- The largest BAME communities in Lewisham are Black African and Black Caribbean (IRIE!'s mission is to develop, deliver and sustain a range of creative, educational and artistic activity based on stimuli derived from Africa and the Caribbean)
- Case studies of progression and positive outcomes from IRIE!'s! participants
- Need for subsidised programming to allow low income families to access arts and related opportunities for positive health, and wellbeing- given the number of black people with mental health) and progression outcomes.

Conclusion & recommendation

IRIE! Is extremely disappointed with your decision to remove the neighbourhood programme in 2017/18. The tone of the report, its findings and recommendations give the impression of a company that is inexperienced with little understanding of planning, delivery, and partnerships and for us does not form an accurate account of project delivery in 2015/2016. IRIE! was founded, and operates, in Lewisham since 1985. In our 32nd year as one of the UK's few black led organisations, the addition of a robust community cohesion programme such as Neighbourhood is a natural progression for IRIE!'s work locally, and we have positioned ourselves accordingly.

Any new change to an organisation has challenges, which we believe IRIE! had successfully overcome by the end of 2015/16, and now being on target for 2016/17. We ask that Lewisham reserve judgement of withdrawing funds until the end of this financial year, and give us the opportunity to at least address the outcomes for this year upon which we can retain funding for 2017/18 (at the 14.9% cut) if targets are met. If the decision needs to be made earlier then we ask that Lewisham support IRIE! given our recent submission to LBL regarding the asset transfer of Moonshot and the need for the post to be maintained as the only representation for black led BME groups at the local assemblies (the 14.9% cut rates) if

2016/17 targets are met. We would like to have the opportunity to make a short 3 minute presentation to the Mayor and Cabinet to be considered alongside the written representation 30 November 2016, 2-6pm.

Yours sincerely
Patrischia Warmington
Chair – IRIE!



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21 November 2016

Dear Patrischia,

Re: MAIN GRANTS – response to formal appeal

Thank you for communicating your concerns regarding the proposal to remove the Neighbourhood funding strand from IRIE! after the completion of the 2016/17 funding period.

I would like to respond to your specific concerns raised in the letter directly and expand on the reasoning behind the recommendation:

1. Performance against targets

The assertion in your submission is that council officers are incorrect in their assessment that you have not met the expected outcomes relating to community development.

While the 3 outputs you listed were on target (although one community event did not reach participation figures), it is not evidenced that the outcomes and strategic approach to neighbourhood work has been achieved.

The agreed outcomes for IRIE!'s neighbourhood work are:

- 1.1 Provide practical support to build strong and cohesive communities
- 1.2 Facilitating involvement of residents in the issues which affect their lives and supporting collective action to deliver change
- 1.3 Address gaps in participation locally i.e. Outreach work to sectors of community that are currently not participating in community activities
- 1.4 Provide support to local residents and new groups wishing to develop local activities
- 1.5 Provide access to community space
- 1.6 Identify gaps in youth and community provision in the ward

Most of the activities evidenced against these outcomes are in fact around provision of space and as detailed in the recommendation report there is no evidence that significant progress has been made against the following outcomes:

- 1.2. Facilitating involvement of residents in the issues which affect their lives and supporting collective action to deliver change

- 1.3. Address gaps in participation locally i.e. Outreach work to sectors of community that are currently not participating in community activities
- 1.6. Identify gaps in youth and community provision in the Ward

Overall, the wider community development requirements of this funding stream have not been met with limited activity to identify needs and deliver a proactive community development function.

Please note under 'Achieving wider outcomes outlined' you wrote that "our overachievement in terms of the 90% benchmark in 10/11 outputs". This is not the case as 8 out of 11 outputs met 90%. Both strategic outputs via the neighbourhood strategies were not met in 2015/16.

2. Neighbourhood Development Strategies

You state that the strategies required to effectively plan the neighbourhood work have now been submitted and are live documents.

Firstly it is important to note that the strategies should have been developed at an early stage in funding and delivery should have been ongoing for the majority of this time rather than just beginning now.

Furthermore, the process of developing the strategies has been less than satisfactory with drafts submitted in 2015/16 that contained very little detail and were not considered deliverable. Officers provided advice on the process of developing this type of document and further drafts have now been received with more detail, but unfortunately they do not contain information that can satisfy me that the required outcomes will be met.

Overall, the activities undertaken to date do not demonstrate sufficient commitment to, or understanding of, the required actions to effectively deliver against this funding stream.

3. Employment of the Community Cohesion and Engagement Officer (CCEO)

Your submission acknowledges that the CCEO post has been unfilled for significant periods.

The first CCEO left post on 4 March 2016 and was replaced for a very short period in June 2016 with an officer who ceased work due to injury. The current post holder was appointed in October 2016 and it is understood that students undertook some tasks during the summer holidays.

As you are aware we also challenged you regarding your recruitment practice in May 2016 when officers became aware that the CCEO post was being advertised on your website for 3 days per week on a daily rate.

The Neighbourhood funding was allocated predominantly to employ the CCEO and this post has been unfilled for a number of months. The organisation's current lack of reserves suggests that the unpaid salary has been absorbed into the organisation's wider budget. As noted at your monitoring meeting in September, we have further concerns that when an officer was in post their focus should have been on the outputs and strategies for the Neighbourhood work and not on the Widening Access to Arts funded elements of IRIE!'s work.

4. Widening Access to Arts – Schools

Your letter challenges comments in the recommendation report that the schools target was overambitious, and suggest that IRIE! in fact engaged with 15 schools rather than the reported 7. To date evidence of engagement with 7 schools have been reported.

We would be pleased to receive evidence that work in the other schools has taken place and perhaps you could provide this to your Development Officer including dates of engagement. Please note that continued funding under this strand of work has been recommended and so no appeal is necessary in that regard. The report highlights the number of children engaged with as an accomplishment and also the good value that IRIE! offers to Lewisham schools due to your subsidised rates and quality of provision.

5. Guidance from LBL officers

Your letter states that the first time that an LBL office spoke directly to the CCEO officer about her role was on 8 November 2016 and that LBL officers up to that point did not express issues with IRIE!'s performance. "If LBL had advised us that there were any issues earlier, we would have been able to make an immediate positive response much sooner, as is our working practice."

I strongly challenge this assertion.

In autumn 2015 the New Cross Assembly Development Officer worked closely with the first appointed CCEO officer advising on issues of working practices and specifically highlighted the need to focus solely on the neighbourhood strand of work.

On 27 January 2016 the Development Officer met with IRIE! and raised concerns that performance targets would not be reached in the 2015/16 period and that the strategy documents had not been produced.

A further meeting took place on 12 July 2016 to discuss issues that the organisation was experiencing and concerns were expressed regarding performance. Advice was given and taken up by the organisation in regards to free access to consultants for more robust business planning. Advice was also given in regards to strategies, funding and building on links with local partners.

Email and phone contact around these issues was maintained between meetings and it has been made clear to IRIE! That council officers are always available to answer questions or discuss any issues experienced by the organisation.

6. IRIE! in Lewisham

The value and importance of IRIE!'s unique work in the borough has not been overlooked as noted in the recommendation report below:

"IRIE! plays an important role in the borough, with its long history of delivering African and Caribbean educational and artistic activity. The Foundation Degree which IRIE! runs from the Moonshot Centre is the only UCAS accredited course in African and Caribbean dance in the UK and there are benefits to residents from this taking place in Lewisham."

Officers will continue to work with IRIE!'s staff and board to assist the organisation with any upcoming changes and challenges and enable a greater number of residents to access IRIE!'s arts activities in the borough.

However, 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 possible to delay this decision as you request as it is important that we give you at least three months' notice of any change in funding level.

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 2:50pm 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', written over a faint, light-colored circular stamp or watermark.

James Lee
Head of Cultural and Community Development