

Main Grants 2017-18 report

Name of organisation	Volunteer Centre Lewisham
Date of meeting	21 September 2016
Names and positions of attendees	James Atkins, Board Member Volunteer Centre Lewisham Fay Millen Director Volunteer Centre Lewisham James Lee, Head of Culture and Community Development Andy Thomas, Cultural Development Manager LBL

Group Name:	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
Total funding received 2015-16	£70,000	N/A	£23,333	£23,333	£23,333					
Total funding received 2016-17	£93,333	£23,333	£23,333	£23,333						
Outcomes	Deliver a more vibrant and connected volunteer workforce across the Borough. By; Members of the Volunteering Consortium funded to deliver volunteering activities. Regular contact and updates with organisations. To promote volunteers who want specific roles. To hold regular volunteering brokerage sessions across the borough, focussing on neighbourhoods and community groups. Advertise through VC Connect. Train volunteers as advisors. Attend a minimum of 8 events that connect to communities. Review all policies and practices within PQASSO									
Outputs:	2015-16 Target	2015-16 Q2	2015-16 Q3	2015-16 Q4	2015-16 Total	% Achieved	2016-17 Q1	2016-17 Q2	% Achieved TD	
45 volunteer involving organisations engaging in Volunteer Managers Forum to improve support and understanding	45	7	13	13	33	73				
Average of 15 Volunteer Managers attend per meeting	15	7	13	13	11	73				
Workshop delivered at each meeting as identified by members		Developing role	Diversifying your volunteer base	Managing Challengi						

				ng behaviour				
To market and deliver 4 training sessions in volunteer management	4	0	1 Avoiding job replacement	5	6	150		
40 participants receive training in various aspects of volunteer management	40	0	11	17	28	70		
60 new volunteering roles developed and advertised	60	33	117	54	204	340		
4000 volunteer registrations 50% of which go on to volunteer (made up of below)	4000							
• 1000 through one to one appointments	1000	120	127	122	369	37		
• 500 through website registration	500	204	56	0	260	52		
• 300 Events	300	100	NA	52	152	51		
• 2200 VC Connect	2200	82	140	475	615	32		
Register to become a DBS Umbrella Company				received insufficient interest from Lewisham groups				
Achieve VCQA wave 4			Achieved	Complete				
Have PQASSO level 2 accredited				to carry over				

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?

Volunteer Centre Lewisham has significantly under achieved against most targets over the 2015/16 9 month monitoring period. This is particularly but not exclusively in relation to volunteer recruitment.

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

VCL has performed reasonably well in relation to support to other organisations but has not been able to address the key challenge of recruiting volunteers.

If no to either of the above:

There are some mitigating factors in relation to VCL's under achievement. It is true that the organisation has gone through significant changes in staffing levels during the past year due to funding from other sources coming to an end. However the organisation will have known and taken these changes into account when setting its targets.

The main reason for the under achievement seems to be a change in context affecting the way that people choose to volunteer. For example evidence seems to suggest that people have more direct contact with the organisation that they want to volunteer with rather than going through a broker. However, VCL has not been able to respond to this changing context adjusting the way that it works.

The organisation report that the drop in numbers of people coming forward to volunteer is also being experienced by other volunteer centres.

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

There is evidence that people are still choosing to volunteer but as noted above, the need for a broker appears to be less clear. More work needs to be done in identifying what role might be played as far as a strategic volunteering organisation is concerned but it appears that a more targeted approach could be the way forward, particularly working with communities that do not easily find their way into volunteering.

Most volunteering recruitment done by the organisation is now through VC Connect website which then connects individuals directly to the organisations that they would like to volunteer with. Some people require support in this process but there is limited involvement from VCL staff

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.

It has not been possible to identify any ways of delivering significant savings. The organisation has experienced a large loss of income over the past few years which means that staffing is now at a minimal level.

What alternative funding streams are you already pursuing?

It has not been possible to identify any alternative funding streams.

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

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?

Discussions have begun to take place around developing a new approach to providing infrastructure support to voluntary organisations in Lewisham – including support around volunteering. This may result in a merger of organisations or it may result in an entirely new organisation being formed by those organisations. Organisations that are currently involved in these discussions are:

- Volunteer Centre Lewisham
- Voluntary Action Lewisham
- Rushey Green Time Bank

At this stage it is likely that VAL and VCL will be involved in this initiative. RGT will continue to be part of the discussions but it is too early to say how things might develop

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?

It is likely that the organisation has gone beyond the stage where sharing resources with other organisations will result in the necessary turn around in its performance.

What support might you need to move these suggestions forward?

Officers are currently working with the organisation to identify the best way forward.

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?

A pro rata cut is not relevant in relation to VCLs grant as the organisation has not met its targets in relation to outputs and outcomes.

It is recommended that VCL is not funded in 2017/18 or 2018/19 but the organisation is supported to work closely with others to develop a new volunteering/infrastructure offer to the borough.

A proportion of the funding previously awarded to VCL will be ringfenced for this offer.

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

Conclusion

Any other comments / areas discussed

Conclusion and recommendation

VCL has not met its targets in relation to outputs and outcomes and it is therefore recommended that funding does not continue from 2017/18.

The strategic importance of volunteering continues to be recognised and so it is recommended that funding is ring-fenced to be part of the budget allocated to the new organisation that will deliver a redesigned voluntary sector infrastructure support offer.

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:

The organisation works across the borough and with all parts of the community. There are no particular groups that would be disproportionately affected by a reduction in services.