

## **LONDON COUNCILS GRANTS COMMITTEE EXECUTIVE MEETING**

Minutes of the Grants Committee Executive meeting held at London Councils, 59 ½ Southwark Street, London SE1 0AL on Wednesday 22 June 2016 at 14:00

Members	Cllr. Paul McGlone (Chair)	LB Lambeth
	Cllr. Simon Wales (Vice Chair)	LB Sutton
	Cllr. Stephen Carr	LB Bromley
	Cllr. Kaya Comer-Schwartz	LB Islington
	Cllr. Julie Pickering	RB Kingston

London Councils officers were in attendance:

Frank Smith (Director: Corporate Resources)  
Nick Lester-Davis (Corporate Director: Services)  
Simon Courage (Head of Grants & Community Services)  
Katy Makepeace-Gray (Principal Programme Manager: Quality)

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

1.1 Apologies were received from: Cllr Gerard Hargreaves (RB Kensington and Chelsea), Cllr James Madden (LB Wandsworth), Cllr Joan Millbank (LB Lewisham) and Cllr Forhad Hussain (LB Newham).

1.2 Members of the Grants Executive and London Councils officers introduced themselves.

### **2. Deputies and Declaration of Attendance**

2.1 There were no declarations of interest. Cllr Julie Pickering acted as substitute for Cllr Gerard Hargreaves (RB Kensington and Chelsea)

### **3. Presentation – The Way Ahead – report commissioned by City Bridge Trust**

3.1 The Chair invited David Warner (DW), Director of London Funders and David Farnsworth (DF), Director of City Bridge Trust, to address the meeting to present on their recent work around the future of civil society support and a potential role for London Councils in representing the boroughs and take questions - hard copies of their presentation were given to the Grants Executive. The Chair emphasised the need for LCs work with both companies to be carried out in a partnership approach to maximise value.

3.2 Mr Farnsworth confirmed that there was an allocation of £1.2m in Bridge House Estates derived from gifts or legacies, and that allocation of grants was both zoned and pan-London. In addition £20m per year was available for grant giving plus social investment. A large part of their work is in supporting London's voluntary sector, for example through second tier support organisations.

3.3 The following points were made:

- Cllr Pickering welcomed the focus on a wider picture beyond local authority commissioning and linking with independent funders. Cllr Pickering asked about how CBT ensured consortium working as part of grant funding? DF confirmed that this requirement is embedded in grant giving. DW confirmed that the report provided to the Grants Executive included a lot of detail on collective use of resources both in the providers' and funders' sectors and the requirement to account for grant spent
- Although the Grants Executive had retained the word 'grants' it now had a commissioning role rather than a directly grant giving one - it also had a good track record of leadership through partnership working
- The Chair welcome the proposal in terms of the potential for London Councils to play a leadership role, supported by officer expert groups, providing democratic legitimacy to leadership of civil society in London.
- Cllr Carr questioned the value of the role of LC here and whether CBT would not be better in going to boroughs directly. DF confirmed that CBT would not wish to seek the views of all 33 boroughs individually, but would wish to reflect on the local knowledge and democratic legitimacy of the boroughs through London Councils. The Corporate Director: Services (CD:S) commented that London Councils could engage with the boroughs to exchange knowledge and information regarding joint working. While many boroughs attend London Funders meetings, LC were concerned to engage strategically with boroughs collectively rather than just individually and reflect their key priorities. In order to properly engage this would require some additional officer time
- The Chair recognised that this work was being developed, and felt that a full report on these issues should be made to the next Grants Committee meeting, showing how LC can assist in the leadership in civil society including work between the third sector and boroughs, and involving both DW and DF.

3.4 The Chair thanked the representatives for their time and DW and DF left the meeting.

#### **4. Minutes of the Grants Executive held on 22 June 2015**

4.1 The minutes of the meeting which took place on 22 June 2015 were agreed as an accurate record.

#### **5. Minutes of the Grants Committee held on 9 March 2016 (for noting)**

5.1 The minutes were noted. Regarding the issue of new technologies being used between officers and members (page 9, 1<sup>st</sup> bullet point), a report had yet to be made back to Grants Executive.

5.2 In relation to item 6 'Performance of Grants Programme' the Principal Programme Manager (PPM) reported that all issues raised at the previous meeting had been addressed.

5.3 The Chair was concerned about the number of apologies for this and the previous meeting, and that a way was needed to reach out to new members. Although an

induction session had been arranged prior to the AGM it was felt that more could be done to engage them.

## **6. Priority Three: Tackling Poverty Through Employment – Update on Implementation**

6.1 The Head of Grants and Community Services (HGCS) introduced the report. He confirmed that in November 2014 it had been agreed that the Grants programme continued to include a Poverty priority, although this has been delayed pending signing the agreement with the GLA. The bidding for grants had been launched on 24 May and closed on 22 June: 28 applications had been received covering 6 geographic clusters. Scoring would now need to take place.

6.2 The following points and questions were raised in relation to this item:

- The criteria for assessing the bids on a borough-by-borough basis would take into account borough population, unemployment and homelessness rates
- The three variables have seen priority shifts to boroughs with high unemployment and homelessness rates. Each borough in receipt of grants must demonstrate clear links with recognised homelessness projects in that area
- Cllr Carr asked when the GLA agreement would be signed and what was the impact of it remaining unsigned? The HGCS replied that they were keen to meet with the GLA to discuss financing that was viable for both sides, and was hopeful that this would be sorted in a few weeks. In the interim the target client group would not be affected short term as they were a minority of very long term unemployed people
- It was explained that the borough clusters were linked by a separate provider for each 'lot', rather than being designed as sub regional schemes. Cllr Pickering felt that the methodology, which requires that outcomes be linked to borough targets and that local businesses should be involved, should have a review period built in. It was agreed that more work should be done to show the analysis as to how the methodology had been applied in the report
- Cllr Wales pointed out that 'output' in the first line of page 2 of the report should be 'outcome'
- Regarding the table on page 3 of the report – there was concern that there was no information in the last two columns – the HGCS to review this.
- In terms of reporting to Grants Committee, the HGCS reported that a table will be made available to members shortly before the meeting. The report to Grants Committee would set the scene and also detail 'borderline' bids flagged up for the Committee to review.
- Cllr Pickering questioned how the borough clusters had been agreed, as she felt that the groupings were different to other sub regional frameworks? The HGCS responded that this was largely for reasons of manageability, rather than sub regionally. The CD:S added that it was quite reasonable for different groupings of boroughs to be applied in different circumstances. The Chair asked that the methodology for the clusters be reviewed – although bidders had bid based on the published clusters, the methodology would be looked at again.

## **7. Grants Programme 2017-21 – Update on Specification Development**

7.1 The PPM introduced the report, and confirmed that it focused on Priority 1 and 2 projects. The focus of the priorities was based on a need to avoid duplication and spreading services too thinly. New emphasis were triggered by reduced housing options and a requirement for tenancy sustainment – children and young people projects were also a priority. The Committee were asked for their views on Priorities 1 and 2, and the draft service area tables in Appendix 1 of the report.

7.2 Officers had been asked to review the performance management model following feedback during the Grants Review on the need to strengthen the measurement of value for money, robust outcomes, avoiding duplication, closer working with boroughs and improving reporting.

7.3 The Committee reviewed Appendix 4 first. The Chair asked the Committee for views on the additional emphasis to the priorities. The view from the Committee was that, although the priorities were agreed, that additional information should be added showing how the priorities had been evidenced.

7.4 Cllr Comer-Schwartz asked to what extent domestic violence was linked to housing issues as it wasn't sufficiently brought out in the Appendix, and there was a specific concern about the impact on temporary accommodation from the rehousing of domestic violence cases. The PPM reported that MOPAC and LC were doing some work in this area with Local Authorities, and although this issue had been addressed in section 2.2 - 2.4 of Appendix 1, it was agreed to make the connection stronger.

7.5 Regarding Appendix 2, it was agreed that there should be an additional columns added to the summary of the options (page 43 of the report) showing the figures in Appendix 3 (current funding levels) and the additional areas as outlined in Section Three. . In addition, the Chair was concerned that, although accepting that bidders needed to know what they were bidding for, the very specific amounts may lead to support being given for lesser quality bids in order to secure funding. His view was that the costs in this table should be more indicative with the option to change amounts to secure bids with the greatest value. The CD:S confirmed that as bids come in they would be scored, and any bids of an insufficient quality or failing to meet defined needs would not be taken forward.

7.6 The Chair was also concerned where reference had been made to specific posts (section 2.1, 2.3 in Appendix 3 - page 42 of the report). He felt that a more 'commissioning' based approach should be adopted. Cllr Carr asked whether there was a danger of any of the proposed services duplicating statutory services, as if this is the case it shouldn't be funded. The PPM confirmed that officers have working with relevant borough officers (and will continue to do so) to ensure that this does not happen.

7.7 Cllr Comer-Schwartz asked whether any flexibility with funding might lead to gaps in meeting objectives, and how the meeting of all objectives is achieved? The Chair confirmed that although the question was hypothetical, the assessment of the bids was based on quality and only bids which improved outcomes would be funded.

7.8 Cllr Pickering questioned why there wasn't anything included about building capacity in the sexual and domestic violence voluntary and community sector? The PPM mentioned that there were examples where capacity building was specifically mentioned (eg in page 37 of the report – section 2.5).

7.9 Cllr Pickering asked for there to be a mention in the report of the reduction to borough subscriptions arising out of not funding priority four going forwards from 2017.

7.10 Cllr Pickering also asked about the capacity to deliver in terms of staffing. The CD:S confirmed that posts had been recruited to in the Grants and Community Services teams for this purpose and flexibility had been built into the resourcing, although this was in the context that staffing should not be more than 5% of the programme, a target set by the Committee.

7.11 Cllr Pickering felt that the more that consortium bidding could be prioritised, the more the outcomes could be achieved. The CD:S agreed, confirming that the London Youth Gateway project was a good example of this, and it was also part of the City Bridge Trust's work.

7.12 The Chair felt that previously some of the outcome indicators from the current programme could be more challenging. The PPM confirmed that these have been addressed in the process of creating new service specifications..

7.13 The Chair confirmed that the intention now was to move towards reporting a set of service specifications in Priorities 1 and 2 for approval at the July 2016 Grants Committee, with confirmation from officers in the boroughs that value has been added in the specifications.

7.14 Cllr Pickering asked whether the specific figures (P 43 of the report) would be removed? The Chair confirmed that officers would round them up and reserve the right to re-allocate, but that the overall priorities remain.

## **8. Grants Programme 2013-17 – Performance 2015/16**

8.1 The HGCS introduced the report.

8.2 The Chair asked whether the recipients of the grant funded services could be analysed by protected characteristic to consider the equalities impact of the funding. The CD:S thought that this might be problematic because much of the work involved low level interactions- the Chair felt that some analysis of the higher level interactions in this way would be useful. The HGCS mentioned the challenges of reporting large amounts of data, but would work on a model for reporting to present at the next meeting. The Chair wanted this reporting to show the critical success factors for 2015/16.

8.3 The chart at the bottom of page 30 of the report was without a heading. There was also a lack of clarity around how the 'Difference' column figures were calculated. This was to be reviewed.

8.4 It was confirmed that officers are working towards each borough receiving their own report on project performance – a pan London report would be submitted to the Grants Committee.

**The meeting ended at 16:10**