

APPENDIX 5 – Lewisham Disability Coalition

Main Grants 2017-18 report

Name of organisation	Lewisham Disability Coalition
Date of meeting	30th August 2016
Names and positions of attendees	Roz Hardie, Director Winston, Community Enterprise Manager, LBL

Group Name:	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
Total funding received 2015-16	£77,500	N/A	£25,833. 33	£25,833. 33	£25,833.33					
Total funding to be received 2016-17	£103,33 3.33	£25,833. 33	£25,833. 33	£25,833. 33	£25,833.33					
Outcomes	1. Disabled people receive quality speciality advice and information 2. Increase number of disabled people receiving the benefits they are entitled to 3. Disabled volunteers trained to deliver and advice form filling sessions 4. LDC supports quality assurance and consistency of advice provision across the borough 5. The social model of disability is promoted across Lewisham through member engagement in specific projects									
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
550 clients assisted with their cases	550	247	304	287	838	152%	733	330		

Increase in positive financial outcomes for clients	£155,750	£173,571	£208,048	£73,090	£454,709	292%	<i>To be agreed</i>	£19,917		
Increase capacity to meet demand	3	1	3	3	7	233%				
Participation in Advice Lewisham partnership	3									
Design and deliver three discrete disability equality projects per annum	2.5	0.5	0	2	2.5	111%				
LDC engagement with prioritised LBL/partnership consultations						Engaged with priorities				

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?

LDC has achieved all its stated outputs. The number of individuals provided with advice services has significantly exceeded their forecast. 500 was forecast and 838 was achieved.

The organisation also achieved its outputs in the area of participating in Advice Lewisham partnerships and the design of three discrete disability projects per annum.

For 16/17, the organisation is keen to revise outputs to include targets not only for its advice services but for its representative role as a borough-wide disability campaigning organisation.

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

The organisation has developed its partnership working during the course of the year, making a significant input to the borough wide equalities working group. A number of initiatives have been developed to improve access to services for people with disabilities. Work undertaken has included initiatives involving Fusion Leisure Services, where the organisation has worked with Fusion to identify ways to increase the number of people with disabilities accessing leisure services in the borough.

Other significant initiatives have included a campaign to highlight hate crimes aimed at people with disabilities.

LDC is developing its strategy to improve its role as an organisation campaigning for and representing the interests of people with disabilities. Their plan going forward includes: the promotion of access and inclusion; and the development of initiatives to challenge barriers and all forms of discrimination. The organisation is aiming to achieve a position where LDC becomes a source of expertise on matters relating to access and inclusion.

During the course of the year, the organisation has made a positive contribution to the borough-wide review of grants-supported advice services and its director is represented on the advice services project board which is seeking to re-shape the grants funded advice services. It also achieved the Advice Quality Standard.

During the course of the year, LDC's trustee board has been significantly strengthened and a number of outstanding issues relating to governance and financial management have been tackled.

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?

N/A

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

The organisation has established positive links with a range of partner agencies working with people with disabilities. The advice service it offers is seen as specialist provision to which other advice providers refer clients requiring specific support relating to their disability.

The organisation reports extremely positive feedback for the service they deliver. They further state that the move to digital channels risks a reduction in access to services for people with disabilities.

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.

LDC is taking part in the advice review and is contributing to the re-design of services across the borough.

What alternative funding streams are you already pursuing?

LDC has identified a range of activities that it is undertaking to pursue funding from alternative sources. This includes:

- Health to provide HIV transition services
- Trust funds via City Bridge
- Research funds in partnership with Goldsmiths
- An increase in online donations

They have submitted three funding applications which have been unsuccessful, but they believe that improved recording of outcomes and a more attractive annual report will support more effective fundraising in future.

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

LDC is keen to support Neighbourhood Care Networks if funding is available.

They have also stated that they would seek support from the Council to become an advice and digital inclusion hub, including support for their office to become a one stop service for disability.

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?

LDC is in discussion with all disability organisations in the borough and currently considering a change to its articles of association in light of recent horizon scanning activities.

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 organisation feels that, given its involvement in the advice review, it is restricted in its ability to discuss service re-design with other organisations outside the Advice Lewisham partnership. Nonetheless, with regard to its representative role, LDC has made links with similar organisations in Greenwich and Bexley and may consider mergers or asset sharing. LDC is also exploring the potential for shared services with other organisations, including ICT and payroll.

What support might you need to move these suggestions forward?

The organisation has stated that assistance with brokerage, guidance on TUPE implications of Advice Lewisham's service design, clear advice for equality work in the borough and access to key health and wellbeing discussions would all be helpful in enabling them to move work forward. The organisation would also welcome assistance from Lewisham officers in resolving difficulties it is experiencing regarding the lease on their Lewisham owned premises.

3. 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 has undertaken a review and believes that a 25% reduction would have an impact on service delivery. However, some of this might be mitigated by the results of the advice review. Nonetheless, the likely impact would include the loss of at least one member of staff or a reduction in staffing hours.

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

The organisation's trustees have discussed the potential cut and believe that the way forward could include developing a disability one stop shop which includes other services which could attract additional income. The organisation will also consider renegotiating staff contracts to make them more generic and enable broader team working.

Conclusion

Any other comments / areas discussed

The organisation is keen to take a strategic approach to any changes in income. It is also keen to continue the development of LDC as a key strategic partner for the local authority as well as the delivery of services.

Conclusion and recommendation

A pro rata reduction in grant is recommended. However, the impact of the cut on the additional role of LDC as a representative organisation needs to be recognised. This recommendation is conditional on the full involvement of LDC in the review and the organisation's commitment to jointly plan and deliver advice provision across the borough.

Equalities groups disproportionately impacted by recommendations

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

Commentary and potential mitigations:

LDC works principally with people with disabilities. This group is likely to be disproportionately affected by a reduction in services. 60% of the organisation's service users are women, a group which would also be disproportionately affected by a reduction in services. The impact of this will be mitigated by the planned advice service changes which will provide better planning for service users and improved referral arrangements between the existing advice providers.



Roz Hardie
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Service
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31st October 2016

Dear Roz,

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.

As your organisation is performing well against the agreed outcomes and outputs (or there are reasonable mitigating reasons for under-performance) a pro-rata cut will be applied.

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 £87,906.00 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.

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.

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', is written over a light grey circular stamp. The signature is fluid and cursive.

James Lee
Head of Cultural and Community Development



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14th November 2016

James Lee
Head of Culture & Community Development
Lewisham Council
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Dear James,

Formal appeal: Main Grant funding 2017-18 and 2018-19 funding recommendation

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Trustees of LDC with a response that has been approved by their last meeting on 8th November 2016.

We wish to speak at the meeting of Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts) on 30 November 2016.

Yours sincerely,

Roz Hardie

Roz Hardie
Director

Registered Charity No: 1147698
Company No: 04508732 Registered in
England



FORMAL APPEAL – LEWISHAM DISABILITY COALITION

Lewisham Disability Coalition understands that these cuts are not ones that the Council chooses to make and that the challenges faced in balancing the budget must be considerable. Our board, staff, members and volunteers are committed to working in partnership to address these and develop creative responses which continue to prioritise addressing the areas of greatest need in the communities we serve. However, there are significant implications of your proposal for our charity's and clients' future to which we would like to draw to your attention.

We are keen to work with the Council to develop a longer term strategy to diversify our funding base, and to transform our business model to effect greater involvement of local disabled people in the emerging Neighbourhood Care Networks. But a further significant and abrupt funding reduction as proposed and if implemented will not only have a major impact on the survival of all the work we do but may also nullify Lewisham's historic investment in a community-led resource.

What is an appropriate pro-rata reduction in the context of your 2015/16 award decision?

We calculate that the cumulative impact of a 14.9 per cent reduction would mean a 44 per cent cut in cash terms to the Council's investment in 2013/14. Our main grants funding is for advice and direct services but also for service development and representation of disabled people in the borough. Our 2015/16 grant was awarded as part of a new funding round and we accept that there was no guarantee that historic funding levels would be maintained. However, we would like the Council to be minded that both the application for this funding and consequent appeal were undertaken when there was no member of staff in post whose role it was to support trustees to present the business case and cost implications, particularly for the non-advice work undertaken.

Moreover, the council report itself accompanying our funding recommendation states *"the impact of the cut on the additional role of LDC as a representative organisation needs to be recognised"*. We would like this to explore this with you. We would also seek reassurance that calculation of any pro rata topslicing or apportionment of staff time towards a collective borough wide advice offer reflects the fact that our main grants funding is not currently solely for advice services.

Diversifying our funding base and reducing our costs takes time

We acknowledge that our charity has been historically overdependent on council main grants funding and are seeking to address this through a proactive fundraising strategy as well as cost-reduction exercises. However we have faced some operational challenges in timescales and expectations of partnership work.

There was also a period prior to summer 2015 where we paid our business rates bills without querying them as staff and trustees did not know that there are national rules which mean organisations promoting the welfare of disabled people may be

fully exempt and also did not know that the Valuation Office Agency had been given incorrect information about the apportionment of the building in relation to our lease.

Moreover, our ability to reduce our expenditure by sharing our premises with another organisation has been hampered by the problems with our tenancy. Dealing with these has also impacted on staff time. In this context we would like you to consider:

1. Transitional relief; i.e. Tapering the main grants reduction over two financial years rather than one;
2. A retrospective partial rent reduction to reflect the proportion of the property that was not 'fit to let';
3. Consideration of refund of business rates we paid in error.

Unplanned work surges due to digitisation agenda

Nationally an estimated 50 per cent of disabled people are digitally excluded. We have found ourselves dealing in an unplanned way with the impact of service transformation which makes access to rights increasingly difficult or completely impossible if you cannot get online. We would urge future "channel shift" to involve us in service redesign to mitigate any negative impact on disabled people in a planned way and ensure digital inclusion support can be targeted to specialist as well as generic support..

Status of Lewisham Compact and relationship between commissioned and main grants funded advice provided by third sector organisations have not always been clear

Our understanding from the Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts) decision of 17/2/16 was a **VISION** that all council funded or commissioned third sector advice would be *"delivered as part of (a) wider system and .. elements sufficiently integrated to avoid major duplication of services"*. Our experience is that subsequent commissioning processes have not always reflected this aspiration.

We recognise that there are strict procurement rules that the Council and other local commissioners must follow. However we recommend that the status of Lewisham's compact with the voluntary sector and associated commissioning guidelines could usefully be clarified to ensure that there is greater shared understanding of commitments such as 'soft market testing' .

Cultural and Community Development Service

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17 November 2016

Dear Roz

Re: Main Grants – Formal Appeal

I am writing further to your formal appeal against the Main Grants recommendation in relation to grant funding of Lewisham Disability Coalition (LDC) in 2017/18 and 2018/19.

As you are aware from the Main Grants consultation, there was general consensus among funded organisations on the process to be used to review Main Grants organisations in order to achieve identified savings targets. The process was formally agreed by Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts) in July 2016 and was followed robustly in order to arrive at recommendations for all groups. The four key stages, as understood by all participating organisations and in order of precedence, are:

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

In reviewing the performance of grant funded organisations, the majority of funded groups were meeting their outputs and outcomes and in many cases over-achieving against agreed targets. As you are aware from the recommendation report which has been shared with you, LDC is one of those assessed as performing well across all areas recommended for a pro-rata cut in their current grant.

You will also be aware, no doubt, that through following stages 1-3 with all groups the level of pro rata reduction is forecast to be less than 15% rather than the originally forecast 25%.

With regard to the specific points you have made in your appeals letter I note that you accept the 2015 funding decisions were taken in response to applications received rather than historic funding levels.

As such, despite any specific issues faced by individual organisations at the time, it is not possible to revisit that decision making process when calculating pro-rata cuts. The approach to delivering savings highlighted above was agreed by Mayor and Cabinet on the explicit understanding that no exceptions would be made for groups in the pro-rata category

so it would clearly be extremely unfair to all groups to revisit that decision at this stage.

I can provide reassurance that calculation of any pro rata top-slicing or apportionment of staff time towards a collective borough wide advice offer will be reflective of the nature of the funding agreement.

I note the issues that you have faced due to your premises and business rates. While this cannot be address directly through the grants programme for the reasons highlighted above I will look into these issues and provide all the assistance I can to ensure a satisfactory outcome.

The issue you raise regarding unplanned work surges due to digitisation agenda is not unique to LDC and this type of work is likely to increase due to the requirement to access Universal Credit online. We acknowledge that changes in council processes are also a factor in the changing pattern of demand on services and are seeking to support the sector through initiatives like the creation of the hub service at the Leemore Centre and the Go On project.

I will continue to work with you to ensure that any unintended consequences from the shift to digital services are kept to a minimum but this is likely to be an area that we need to work collaboratively on over the coming years. Overall it is worth noting that the Council greatly appreciates LDC's responsive approach to addressing individuals' needs.

Finally I would like to clarify the position relating to the range of different advice services commissioned by the Council. The initial priority is to develop a common offer from Main Grants funded organisations. If this initiative is successful we would expect the model to be extended to other Council funded advice provision but until we have a degree of certainty regarding the new model it is difficult to expand beyond the Grant funded groups. As a member of the Project Board for this work you will be aware of the huge amount of work that is being undertaken to make this a success and I am confident that the approach will deliver excellent results and partners who are currently involved will be in a strong position to bid for future advice services.

All Council funded contracts are advertised on the London Tender Portal (ProContract) and all organisations meeting eligibility criteria have equal access to tendering opportunities. With regard to the Compact, the Lewisham Compact has been under review by a Compact steering group led by Voluntary Action Lewisham (VAL) and the Council will work with VAL to complete this work.

I trust that these points clarify the position in relation to your specific queries. Given the information contained within your initial report and this letter I do not intend to amend the recommendation to Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts) in relation to the grant reduction.

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 3:10pm 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 grid background.

James Lee

Head of Cultural and Community Development