

Main Grants 2017-18 report

Name of organisation	Voluntary Action Lewisham
Date of meeting	29 September 2016
Names and positions of attendees	Chris Freed, Chair Voluntary Action Lewisham James Banks, Temporary strategic support whilst the VAL Director is on long term sick leave 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	£139,216.	N/A	£46,405	£46,405	£46,405
Total funding received 2016-17	£185,621.	£46,405	£46,405		

Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-finance specialists in small and medium sized VCSE organisations demonstrate improved confidence in financial management • Existing and prospective trustees/directors of small and medium-sized VCSEOs have a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities and how to comply with the legislation that applies to their organisation. • VCS organisations are better able to demonstrate change and improved effectiveness through implementing a systematic approach to outcomes and impact assessment. • Improved confidence and ability among non-financial workers in VCSEO to develop project plans and proposals for fundraising purposes • VCS groups have improved opportunities to debate, problem solve, and deliver solutions • VCS representatives will have improved support and clarity of accountability to the sector. • Improved confidence and ability among trustees and senior managers to enter into collaborative working arrangements • To increase the capacity of VCS organisations and groups to create or strengthen their brand • Strengthen the brand of VAL among members, funders and supporters • Increase engagement of existing and lapsed members with VAL new services and role
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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
Outcome 1a Financial management support delivered via 1:1 and group coaching, events and workshops.	50 people	2 pple (2 orgs) at cuts surgery + 33 orgs Information, advice or guidance (IAG) via 1:1s or email	31 orgs IAG	8 pple (7 orgs) at two software demos 36 orgs IAG	50 people	100				
Outcome 1b Governance support delivered via 1:1 and group coaching, events and workshops.	18 orgs	7 pple (7 orgs) at two events + 21 orgs IAG via 1:1s or email	33 pple (28 orgs) at two events + 17 orgs IAG	10 pple (9 orgs) at two events + 20 orgs IAG	18 orgs	100				
Outcome 2a Outcomes and impact support programme delivered via 1:1s and peer learning & online.	10 orgs 1:1 5 orgs attend workshops 2 case studies	6 orgs IAG via 1:1s, phone or email	45 orgs at launch event + 7 orgs IAG 2 case studies	10 orgs signed up to prog, attending workshops and 1:1s 3 workshops delivered + 11 orgs IAG	10 orgs 1:1 5 orgs attend wshops 2 case studies	100				
Outcome 2b Fundraising and project planning support delivered via 1:1s, peer learning, events & workshops.	18 orgs	5 orgs at event + 17 orgs IAG via 1:1s,	11 orgs at 2 events + 21 orgs IAG	18 orgs at 3 events + 12 orgs IAG	18 orgs	100				

		phone or email								
Outcome 3a VCS orgs have improved opportunities to debate, problem solve and deliver solutions. Target: one sector-wide VCS event Agree and implement methodology for information exchange between VCS and strategic boards	1 event	VCS forum organised with input from Local Infrastructure Group, attended by 41 orgs	CYP forum attended by 23 orgs Turn up & talk community spaces attended by 8 orgs	Turn up & talk community spaces attended by 10 orgs	1 event	100				
Outcome 3b VCS representatives and boards have improved support and clarity of accountability to the sector. Target: 2 training/support workshops per year for 10 VCS reps.	2 events, 10 reps			6 pple (6 orgs) at training workshop for newly elected CYP forum steering group	2 events, 10 reps	100				
Outcome 3b VAL continues to contribute to Health & Wellbeing Board, other strategic and multi-agency Boards	H&W Board & others	Health & Wellbeing Board + Stronger Communities Partnership Board co-chaired by Director + Lewisham Safeguarding Children Board	Ongoing	Ongoing	H&W Board & others	100				

Outcome 3c Improved confidence and ability among trustees and senior managers to enter into collaborative working. Deliver training programme including training on setting up a consortium	1 training event, 8 participants	Support for Chinbrook Big Local partnership	15 people (12 orgs) at trustees event on Collaborate? Merge? Close? (also counted under outcome 1b)		1 training event, 8 participants	100				
VAL continues to support and develop current consortia including Lewisham Connections Consortium, Lewisham Mental Health Connection & Lewisham Infrastructure group	3 consortia	VAL supports Lewisham Local steering group; Lewisham Mental Health conference; Community Connections Steering group; Lewisham Connections Consortium; Local Infrastructure Group; Go On steering group.			3 consortia	100	3 consortia			
Outcome 4a VCS orgs are able to define their mission, vision and values and succinctly describe their work to funders and stakeholders Target: 5 orgs workshops / support	5 orgs			6 people (6 orgs) vision, mission & values session for newly elected CYP forum steering group + 2 orgs IAG	5 orgs	100				
Outcome 5a Establish Equalities Working Group and action plan, initial report to Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee, annual report to Stronger Communities Partnership Board.	Set up EWG action plan & report	7 orgs at Equalities meeting Sept	Equalities Working Group set up, action plan agreed, progress reported	15 people (10 orgs) at EWG Jan 9 people (8 orgs) EWG March EWG TOR agreed	Achieved <i>note 6</i>					

			to Safer Stronger Select Committee e. 9 people (8 orgs) at EWG Nov							
Outcome 5b. A better understanding is gained of the work that a range of specialist VCS orgs are doing to address inclusion, and the barriers and challenges they face as organisations				Presentations from EqualTeam and LDC and information exchange at EWG meetings	Achieved					
Outcome 5c. Recommendations based on evidence from the community ...to address inclusion of people from the protected categories are presented and endorsed by the Lewisham Infrastructure Group				Recommendations made to LBL re inequalities in Trans* community, 3rd party reporting/hate crime. Members of LIG participate in the EWG	Achieved					

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?

Voluntary Action Lewisham has achieved all targets over the 2015/16 9 month monitoring period.

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

These outcomes have been achieved and it is important to note that these targets were agreed by the Council.

However, there is agreement that broader and more challenging outcomes need to be set going forward and this is likely to require a major overhaul of the infrastructure 'offer' in the borough. Current outcomes and outputs have a strong focus on delivering training and workshops and it is suggested that a strategic infrastructure should be more than this.

This suggestion has been welcomed by the organisation and discussions have already begun to take place about how VAL might develop.

If no to either of the above:

N/A

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

The need for a strategic infrastructure organisation is widely recognised. Demand for services and user surveys demonstrate high levels of demand. However, the needs of the voluntary and community sector have changed and it will be important to capture a clearer picture of what those are going forward in order for the organisation to develop and provide services that meet those needs.

The Way Ahead report from London Funders has provided a general framework for this work and local elected members are exploring the local needs through evidence session at the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee.

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.

The organisation will shortly be moving to new premises and there may be income generation opportunities that come with this.

Discussions have begun around the development of an entirely new approach to delivering infrastructure support. This is likely to involve the development of a new business model. At this stage it is not possible to be clear about any savings that might be made.

What alternative funding streams are you already pursuing?

It is likely that there will be funding available in relation to “The Way Ahead” a review of future of civil society infrastructure in London, VAL may be able to bid for this funding but it will not replace Council funding.

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

No funding streams of this nature have been identified but officers will provide support if this becomes necessary

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. 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:

- Voluntary Action Lewisham
- Volunteer Centre 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?

The organisations move to the Leemore Centre will provide opportunities for sharing resources but it is difficult to know whether this will deliver significant efficiencies.

What support might you need to move these suggestions forward?

Officers are already working closely with the organisation around this move.

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 is clear that a new approach to voluntary sector infrastructure support is necessary. These changes will be significant and will provide an opportunity to design services that fit within the new financial envelope available. The bringing together of organisations will also provide an opportunity for efficiencies to take place. It is therefore anticipated that there will be a positive impact on service delivery.

Have you modelled this cut and developed an action plan for its implementation?
 Business modelling will take place as part of the service design process.

Conclusion

Any other comments / areas discussed

Conclusion and recommendation

Voluntary Action Lewisham has met all of its output targets and outcomes but it has become clear that there is a need to review and redesign the way that voluntary sector infrastructure support is provided. Discussions have already begun to take place and there is already a commitment to bring together VAL and VCL to this end. These discussions need to be given adequate time to reach their conclusions.

It is recommended that Voluntary Action Lewisham do not receive direct funding in its current form but that £210,000 is allocated to develop the infrastructure offer. This award consists of resources previously allocated to VAL and VCL with a 25% cut applied.

This funding may increase if Rushey Green Timebank join the partnership.

Equalities groups disproportionately impacted by recommendations

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

The organisation is funded to provide generic services and so no equalities group will be disproportionately affected by the recommendation.