

SAFER STRONGER COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE

Title	Main Grants Consultation		
Key Decision	No		Item No. 8
Ward	Borough wide		
Contributors	Executive Director for Community Services		
Class	Part 1	Date: 12 July 2018	

Reasons for urgency

It is important that the consultation is launched ahead of the Council's recess to avoid any delays in re-letting the programme once budgets are considered later in the year.

Reasons for lateness

Officers were unable to meet key individuals to seek input ahead of the initial dispatch date. It is acknowledged that this is unacceptable and officers offer apologies to the Committee for the late dispatch.

1. Exclusion of press and public

NA

2. Summary

NA

3. Purpose

This report presents a draft consultation paper on the main grants programme and seeks comments from the Committee on the approach.

4. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee review and comment on the proposed consultation on the criteria for the main grants programme – attached as Annex A.

5. Policy context

5.1 Lewisham's Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2020, 'Shaping our Future', sets out the borough's ambitions to encourage development, enable citizens to live healthy lives and to empower Lewisham's communities to prosper. It has six strategic priorities, including a commitment to creating a borough that is "Empowered and Responsible: where people are actively involved in their local area and contribute to supportive communities".

5.2 The empowered and responsible strand of the strategy highlights the importance of the community and voluntary sector in all areas of public life. It recognises that the sector plays a significant part in Lewisham's ongoing success.

- 5.3 This is reflected in Lewisham's corporate priorities: "Community leadership and empowerment: developing opportunities for the active participation and engagement of people in the life of the community".
- 5.4 Lewisham has a strong history of working with the voluntary and community sector and empowering residents and communities. Lewisham is fortunate to have a strong and thriving sector which ranges from very small organisations with no paid staff through to local branches of national charities. The sector includes charities, not for profit companies limited by guarantee, faith organisations, civic amenity societies as well as social enterprises. There are estimated to be around 800 community and voluntary sector organisations in the borough.
- 5.5 What all these organisations have in common is their ability to bring significant additional value to the work that they do through voluntary support and raising funds from sources not available to other sectors such as charitable trusts. In addition they often provide services that the Council cannot easily provide; create links between communities and people; and give people a voice.
- 5.6 As well as being directly involved in delivering services to citizens in the borough, third sector organisations also provide the essential infrastructure to allow the sector as a whole to develop and support individual citizens to be able to play an active role within their local communities.
- 5.7 Lewisham was the first London Borough to develop a Compact with the third sector in 2001. The compact seeks to support a positive relationship between the sector and key statutory partners. It includes expectations around the management of grant aid as well as broader partnership working principles. The compact was further developed in 2010 with the addition of guidelines for commissioning with the third sector in recognition of the important contribution that the third sector should play in identifying needs as well as potentially delivering service solutions.

6. Draft consultation on the main grant programme

- 6.1 Lewisham's main grant programme was last fully let in 2015 following a full public consultation on the revised framework which was agreed by Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts) on 12 November 2014. These grants initially ran until the end of March 2018 but were extended to the end of March 2019 as part of the previous round of budget cuts.
- 6.2 As part of the process of re-letting the programme the Council is proposing a number of changes to the assessment criteria. As such it is necessary to run a three month consultation on these changes which also allows for the sector and the wider community to give their views on the overall approach and to highlight any areas that they believe should be included in the programme.
- 6.3 The draft consultation paper attached as Annex A outlines the proposed changes as well as a number of wider questions relating to the programme. This paper will be amended following feedback from the Committee and the Stronger Communities Partnership Board (Chaired by the Cabinet Member for the Community Sector, Cllr Jonathan Slater) on the 18th July 2018. The dates for the consultation meetings will be agreed following discussions at the Partnership Board.

6.4 Following this the consultation will run for three months with the results and revised criteria presented to the Committee and ultimately Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts) for approval later in 2018.

7. Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising from the consultation for LB Lewisham. The overall budget for the main grants programme will be set as part of the overall budgeting process later in the year.

8. Legal implications

There are no legal implications arising from this consultation for LB Lewisham.

9. Crime and disorder implications

There are no direct crime and disorder implications from this consultation.

10. Equalities implications

The consultation contains a number of questions specially related to equalities issues. Any changes to the grants criteria will be subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment as will the proposed grant allocations.

11. Sustainability implications

There are no sustainability implications arising from this consultation for LB Lewisham.

12. Conclusion

The Committee is asked to review and comment on the proposed consultation on the criteria for the main grants programme – attached as Annex A.

Background documents and originator

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