

MAYOR AND CABINET		
Report Title	Appeals against Main grants programme Recommendations	
Key Decision	Yes	Item No.
Ward	All	
Contributors	Executive Director for Community Services	
Class	Part 1	Date: 24/03/2019

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the letters of appeal against the draft recommendations for the allocation of the Main Grant Programme 2019-22. The final recommendation report will be presented to Mayor and Cabinet for agreement on 24th April 2019.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that Mayor and Cabinet:

Hear each of the appeals and make recommendations to the subsequent meeting of Mayor and Cabinet on 24th April 2019 regarding any amendments to the original recommendations report – previously received as a background paper.

3. Policy Context

- 3.1 The full policy context for the Grant's Programme is set out in the draft recommendation report highlighted above.

4. Funding criteria and application process

- 5.1 The full application form and criteria agreed by Mayor and Cabinet on 21 November 2018 are set out in the draft recommendations report.

- 5.2 In summary there are 4 themes against which applications are assessed:

Strong and Cohesive Communities – this theme seeks to develop and maintain strong communities and build a more inclusive and cohesive borough. With the reduction in statutory resources, residents and communities are being asked to do more for themselves. This theme seeks to ensure that there is an infrastructure across the borough that can encourage and capitalise on active citizenship, supporting grass roots activity. The theme also

funds services that provide equalities support to ensure equal access to services.

Communities that Care – the overall intention of this theme is to fund a range of organisations that together provide support to vulnerable adults to assist them in accessing services, prevent their needs from escalating, reduce the burden on statutory services and provide links between statutory services, VCS and communities in relation to working together to support vulnerable adults. The activities funded through this theme form an important part of the borough's preventative strategy.

Access to Advice Services – the advice sector provides an essential service to some of the borough's most vulnerable residents. Advice organisations provide independent, high quality advice to individuals to ensure that they receive the benefits they are entitled to, are supported to manage debts, address financial exclusion and deal with housing issues. Statutory services work closely with the advice sector as addressing these issues are of mutual benefit.

Widening Access to Arts and Sports - this theme seeks to ensure that the rich and diverse contribution that the borough's Arts and Sports organisations make to the quality of life of residents is maintained. The Arts and Sports sectors are adept at attracting resources from external funding, earned income and volunteers. However, the sectors still require a level of core funding to enable them to continue to attract these resources that would otherwise be lost to the borough. The focus of our support is on increasing participation particularly by those who are less able to participate due to disability, economic disadvantage and age.

- 5.3 The application process was launched on 3rd December 2018 with a deadline for applications of midnight on Sunday 3rd February 2019.
- 5.4 The re-letting of the programme is taking place with an annual budget cut of £600,000.

6. Applications and recommendations

- 6.1 As with previous application rounds there was huge interest in the Main Grants programme with requests for funding that significantly exceeded the available budget. 92 applications were received requesting annual funds of £5,869,223 against an available budget of £2,562,102 - a subscription rate of 229% i.e. for every £1 available £2.29 was requested.
- 6.2 In this context officers worked to ensure that funding recommendations were made for those submissions which most closely met the criteria as outlined above, were detailed and comprehensive in their responses and contributed to a strategic spread of services for Lewisham. However, it remains a fact that many projects are not recommended for funding or for much less than they applied for.
- 6.3 In assessing each application officers applied a 0-5 scoring criteria across a number of questions, with 0 representing an absent answer and 5 covering all expected areas with significant innovation and added value. Detailed assessment guidance that was issued to officers is attached as Appendix 3 of the draft recommendation report.

- 6.4 These scores were then moderated before being passed to a second round of assessment that considered the quality of applications in a range of different groups including service type, geographical spread and equalities implications.
- 6.5 All applicants were considered together to ensure that the overall programme provided the most appropriate coverage of needs across the borough given the quality and scope of applications and the available budget.
- 6.6 Taken together this overall assessment process led officers to recommend 43 groups for funding with the remaining 49 not recommended. This is a significant reduction on the current programme which provides funding to 60 groups and is in response to the feedback from the consultation which supported funding fewer organisations to a higher level (just over 62% of respondents) over spreading funding across more organisations with each getting less (just over 36%).
- 6.7 The recommendations also reflect the consultation feedback that funding should be targeted at efficient, effective and well run organisations that are able to demonstrate the ability to attract other funding to the borough. Typical consultation responses included phrases such as "those funded should display excellence, accountability and best value for money" and "some organisations are wholly dependent on Lewisham funding and yet fail to prove efficacy and reach."
- 6.8 Overall this means that 13 currently funded groups are not recommended for funding. The remaining reduction in the number of groups recommended is accounted for by a consortium bid by the Advice Lewisham partnership under the Access to Advice theme and 2 of the currently funded groups not applying for funding due to a change in their priorities or the nature of their relationship with the council.
- 6.9 This reduction in the number of funded groups, and the on-going quality of the majority of the current grant recipients, meant that it was difficult for new groups without a strong track record in the borough to respond strongly enough to be recommended for funding. Notwithstanding this 4 groups who have not previously received a Main Grant are recommended for funding.
- 6.10 Officers' recommendations following that process are contained in a draft report which has been prepared for the meeting of Mayor and Cabinet on 24th April (that draft report is provided as background to this report).

7. Appeals process

- 7.1 All organisations were written to on Tuesday 28th February to inform them of the draft recommendation of their funding level. This letter also acted as five months notification of a change of funding for all current grant recipients. The letters inform the organisations that unless otherwise stated the recommended award is for 2 years and 8 months until 31 March 2022. The letter also highlights that all council expenditure is subject to annual review in light of central government cuts to LB Lewisham but any changes to grant funding will be subject to formal consultation.
- 7.2 As part of the main grants process organisations are given the opportunity to appeal against officers' recommendations. The organisations were given until 20th March to write to the council disputing their funding recommendation.

14 formal appeals were received although 2 of these related to matters of accuracy or related to issues that have been addressed by officers directly leading to the withdrawal of the appeal. These were:

- Lewisham Asian Elders and Carers Group
- Platform Cricket

7.3 Of the remaining 12 organisations, Contact and Lewisham Pensioners' Forum requested that their submission be considered without further representation while 10 have exercised their right to present their case to the meeting in person and will be considered in theme order as outlined below. Each organisation has 3 minutes to present their case with the remaining time within each ten minute slot for questions and clarification from the Mayor and Cabinet.

Theme	Organisations	Time
Strong and Cohesive Communities	Voluntary Action Lewisham	10:05
Access to Advice	Evelyn 190	10:15
Widening Access to Arts and Sport	Sydenham Arts	10:25
Widening Access to Arts and Sport	Montage Theatre Arts	10:35
Widening Access to Arts and Sport	Greenwich and Lewisham Young Peoples Theatre	10:45
Communities that Care	Eco Communities	10:55
BREAK / TIME CONTINGENCY		
Communities that Care	Ageing Well in Lewisham	11:20
Communities that Care	The Grove Centre	11:30
Communities that Care	Noah's Ark Children's Venture	11:40
Communities that Care	Lewisham Community Transport Scheme	11:50
Communities that Care	Contact (to be considered without representation)	12:00
Strong and Cohesive Communities	Lewisham Pensioners' Forum (to be considered without representation)	12:10

7.4 Following the consideration of all the appeals the Mayor and Cabinet will make recommendations regarding any changes to the original proposed allocations as set out in officers' recommendations (as set out in the draft report for the meeting of Mayor and Cabinet on 24th April 2019). Appellants will be written to by Friday 5th April outlining the outcome of the appeal and the reasons behind the final recommendation.

7.5 A further and final version of the report for the meeting of Mayor and Cabinet on 24th April 2019 will be prepared taking into account those recommendations. That report will contain final officer proposals. Accordingly, at the meeting on 24th April 2019 Mayor and Cabinet will take final decisions on grant allocation having taken into account officers' final proposals which will have taken into account the recommendations from this appeal meeting.

7.6 The details of the amount applied for, current grant level (where applicable) and recommended amount are attached as appendix 1. The appeals letters and initial officer assessments and initial application forms for each appellant are attached as appendices 2 – 13.

8. Financial implications

8.1 Financial implications are set out in the draft recommendation report for April 24th 2019.

9. Legal implications

9.1 Full legal implications are set out in the draft report for the meeting on 24th April 2019. In particular, the implications in that draft report note that 'In relation to any consultation exercise sufficient reasons must be given for any proposal, adequate time must be given for consideration and response and the outcome of the consultation must be conscientiously taken into account'.

10. Crime & disorder implications

10.1 There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report. Some of the recommended main grant organisations deliver services and projects which help to reduce the fear of crime.

11. Equalities implications

11.1 The assessment of each individual application included a range of equalities elements including how well the individual services will seek to engage those who do not traditionally access services.

11.2 An overarching Equalities Analysis Assessment (Appendix 4 of the draft recommendations report) was then undertaken against the entirety of the draft recommendations with a number amended to ensure that the spread of services recommended for funding under the main grants programme was considered to be fair and equitable and did not disproportionately affect any one particular group. The awarding of grants to a wide variety of organisations that work with and support Lewisham's diverse communities will help to promote equal opportunities.

11.3 The £600,000 reduction to the grants programme from 1 August 2019 was analysed in terms of equalities impact, and whilst the recommendations for future funding sought to minimise direct impact on service delivery; individual assessments of the protected characteristics most affected by each funding recommendations led to a number of revisions. Officers will continue to work with individual groups and as well as those funded to provide a coordination function to mitigate specific impact of funding reductions.

12. Environmental implications

11.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

13. Conclusion

13.1 The Council recognises the important part the voluntary and community sector play in the lives of our residents and the main grants programmes seeks to support this provision. The Council is committed to letting these grants in the most transparent way possible

For further information on this report please contact James Lee, Head of Cultural and Community Development, james.lee@lewisham.gov.uk, 020 8314 6548

Appendix 1 – Appellants’ recommended allocations for main grant funding
Appendix 2 – Voluntary Action Lewisham – Appeal Submission
Appendix 2a - Voluntary Action Lewisham – Assessment Form
Appendix 3 - Evelyn 190 – Appeal Submission
Appendix 3a - Evelyn 190 – Assessment Form
Appendix 4 – Sydenham Arts– Appeal Submission
Appendix 4a - Sydenham Arts – Assessment Form
Appendix 5 - Montage Theatre Arts – Appeal Submission
Appendix 5a - Montage Theatre Arts – Assessment Form
Appendix 6 – GLYPT – Appeal Submission
Appendix 6a - GLYPT – Assessment Form
Appendix 7 - Eco Communities – Appeal Submission
Appendix 7a - Eco Communities – Assessment Form
Appendix 8 – Ageing Well in Lewisham – Appeal Submission
Appendix 8a - Ageing Well in Lewisham – Assessment Form
Appendix 9 - The Grove Centre – Appeal Submission
Appendix 9a - The Grove Centre – Assessment Form
Appendix 10 – Noah's Ark Children's Venture – Appeal Submission
Appendix 10a - Noah's Ark Children's Venture – Assessment Form
Appendix 11 - Lewisham Community Transport Scheme – Appeal Submission
Appendix 11a - Lewisham Community Transport Scheme – Assessment Form
Appendix 12 – LPF – Appeal Submission
Appendix 12a – LPF – Assessment Form (Core)
Appendix 12b – LPF - – Assessment Form (Project)
Appendix 13 – Contact – Appeal Submission
Appendix 13a – Contact - – Assessment Form

Appendix 1 - List of appellants' recommended allocations for main grant funding

Organisation	Amount Requested	Current funding	Recommendation
Voluntary Action Lewisham	£200,000	£210,000	£0
Ageing well in Lewisham - LCC	£28,945	£25,637	£0
ECO Communities CIC	£70,000	£33,896	£0
Evelyn 190 Community trust	£175,000	£175,129	£0
Greenwich and Lewisham Young Peoples theatre (GLYPT)	£70,000	£68,530	£35,000
Lewisham Community Transport Scheme	£75,000	£40,675	£0
Lewisham Pensioners Forum (LPF)	£68,235/£22,000*	£33,896	£35,000
Montage Theatre arts	£13,500	£8,474	£0
Noah's Ark Children's Venture	£36,000	£36,156	£0
Sydenham Arts	£34,353	£8,474	£0
The Grove Centre	£13,482	£16,524	£0
Contact	£65,382	£60,606	£49,100

* LPF submitted two applications - £68,235 for core funding and £22,000 for project funding