



Mayor and Cabinet

## Main Grants Extension

**Date:** 10 March 2021

**Key decision:** Yes

**Class:** Part 1

**Contributors:**

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## Recommendations

This report seeks approval from Mayor and Cabinet on a recommendation to extend a further year's Main Grants funding to eight organisations whose Main Grants funding was only initially agreed until 31 March 2021. The extension will enable them to operate for a further year to bring all organisations currently funded by the Main Grants programme into line in recognition of similarities in delivery and outcomes for all organisations notwithstanding the application process they pursued.

It is recommended that Mayor and Cabinet agree that a total of £155,815 be granted to the organisations in question to enable them to continue to deliver crucial Covid-19 -related and recovery services to Lewisham residents. This extension will also put them in a position to continue their core services and continue work towards achieving their original targets, previously disrupted by the Covid-19 crisis, until the start of the new Main Grants programme in April 2022.

## Timeline of engagement and decision-making

Main Grants funding allocations agreed by Mayor and Cabinet via initial decision paper – 24/04/19

<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=139&MId=5440&Ver=4>

### 1. Summary

- 1.1. Main Grants core and project funding was originally granted in April 2019 and delivery began in August 2019, running until 31 March 2022 for core funded organisations and 31 March 2021 for those funded as projects.
- 1.2. All organisations, whether awarded core or project funding, were required to demonstrate by the end of their defined funding period that their grant funded activities had developed to a degree which would allow them to become more sustainable by attracting future funding from alternative sources. The aim was to reduce future reliance on direct Council grant funding.
- 1.3. Core funded community activities were awarded funding to the end of March 2022 and projects to the end of March 2021.
- 1.4. Both core and project-based Main Grants funded services have continued to provide valuable services to Lewisham residents over the last 18 months. At the same time, they have demonstrated considerable agility in gearing activity to address the unforeseen circumstances introduced by the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 1.5. As the funding period has progressed, it has become clear that the differences between core and project-based services are less great than originally anticipated and much of the difference relates to the administration of the application process rather than actual delivery on the ground. In the main, this has been because project work, which was originally envisaged as being lighter-touch and more related to “proof of concept” has become more embedded than expected. For example, partnership working, which was a central requirement of core service applications, has become central to the delivery of projects as well as core services. This is in part due to the requirements placed on organisations by covid and partly by organic changes in delivery.
- 1.6. However, inevitably, the pandemic resulted in some changes and delays to original plans for delivery. This means that project-based services are approaching the end of their funding period without having had the opportunity to consolidate the findings of their activities to maximise their potential for attracting alternative funding. All Main Grants organisations have been impacted by the Covid-19 crisis and have been required to a greater or lesser extent to repurpose their services to meet the current needs of service users. They have all made

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significant changes to their delivery to incorporate emergency Covid-19 requirements but have continued in most cases to provide services to their core users throughout the pandemic period.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that Mayor and Cabinet agree that a sum of £155,815 be granted to eight organisations to extend their delivery period under the current Main Grants programme to 31 March 2022. This will allow all organisations that have been granted funding under the Main Grants programme to continue delivery of crucial Covid-19 recovery-related services to Lewisham residents. This extension will also ensure that all organisations are enabled to continue delivery of essential community activities and work towards sustainability in light of previous disruptions resulting from the Covid-19 crisis, until the start of the new Main Grants programme in April 2022.

## 3. Policy Context

- 3.1. The eight organisations in question and the Main Grant Programme 2019 to 2022 as a whole contribute to one or more of the corporate priorities set out in Lewisham's Corporate Strategy 2018-2022. This sets out the borough's ambitions through seven corporate priorities which are:
  - Open Lewisham - Lewisham is a welcoming place of safety for all where we celebrate the diversity that strengthens us.
  - Tackling the housing crisis - Everyone has a decent home that is secure and affordable.
  - Giving children and young people the best start in life - Every child has access to an outstanding and inspiring education and is given the support they need to keep them safe, well and able to achieve their full potential.
  - Building an inclusive local economy - Everyone can access high quality job opportunities, with decent pay and security in our thriving and inclusive local economy.
  - Delivering & defending: Health, Social Care and Support - Ensuring everyone receives the health, mental health, social care and support services they need.
  - Making Lewisham greener - Everyone enjoys our green spaces and benefits from a healthy environment as we work to protect and improve our local environment.
  - Building safer communities - Every resident feels safe and secure living here as we work together towards a borough free from the fear of crime.
- 3.2. 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.
- 3.3. 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

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links between communities and people; and give people a voice.

- 3.4. 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.
- 3.5. Although the third sector's role within the commissioning of local public services continues to grow the Council recognises that there continues to be a need for grant aid investment for the following reasons:
  - A recognition of the importance of maintaining an independent sector that can act as a critical friend to challenge public sector policy and delivery.
  - A recognition that the third sector is often better placed to understand local communities and develop innovative assets based programmes that avoid the need for expensive, and sometimes unwelcome, statutory interventions at a later date.
  - A recognition that some people may feel more able to access voluntary sector groups due to suspicion, or negative experiences, of statutory services.
  - A recognition of the key role that the sector plays in building civic participation, providing a voice for seldom heard residents and providing community intelligence.
  - A recognition of the great diversity of the sector and the need to engage with small and emerging groups as well as large established organisations.
  - A recognition of the sector's potential to take risks and innovate which does not sit easily within commissioning frameworks.
  - A recognition that third sector organisations have been key delivery partners within Lewisham, including for a wide range of targeted short term initiatives. Grant aid provides a level of security for organisations ensuring that there is a strong sector able to address local need, attract significant additional resources and be ready to work in partnership with us.

## 4. Background

- 4.1 Under the Main Grants programme, both core-funded and project-based services are now demonstrating their strengths in terms of reaching and supporting Lewisham residents and demonstrating their ability to attract sustainable future funding.
- 4.2 For example, the Millwall Community Trust was originally funded to deliver a primarily football-focused social inclusion project. As a result of the Covid-19 crisis, it has extended its reach to a far wider community, working with partners to deliver food, promote healthy living, provide volunteers and build an online community. This activity exemplifies the potential for attracting wider funding for all organisations with shorter term funding, affected by both the disruption and opportunities created by the Covid-19 crisis.
- 4.3 Organisations funded under the Core strand of the Main Grants programme, on the other hand, have been eligible for a longer funding period from the outset. Although no less affected by the pandemic and having made similar adjustments to activity to reflect the disruption of Covid-19, they have been in a better position to plan for developing sustainability solutions over a longer planning horizon, placing them in a position of more certainty.

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- 4.4 Given the achievements of project-based services such as the Millwall Community Trust in the last 18 months, partly because of and partly despite the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is in Council interests to recognise these achievements and fund the activity required to demonstrate them properly in order to build a sustainable future for these activities in continuing to improve the lives of Lewisham's residents as we hopefully emerge into the post-Covid-19 crisis period.

## 5. Organisational information

- 5.1. The organisations that are being proposed for a 12 month extension of funding offer a wide range of activities. This section provides a summary of the analysis that has been undertaken of their work from August 2019 when they were awarded their grants up to the start of the Covid-19 pandemic; during the pandemic when they largely re-purposed their work and their proposed activities in the coming year which continues to have a focus on Covid-19 recovery but also includes focus on achieving their original targets.
- 5.2. **Millwall Community Trust**
- 5.3. Millwall Community Trust delivers a variety of free projects and activities, annually supporting over 1100 youths aged 7-19, school children and adults. Aiming to reduce youth violence, knife crime and anti-social behaviour, social isolation and increase health and well-being and enhance employment opportunities.
- Accredited Training: football coaching, safe-guarding and first Aid
  - 5 Primary and secondary school football tournament
  - Over 35's football sessions
  - Match funding from the premier league charitable trust
- 5.4. During the pandemic, activities and delivery have been repurposed. Health and wellbeing of clients has been at the heart of delivery which has been both proactive and reactive in line with changing needs. Activities delivered online, face to face and remotely include:
- Football and sports activities online for young people and parents
  - Weekly check-in with clients
  - Online healthy meals recipes
  - Podcasts to share stories of participants
  - Onsite delivery of essential educational and physical activities for children of keyworkers
  - Distribution of 300 food packages for children and families of Conisburgh College
  - Grocery delivery and social distance catch-ups
  - Online/e-learning courses including finance and trading
  - Volunteers supported Voluntary Services Lewisham's befriending project
- The value of Millwall's Community Trust's annual grant is £25,000.
- 5.5. **Lewisham Refugee Welcome**
- 5.6. Lewisham Refugee Welcome provides support and assistance to refugees and their families including befriending, ESOL provision and volunteering

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opportunities to enable people to settle into their new home and community.

- 5.7. They have extensive links and support arrangements for service users both locally and with the Refugee Council.
- 5.8. During the pandemic, service were repurposed quickly and positively. Adapting services and delivery in response to service user feedback and using funding raised to ensure that families were not isolated during lockdowns. Support included:
- Arranging Wi-Fi access to enable access to essentials like online education, foodbank parcels and education packs
  - Regular online catch-ups to ensure individuals and families were not isolated
  - Building cross-borough partnerships to support their clients with Lewisham foodbank, schools partnership and to enable clients to volunteer and work in the community

The value of Lewisham Refugee Welcome's annual grant is £20,000.

5.9. **London Sports Ltd**

- 5.10. The aim of London Sports is to increase mass participation in boxing, as a recreational tool or in competition for those who wish to engage. All activities are used to increase the health and well-being of Lewisham residents.
- 5.11. The organisation was funded to enable a Boxing Development Officer to identify facilities to increase the boxing offer across the borough, with the aim of improving the health and well-being of all communities but with a specific focus on BAME communities.
- 5.12. There are a variety of boxing activities and sessions for recreation, fitness, training and competition to increase health and wellbeing of participants, including:
- Provision of hub boxing sites in the community
  - Female only boxing sessions
  - Development of older adults boxing provision
  - Accreditation and qualification for coaching and boxing leaders
  - Development of 2 newly affiliated amateur boxing clubs
- 5.13. Following receipt of their Main Grant funding, the organisation had started to leverage in funding from other sources, including £20,000 from the Fulcrum Group to deliver "Jab, Don't Stab" workshops in schools and were in advanced discussions with Bellingham Leisure Centre to establish a community hub. The organisation had also delivered two boxing shows, generating revenue of £3,200, and were preparing for a third.
- 5.14. Face-to-face activity was necessarily put on hold during lockdown, although the organisation did deliver online mental health and anti-racism workshops to boxing coaches. Despite the necessary limits on boxing activity, the "Jab, Don't Stab" funding and establishment of community partnerships during lockdown place the organisation in an excellent position to work towards its Main Grant outcomes with renewed vigour if its grant is extended. Without the grant extension, the organisation will be unable to deliver a proposed boxing programme in the south of the borough for which they have already raised £3,000.

The value of London Sports Ltd's annual grant is £15,000.

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5.15. **London Thunder Basketball**

5.16. London Thunder Basketball offer a range of basketball activities to improve fitness, health and well-being with over 1000 participants each year. Activities include:

- After school physical and study
- Community basketball
- Wheel chair basketball
- Women's only fitness
- Coaching and referee accreditation
- Sessions for children and young people with additional needs
- Volunteering and work experience opportunities

5.17. During the pandemic the organisation repurposed activities online and remotely. Providing a range of methods to continue activities and to stay in contact with both individuals and groups. Demand has increased to join activities during and after the lockdowns. Activities include:

- Online training camps
- Online podcasts
- Various basketball training videos – Homework Hoops, Basketball training, skills and tips, downloadable record and instruction sheets
- Face to face activities during half-term where possible

The London Thunderball Basketball's annual grant is £25,000.

5.18. **The Front Room, St Lukes, Downham**

5.19. The Front Room Club is a cafe style drop in for those who are experiencing or at risk of social isolation and provides a safe, welcoming and supportive place to grow. The club is a place to meet people, access support and advice, develop social and practical skills, and talk about mental health challenges. The objectives are to:

- reduce isolation and the negative impact it causes to people's mental and physical health
- provide accessible advice and support services for the isolated
- encourage people to take an active role in society.

5.20. Whilst the café is closed during the pandemic, the service has been repurposed to provide support as the team had been available to provide a food/activity parcel or for practical assistance. The Front Room has good links with Lewisham Local and the Lewisham Foodbank to access food and additional services.

The value of Front Room's annual grant is £12,715.

5.21. **THYSF - Platform Cricket in Lewisham**

5.22. Platform Cricket provides children with the opportunity to participate, learn new skills and compete whilst improving their health and physical well-being. The aim is for children to become part of a team and interact with children from local schools within their area. Sixteen hubs have been set up at local schools and activities include:

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- In school cricket clubs
  - Inter-school competitions
  - Competition cricket hubs across a 2-3 wards
  - Pop-ups at local events
- 5.23. During the pandemic some community programmes have been delivered with additional activities held during October half-term at 9 out of 16 hubs. Easter and summer holiday programmes are currently being arranged to roll out in accordance with Covid guidelines if feasible. It is envisaged that demand for programmes will be high following a sustained period of inactivity for most children. Community provision has exceeded targets during the pandemic as it has had a flexible approach to delivery.

The value of THYSF's annual grant is £25,000

5.24. **Wheels for Wellbeing**

- 5.25. Wheels for Wellbeing provide inclusive cycling activities including a drop-in cycling sessions for disabled people and their families, carers or friends, from three bases in south London. Qualified instructors and volunteers help participants try out cycles to find a good fit for the rider and ongoing support is provided.

- 5.26. During the pandemic services were quickly repurposed, providing vital support and assistance in partnership with local community organisations to ensure that basic needs were met:

- Weekly contact with carers supporting relatives with dementia
- Providing delivery service to support the Irish Community Centre and Catford Fridge hot meals service to elderly and isolated residents
- Collection and delivery of medication to shielding residents
- Socially distanced befriending service to carers
- Cycles for use by the Lewisham Community Response

The value of Wheels for Wellbring's annual grant is £29,350.

5.27. **The Grove Centre**

- 5.28. The Grove Centre, Sydenham provides a Coffee Bar and Lunch provision Monday to Friday for elderly members of the local community. The organisation host a diverse range of activities to meet local need and is home to a children's nursery.

- 5.29. The luncheon service was immediately repurposed at the start of the pandemic with 20 meals each day being delivered. This was increased as the lockdown continued to 25 meals. The Centre established links with the Co-op to make use of 'Best before' stock – allowing all recipients to receive additional food bags with deliveries. Ongoing surveys of users ensure that the service continue to address the needs and requirement of recipients.

The value of the Grove Centre's annual grant is £3,750.

## 6. Financial implications

- 6.1. This report seeks approval to extend funding to the voluntary and community sector organisations as set out in paragraph 5. The total proposed funding of £155,815 will be cover the period 1st April 21 to 31st March 22. The proposed grants can be contained within the 21/22 base budget allocated to the Main

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Grants Programme in the 2021-22 financial year.

## 7. Legal implications

- 7.1. Under S1 of the Localism Act 2011 the Council has a general power of competence to do anything which an individual may do unless it is expressly prohibited.
- 7.2. The giving of grants to voluntary organisations is a discretionary power which must be exercised reasonably, taking into account all relevant considerations and ignoring irrelevant considerations.
- 7.3. The report sets out the reasons for offering a further 12 months grants to the eight organisations.
- 7.4. Decisions on making a grant or giving assistance to a voluntary organisation require the approval of Mayor and Cabinet where the level of a grant is over £10,000 (Mayoral Scheme of Delegation section Q). Those decisions will be key decisions (Constitution Article 16(c)(xiii)).
- 7.5. The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) contains a public sector equality duty (the equality duty or the duty). It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

In summary, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

7.6 The duty continues to be a “have regard duty”, and the weight to be attached to it is a matter for the Mayor, bearing in mind the issues of relevance and proportionality. It is not an absolute requirement to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or foster good relations.

7.7 The Equality and Human Rights Commission has issued Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty and statutory guidance entitled Practice”. The Council must have regard to the statutory code in so far as it relates to the duty and attention is drawn to Chapter 11 which deals particularly with the equality duty. The Technical Guidance also covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty. This includes steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The guidance does not have statutory force but nonetheless regard should be had to it, as failure to do so without compelling reason would be of evidential value. The statutory code and the technical guidance can be found at:

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/equality-act/equality-actcodes-ofpractice- and-technical-guidance/>

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7.8 The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has previously issued five guides for public authorities in England giving advice on the equality duty:

- The essential guide to the public sector equality duty
- Meeting the equality duty in policy and decision-making
- Engagement and the equality duty
- Equality objectives and the equality duty
- Equality information and the equality duty

7.9 The essential guide provides an overview of the equality duty requirements including the general equality duty, the specific duties and who they apply to. It covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty including steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The other four documents provide more detailed guidance on key areas and advice on good practice. Further information and resources are available at

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sectorequalityduty/guidance-on-the-equality-duty/>.

## 8. Equalities implications

8.1. There are no specific equalities implications arising from these recommendations. However, a full equalities assessment was undertaken at the time the grants were let, in April 2019. Please see Appendix 1.

## 9. Climate change and environmental implications

9.1. There are no specific climate change or environmental implications.

## 10. Crime and disorder implications

10.1. There are no specific crime and disorder implications.

## 11. Health and wellbeing implications

11.1. The projects address the Communities that Care and Wider Access to Sports and Arts themes and all make a contribution towards health and wellbeing.

## 12. Background papers

12.1. Appendix 1 – Main Grants Programme

<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=139&MIId=5440&Ver=4>

## 13. Glossary

Term	Definition
Main Grants programme	A funding programme operated by Lewisham Council, providing support to a range of voluntary and community organisations working with vulnerable residents and contributing to the borough's key priorities

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Term	Definition
Voluntary and Community Sector	Independent not-for-profit organisations, often registered with the Charity Commission, working towards social objectives

## 14. Report author and contact

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