

**LONDON COUNCILS GRANTS COMMITTEE -  
9 March 2016**

Minutes of the Grants Committee AGM held at London Councils, 59½ Southwark Street, London SE1 0AL on Wednesday 9 March 2016

**London Borough & Royal Borough:**

Barking and Dagenham  
Bexley  
Brent  
Bromley  
Camden  
City of London  
Ealing  
Enfield  
Greenwich  
Hackney  
Hammersmith and Fulham  
Haringey  
Harrow  
Havering  
Hounslow  
Islington  
Kensington and Chelsea  
Lambeth  
Lewisham  
Merton  
Newham  
Redbridge  
Richmond  
Southwark  
Sutton  
Waltham Forest  
Wandsworth

**Representative:**

Cllr Cameron Geddes (Dep)  
Cllr Don Massey  
Cllr Michael Pavey  
Cllr Stephen Carr  
Cllr Abdul Hai  
Ms Alison Gowman  
Cllr Ranjit Dheer  
Cllr Yasemin Brett  
Cllr Denise Scott-McDonald  
Cllr Antoinette Bramble (Dep)  
Cllr Sue Fennimore  
Cllr Peter Morton  
Cllr Sue Anderson  
Cllr Melvin Wallace  
Cllr Sue Sampson  
Cllr Asima Shaikh  
Cllr Gerard Hargreaves  
Cllr Paul McGlone (Chair)  
Cllr Joan Millbank  
Cllr Edith Macauley MBE  
Cllr Lester Hudson (Dep)  
Cllr Farah Hussain (Dep)  
Cllr Meena Bond  
Cllr Michael Situ  
Cllr Simon Wales  
Cllr Clyde Loakes  
Cllr Guy Senior

London Councils officers were in attendance.

**1. Apologies for Absence and Announcement of Deputies**

Apologies were received from Cllr Darren Rodwell (Barking and Dagenham), Cllr Daniel Thomas (LB Barnet), Cllr Jonathan McShane (LB Hackney), Cllr Douglas Mills (LB Hillingdon), Cllr Julie Pickering (Kingston upon Thames), Cllr Forhad Hussain (LB Newham), Cllr Dev Sharma (LB Redbridge), Cllr Rachel Saunders (LB Tower Hamlets), Cllr Liaquat Ali (LB Waltham Forest), Cllr James Maddan (LB Wandsworth) and Cllr Steve Summers (City of Westminster).

**2. Declaration of Interest**

No interests were declared.

**3. Minutes of the Grants Committee held on 18 November 2015**

Cllr Carr suggested that the minutes did not fully reflect the lack of support for the ESF programme.

The minutes of the meeting on 18 November 2015 were agreed.

**4. Review of London Councils' Grants Programme**

The Chair introduced the item by providing some background to the current position of the Grants Scheme:

The current grants programme delivered jointly by the London local authorities under the London Grants Scheme was due to conclude in March 2017.

In July 2015 London Councils Grants Committee embarked on a review to inform future decisions by Grants and Leaders' Committee as to the continued delivery of a pan-London grants programme at the conclusion of the current programme in 2017.

The Review involved consideration, analysis and evaluation of a number of sources of information and factors relevant to the decision. In particular, it sought and analysed the views of stakeholders provided through established sector arrangements and a formal consultation undertaken between July and October 2015. It evaluated evidence relating to the operation and impact of the current grants programme. Specific consideration was given to the equalities impacts arising from the operation of the current programme and those which may have arisen in delivering a future programme including one which may have differed in scope. Regard was also had to the pressures on local authority budgets arising from significant cuts to local government funding in recent years and the additional adverse impact of the Comprehensive Spending Review announced on 25 November 2015 – subsequently confirmed by the final Local Government Financial Settlement announced on 8 February 2016 – which would reduce local authority funding further.

The evaluation and analysis by officers was considered by Grants Committee on 18 November 2015 and Leaders' Committee on 8 December 2015, which agreed a new grants programme should be delivered from April 2017 (retaining the principles underpinning the current programme) and that it was minded, subject to further consultation, to endorse future priorities around combatting sexual and domestic violence and on poverty through worklessness, on tackling homelessness (subject to certain provisos) but not to support a priority around capacity building for the third sector. Further, Leaders' Committee resolved that officers should work to strengthen programme management and relationships with boroughs at a local level to support the management of each priority and delivery of outcomes.

A subsequent additional consultation took place from 17 December 2015 to 22 January 2016 to seek further views on the position the Committee was minded to take as outlined above. This report summarised the findings of this consultation in presenting relevant evidence and information to the Committee in taking their decision to make recommendations to Leaders' Committee on the future scope of the next grants programme. This included evidence in the form of a report commissioned from Homeless Link into homelessness need in London and information gathered at a London Councils borough event focused on sexual and domestic violence which took place on 23 February 2016.

There was also other work currently underway by London Funders (and funded by the City Bridge Trust) to review infrastructure support in London and the outcome of that review was due to be delivered to London Councils at the end of March 2016.

The Chair then asked for questions and comments.

- Cllr Denise Scott-McDonald expressed her borough, Greenwich's concern over the potential loss of the capacity building priority and argued the importance of linking homelessness with job creation.
- Cllr Joan Millbank made clear that the proposals did not reflect any lack of appreciation of the importance of capacity-building going forward but that the boroughs budgetary situations had to be considered and she was delighted with the work on capacity-building being carried out by the City Bridge Trust. She went on to stress the importance of access to immediate housing as well as moving on support and that government policy was making responses to Homelessness more complex
- In response to a point made by Cllr Carr about the absence of previously agreed provisos in the report the Corporate Director Services replied that he was happy to make them clear in the report that was to go to Leaders' Committee on 22 March
- In response to a question from Cllr Gerard Hargreaves about where the financing would come from for any proposal on capacity-building that may come from the work by the City

Bridge Trust, the Corporate Director Services replied that none was anticipated and, in any event it was a matter for the committee to agree, or turn down any officer recommendation for increased funding

- Cllr Yasemin Brett welcomed the greater recognition of the issue of Homelessness in outer London boroughs, a point supported by Cllr Clyde Loakes and Cllr Don Massey. She went on to mention an increase in prostitution in her borough. In response to a request she made for increased use of new communications technology to facilitate discussions between officers and members in different agencies and reduce the number of meetings, the Chair asked officers to bring back proposals aimed at achieving that.
- Cllr Don Massey argued that in some instances, capacity-building money could be better spent by individual boroughs than on a pan-London basis.
- Cllr Michael Situ pointed out that his borough, Southwark, had started work on capacity building and stressed the importance of linking what the London Councils Grants Scheme and the boroughs were doing
- Ms Alison Gowman informed the committee that she was the deputy-chair of the City Bridge Trust. She had been heartened by the boroughs commitment to capacity-building and was keen to develop the work of the Trust with the Grants Committee and the boroughs.

The Chair summed up as follows:

- Discussions on how to develop a new understanding of how to lead and participate in capacity-building were to continue
- He drew attention to the exchange of letters between Mr Bob Green, chair of LVSF and Mayor Jules Pipe, chair of London Councils and said that the letter from Mr Green could have been read as suggesting that equalities issues were not being addressed, Cllr McGlone considered that assertion to be fundamentally wrong

Grants Committee unanimously agreed:

- To make recommendations to Leaders' Committee to agree to deliver a Grants Programme from April 2017 operating in accordance with the current principles and focused on the following priorities –
  - Priority 1 Combatting Homelessness
  - Priority 2 Tackling Sexual and Domestic Violence
  - Priority 3 Tackling Poverty through Employment (European Social Fund match funded)
- That officers develop a proposal to work with City Bridge Trust on the implementation of the review into infrastructure support in London (being undertaken by London Funders) and that this be reported to the next meeting of the Grants Committee in July 2016

## **5. Priority 3 Poverty (Co-funded by ESF): Implementation of Committee's Decisions**

The Chair introduced the item:

- The last cycle of the national ESF programme, including the London Councils ESF programme, had closed in December 2015. It half funded the Committee's Priority 3 Tackling Poverty through Employment
- London Councils was close to signing the agreement for its new programme with the GLA, which managed the overall ESF programme in London. Delivery would run to the end of 2018 and have a value of £22 million
- As in the last programme, each element would be half funded by ESF and half funded by the boroughs including £3 million allocated in principle by the Grants Committee for this purpose at its meeting in December 2014. This allocation was made for three years but subject to the outcome of the Review of Grants. The

agreements with the providers of the services would therefore enable London Councils to terminate them at the end of 2016/17 if members decided not to proceed with the Grants Programme beyond then

- The Priority would be delivered by third sector organisations through an open and competitive application process based on service specifications and officers were taking care to ensure outcomes would be delivered fairly across all boroughs.

The Chair asked for questions or comments

- Cllr Don Massey questioned how a decision in the EU Referendum to withdraw from the EU would affect the ESF Programme and the Corporate Director Services replied that there was no clarity on this point but he thought it unlikely that changes would come into effect sufficiently rapidly to have any effect
- Cllr Simon Wales asked about the feasibility of integrating Homelessness and Employment and the Chair sought an assurance from officers that this link was to be rock solid and would not be an aspiration but an obligation.

Grants Committee agreed:

- To note the progress on implementing its previous decisions and the findings on the Review of Grants in respect of bringing Homelessness and Employment Support closer together in boroughs
- That officers may:
  - Seek applications in a competitive process as soon as London Councils has a signed ESF agreement with the GLA (expected within one month)
  - Report on those applications, against the specification, to the Grants Executive subject to timing before any awards were made
  - Award the relevant grants to the successful organisations following this process of member approvals
  - Report on progress to the Committee at its next meeting in July, which would also be an opportunity for a report on the wider London Councils ESF programme.

## **6. Performance of Grants Programme**

The Head of Grants and Community Services introduced the report saying:

- This was London Councils' officers' quarterly report on the performance of the Grants Programme, covering the first three quarters of 2015/16, year three of the current funding cycle.
- At priority level, the outcomes for:
  - Priority 1 (homelessness) overall were 28% above profile in the first three quarters of 2015/16
  - Priority 2 (sexual and domestic violence) overall were 9% above profile in the first three quarters of 2015/16
  - Priority 3 (ESF tackling poverty through employment) overall were 1% above profile at completion

- Priority 4 (capacity building) overall were 3% above profile in the first three quarters of 2015/16
- This performance in the last three quarters meant that the number of interventions delivered in the 11 quarters combined since the start of the programme is as follows:
  - Priority 1 (homelessness) – 54,950
  - Priority 2 (sexual and domestic violence) – 196,162
  - Priority 3 (ESF tackling poverty through employment) – 7,474 (Q1-10)
  - Priority 4 (capacity building) – 13,710

A total of 272,296

The Principal Priority Manager reported that on the Project Level, generally, commissions were performing well and above targets but some individual projects were classified as amber such as Women in Prison (specification 2.2). Officers will bring a further update on this commission to the next meeting. Additional updates focused on the closure of PACE and Eaves as partners of projects led by Thames Reach, GALOP and New Horizon Youth Centre. The Chair asked for reports back to be made on the five projects for which there were concerns.

Cllr Gerard Hargreaves pointed out that all the reports on the cases in the report were positive and he was concerned that this may present a misleading picture and asked that areas of concern should also be reported back. The Chair agreed and asked that all projects that required special attention were reported back through the meetings of the Grants Executive in June and Grants Committee in July.

Cllr Meena Bond asked for less to be presented in reports about case studies and more about how efficiently projects were run and how much fund-raising they do for themselves.

Grants Committee agreed to note the report.

## **7. Emergency Refuge Accommodation: Eaves**

The Chair introduced the report saying:

- At its meeting of 18 November 2015 Grants Committee agreed that officers were to investigate options to address the gap in service caused by Eaves going into administration in October 2015. Eaves were awarded funding in 2013 to deliver emergency refuge accommodation to women who had been a victim of trafficking and sexual exploitation. Members asked for proposals to be brought forward to address this gap within the existing budget allocation of £162,950 for the period 1 April 2016-31 March 2017.
- Grants Committee was asked to consider two options:
  - Option 1: Subject to continued availability of resources and delivery of the outcomes and the meeting of the London Councils conditions as set out in a grant agreement between London Councils and the applicant, an award to Ashiana of a grant of £162,950 should be made for the period 1 April 2016- 31 March 2017 or
  - Option 2: A grant of £184,950 on the same terms, which would deliver additional outcomes outlined in the body of the report but would exceed the allocated

amount by £22,000 which would deliver six additional units of Stage 2 Housing, an option which he, the Chair was minded to support.

Cllr Yasemin Brett mentioned the closure of the North London Muslim Women's Refuge and asked for connections to be made between it and Ashiana.

Cllr Carr said he would be happy to support Option 2 and mentioned the need to support women who fell into the category No Recourse to Public Funds

Grants Committee agreed to Option 2 subject to the following caveats to be confirmed by the Chair of the Grants Committee.

- that clarification was sought by officers on how the boroughs could signpost to the project on a needs basis
- that clarification was sought on the level of proposed outcomes and delivery associated with option two
- that there would be no increase in the value of the £10m Grants scheme in 2016-17 and that this cost would be met through underspend during that year. Also that reassurance had been provided by the Director of Corporate Resources that based on typical levels of underspend returned to London Councils over a year that it would be reasonable to assume that £22,000 would become available during 2016-17.

Action: Officers to report back to the Chair on these issues.

## **8. Month 9 Revenue Forecast 2015/16**

The Director of Corporate Resources introduced the report saying that there had been movement of £400,000 since last reported in November 2015 because of slippage in the new 2016+ ESF programme. In response to a request from the Chair for a report explaining how the ESF financing worked, the Director of Corporate Resources pointed out that the process for claiming grant and the timing of the actual receipt of payments was highly complex, although he would endeavor to provide the analysis as simply as possible.

Cllr Carr called for greater discipline in dealing with the boroughs contribution to the new 2016+ ESF programme since it had slipped further.

Grants Committee agreed to note:

- The projected surplus of £1.141 million for the year and
- The projected level of Committee reserves and the commentary on the financial position of the Committee included in the report.

**The meeting finished at 12:20**