

Grants Committee

Grants Programme 2017-21

Item 14

Report by:	Simon Courage Katy Makepeace-Gray	Job title:	Head of Grants and Community Services Principal Programme Manager
Date:	13 July 2016		
Contact Officer:	Simon Courage		
Telephone:	020 7934 9901	Email:	simon.courage@londoncouncils.gov.uk

Summary

Following recommendations from Grants Committee, Leaders' Committee considered a report at their meeting 22 March 2016 and agreed that there should be a Grants Programme from April 2017 to March 2021, 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 (ESF match funded)

This report provides an update on this process regarding Priority 1 and Priority 2, and timetable of next steps. Priority 3 receives match-funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) and therefore operates under a slightly different timetable and is covered in a separate report on this agenda.

Officers have taken the evidence outlined in the March Grants and Leaders' Committee reports and used this to draw up draft proposed service areas. These have been used to work with boroughs and key stakeholders to co-produce specifications (**Appendix One**). Members of the Grants Executive also reviewed the draft service area tables at their meeting on 22 June 2016 and comments are included in Section Two, paragraph 2.8.

Recommendations

Members are asked to,

1. Note the process which has led to the co-production of service specifications in **Appendix One**, as outlined in

Section Two, including the involvement of relevant borough officers, key stakeholders and Grants Executive (22 June 2016).

2. Agree the specifications in **Appendix One**, for services to be delivered from April 2017 to March 2021.
3. Agree one of the three options for potential indicative funding levels set out in **Appendix Two**, which reflect where there has been a steer to place greater emphasis on certain areas as outlined in Section Three. Indicative funding levels are designed to assist potential applicants and are subject to agreement of available resources by the Grants Committee and Leaders' Committee in November/December 2016. These indicative sums may be increased or decreased by committee within an agreed budget when decisions on the commissions to be funded by London Councils are made in February 2017. Funding to commissions is also subject to the annual budget setting process.
4. Note the timetable outlined in **Appendix Four** as presented to Grants Committee 9 March 2016, with further detail.

1. Background

1.1 Following recommendations from Grants Committee, Leaders' Committee considered a report on the future London Councils Grants Programme at their meeting 22 March 2016 and agreed, that there should be a Grants Programme from April 2017 to March 2021, 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)

1.2 Members also agreed that there should be a re-focus to some of the priorities as follows. Priority 1 and 3 to be more closely aligned, greater focus on the different needs of inner and outer London (particularly in relation to Priority 1) and in addition a strengthened focus on robust outcomes and borough involvement in the specifications development to ensure best fit with local services (additions set out in **Appendix Three**).

2. Development of service areas and service specifications

2.1. Grants Committee considered a package of evidence (including two consultations, a letter from MOPAC, a report on homelessness by Homeless Link, equalities information and findings from a borough and VCS domestic violence event). The evidence supported a reflection of the current funding service areas of Priority 1 and 2 with the addition of various changes to address the changes that have taken place since the start of funding in 2013. These additions are set out in **Appendix Three**.

2.2. In the first stage of specification development officers created **draft service area tables** with objectives and outcomes. As outlined above, these incorporated elements of the existing strands with the additional areas as outlined in **Appendix Three**. These were used as the starting point for discussions with borough officers from the relevant borough officer networks, such as the Borough Grants Officers Network, Housing Needs and Homelessness Borough Officer Forum (which both meet at London Councils) and MOPAC's Violence against Women and Girls Borough Officer Forum, as well as other key stakeholders.

2.3 Four focus groups were held with key stakeholders in May (two focus groups each for Priority 1 and Priority 2) with 66 people attending in total. This included 13 borough representatives with expertise in homelessness (and two representatives from Housing Partnerships representing 12 local authorities between them) and 13 borough representatives with expertise in sexual and domestic violence (one

borough represented the three boroughs with a combined commissioning approach in this area)¹. In addition there were representatives from VCS (both currently funded and not) as well as representatives from MOPAC and the GLA's housing section.

2.4 Stakeholders were also invited to contribute via email/letter if they were unable to attend a focus group. Emails were sent to the Borough Grants Officers Network, Housing needs and Homelessness Borough Officer Network and Violence against Women and Girls Borough Officer Network. In relation to Priority 1, 18 emails/ letters were received, including nine from boroughs, VCS (both currently funded and not), the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime and Lloyds Foundation (a funder). In relation to Priority 2, 22 emails/ letters were received including nine from boroughs and other responses from VCS, MOPAC and Lloyd's foundation.

2.5 The focus groups and emails were used to co-produce service specifications with the intention of including clear robust SMART² outcomes, and to ensure value for money and best fit with existing local and regional services and duties.

2.6 Key themes emerged relating to Priority 1 and 2 during this process, which are outlined below. These are in addition to (and often reflecting) issues raised during the Grants Review (**Appendix Three**):

Priority 1 Tackling Homelessness

- The need to address outer London homelessness remained key, however, respondents did not draw out clear distinctions in different service delivery types needed in inner and outer London (with the exception of the issue of rough sleeping). Officers are therefore of the view that this might be better addressed through borough targets that reflect the changing need.
- The need to have focused services, in which service delivery is not spread too thinly.
- That given the limited housing options, services that supporting tenancy sustainment is ever more important.
- Areas that the programme should focus on to complement local provision and address particular groups that boroughs found it difficult to support (mental health (including personality disorders), supported family reconnection,
- The impact of welfare changes on young people, the increasingly level of need for this group and the fact that it is particularly well suited to pan-London provision.
- Continuing reflection on the need to work with boroughs to create shared solutions (and not to use challenge as the first means of communication)
- That communication with borough housing departments needs to be strengthened

¹ Three boroughs are LBs Kensington and Chelsea, Hammersmith and Fulham and Westminster

² SMART – Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic/relevant, time-bound

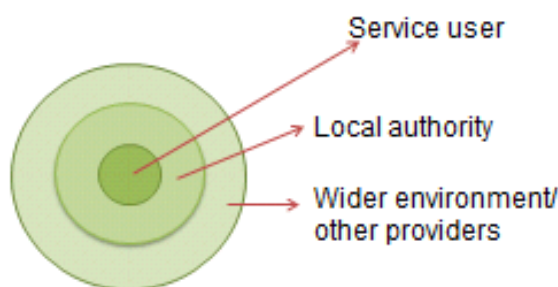
Priority 2 Tackling Sexual and Domestic Violence

- The need to reflect the increasing impact of issues around housing/homelessness in relation to domestic violence.
- The need to have focused services, in which service delivery is not spread too thinly.
- A continued request for robust clear outcomes
- The importance of working with sexual and domestic violence borough leads (VAWG Coordinators), Heads of Community Safety, Safeguarding leads to plan effective services
- The importance of sustained aftercare for providers
- The need to reflect recent changes to the sector (increased focus on generalist provision by commissioners, reduced funding, increased demand, welfare reform, loss of specialist services)
- Ideas about how best to complement local provision and ensure that services have local reach, embedded within existing structures and with a wider reach to harness additional support across borough boundaries (local focus with city-wide approach) including co-location and wrapping around existing services. For this relationship to be supported by service area 2.5.
- The shortage of specialist refuge provision for particular groups
- The importance of service user involvement in the design and review of services.

2.7 Key themes that related to both priorities included,

- The need to measure the impact of the service across a range of client groups as outlined in figure 1. Officers will incorporate this into the draft specifications.

Figure 1: Model of client groups to be measured



2.8 Draft service area tables were considered by Grants Executive at their meeting of 22 June 2016. Members asked officers to reflect the following aspects.

- to be more explicit in the link between domestic violence and housing/homelessness issues

- the importance of support to strengthen the resilience and financial stability of the sexual and domestic violence sector (service area 2.5)
- to ensure that there was clarity that indicative funding levels were there for guidance purposes, and could change depending on the bidding process, with levels varying between service areas and potentially priorities
- to ensure that partnership and consortia are positive promoted in the specifications, building on the fact that the current programme has had a number of successful partnerships
- to ensure the report sets out the reduction to the budget (to be considered by Grants and Leaders' Committee in the autumn) relating to the new Grants Programme not having a priority solely focused on capacity building.

3. Indicative funding levels

3.1 Through the analysis of the two consultations, reports and other stakeholder engagement in the 2015-16 Grants Review and recent specification development work there have been a number of key developments since the 2011-12 Grants Review that have emerged. Officers have incorporated these elements into the service specifications in **Appendix One** and Members are asked to consider whether these should influence how much is allocated to each of the service areas within the indicative budget envelope. Options for indicative funding levels for each service area are outlined in options in **Appendix Two**. As outlined above the service areas are largely similar to the service areas in the 2013-17 programme and members are asked to consider funding allocations with the 2013-17 figures as a reference point. These developments are as follows

- Increased need around emergency refuge provision and housing solutions for victims of Domestic Violence (Priority 2)
- Coordination of refuge provision (Priority 2)
- Young people and homelessness (Priority 1)
- Children and young people affected by sexual and domestic violence (Priority 2)

Further details on these are set out below in paragraphs 2.8.1 to 2.8.4.

3.2 Emergency Refuge Provision and Housing Solutions (Priority 2)

A number of factors have recently led to a shortage in refuge spaces in London, particularly specialist refuge provision. A tendency towards commissioning of more mainstream/ generalist services has come at the expense of specialist provision. The closure of Eaves reflects this (amongst a number of factors). In addition the lack of move-on accommodation has meant that refuges have found it difficult to move women on and therefore accept new referrals. There has been a reported over-use of refuge provision from local authorities for medium risk victims, impacting again on the

number of bed spaces for high risk victims. This has been a result of more limited housing options available to local authorities and service users and perpetrators remaining in tenancies unchallenged. This has been highlighted in Solace Women's Aid's recent research into domestic violence and homelessness.³

Boroughs and other key stakeholders, such as MOPAC have highlighted the challenge around specialist refuge provision and the need for more housing solutions for victims of domestic violence.

At its meeting in February 2013 Grants Committee agreed to fund Women's Aid UKROL to collect data relating to refuge provision in London. The most recent quarterly report of this data (January – March 2016) shows the percentage of successful referrals to a refuge in London is 36.2% (which means that 63.8% of women seeking refuge provision are turned away). The situation is worse for particular groups, for example those with substance misuse issues had a 32.1% rate of successful referrals, women with mental health support needs (25.8%) and women with no recourse (4.8%).

The Council of Europe and the Home Office Select Committee recommendation is for one family place in refuge per 10,000 population: for London population of 8.5million this equates to 850 bed-spaces. London currently has 812 bed spaces. It is anticipated that the shortfall is greater than this due to certain factors relating to London, such as the higher numbers of trafficked women entering the capital.

The situation may be further affected by changes in housing benefit. Following the Spending Review in November 2015 there is a further potential threat to refuge provision in London. The proposed restriction of social housing rates of Housing Benefit to Local Housing Allowance levels (which will apply to supported housing) will mean that London local authorities will find it challenging to top up the shortfall and the likely result is a loss in the number of refuge beds in London.

Members may wish to consider increasing the amount allocated to service area 2.4 (emergency refuge provision) in comparison to the similar service area in the 2013-17 programme to address this issue.

In addition as outlined above there is evidence that housing related problems are an increasing issue for those fleeing sexual and domestic violence (including trafficking and sexual exploitation). Officers propose an increased emphasis on housing/homelessness work through the Priority 2 service areas to address this. Officers have also included a housing element to service areas 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, and a training element to service area 2.5 (support). These cover a range of housing issues to support better outcomes for victims, for example working with social landlords to ensure women can maintain

³ *The Price of Safety: Housing Status Research Report*, Solace Women's Aid, March 2016

a tenancy (where appropriate) rather than the tenancy being held by the perpetrator. In addition the service areas 2.2, 2.4, 2.5 and potentially 2.3 will be asked to link to Priority 1 to embed the need to increase homelessness support to those affected by sexual and domestic violence.

3.3 Coordination of refuge provision (Priority 2)

Through both consultations and during the recent specification development work there has been a request for London Councils Grants Programme to play a greater role in supporting the coordination of refuge provision in London. In February 2013 Grants Committee agreed funding to Women's Aid to deliver the London element of the National Domestic Violence Helpline and UKROL (UK Refuges online), under strand 2.3. This service includes the helpline from which refuge referrals are made, the London database of refuge provision (updated daily with availability) and a data gathering element, which has collated (for the first time) data relating to the levels of successful and unsuccessful referrals to refuge provision across London by different characteristics.

Members may wish to consider allocating more to this service area (Strand 2.3), in comparison to the similar service area in the 2013-17 programme, within the indicative budget envelope, to increase the role of the data gathering element (including additional data relating to the housing status of victims fleeing violence) to be a more coordinating role, working with MOPAC.

3.4 Young People and Homelessness (Priority 1)

The situation for young people at risk of becoming homeless has become more challenging in recent years. Homeless Link's recent report into youth homelessness reported that young people are the most likely group to be living in poverty, have been adversely affected by welfare reforms, have increasingly fewer housing options due to affordability and have increasingly limited options in terms of temporary support when things go wrong. The report states that 'nearly half of people living in homeless accommodation services are aged between 16 and 24'.⁴

Single under 35 year olds looking for private rented accommodation are only entitled to a lower rate of housing benefit, the Shared Accommodation Rate (SAR). This is based on the cost of a room in a shared property. However, issues of affordability and availability have limited the options of obtaining a room in a shared property for many young people. In addition there are certain young people for whom sharing a property with strangers is not a suitable option (those fleeing hate crime, domestic violence/ abuse, mental health issues and those recovering from addiction). From 2017 there will also no longer be automatic entitlement to housing benefit for under 21 year olds.

⁴ Young and Homeless, Homeless Link, 2015

Members may wish to take into account the increase in need for this target group when allocating indicative budget levels between service areas. Officers have also reflected the change in available housing options with a greater emphasis on supported family reconnection (where appropriate) which has been supported by borough officers who have said that the scope to do this locally is limited.

3.5 Sexual and domestic violence affected by children and young people (Priority 2)

Children and young people were mentioned through the Grants Review and the follow up specification development work as a group that Priority 2 has not really addressed sufficiently to date and that have an unmet need in London. Officers are keen to ensure that recommendations around this group do not duplicate the responsibilities of existing safeguarding frameworks.

Members may wish to allocate additional funding to strand 2.1. in comparison to the similar service area in the 2013-17 programme. For example, 2.1 could be enhanced to simply cover more schools and youth settings, or to have a support element that would provide capacity to support children when they disclose on the project, supporting them to link into the services that are available.

4 Wider Policy Context

The development of service specifications has been informed by the Grants Review (consultations, Homeless Link research, letter from MOPAC, key borough events, equalities information), and subsequent specification development work (research, focus groups and email input from boroughs and key stakeholders). The development also takes place in a wider policy context. Key policy initiatives include,

The Government has recently published its refreshed Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy. The aims of the refreshed strategy² revolve around the following outcomes:

- A reduction in the prevalence of all forms of violence against women and girls.
- Increases in reporting, police referrals, prosecution and convictions for what can be hidden crimes.
- Earlier intervention and prevention so fewer women reach crisis point and every victim gets the support they need including for their children as well.

The new Housing and Planning Act gained Royal Assent on 12 May 2016. In a recent London Councils briefing officers have outlined concerns that aspects of the Housing and Planning Act may limit borough's ability to deliver the homes that the capital needs.

5. Next steps

5.1 Subject to members consideration of specifications in Appendix One, officers will launch a commissioning round, seeking bids that address the service specifications, In line with the performance management framework, outlined in Item 15. Bids will be assessed against a standard framework that will measure, ability to deliver the specification, value for money and sustainability of the organisation/management of risk.

5.2 There are a number of areas that are currently in development at the GLA/ Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) following the recent Mayoral election, these are included as service specific requirements in the specifications, to ensure applicants are able to demonstrate that they will be flexible to meet any changes, findings coming out of a number of current GLA/MOPAC reviews.

5.3 Officers will continue to work with boroughs and other stakeholders during the next stages of the application process and assessment of applications in the summer and autumn. More information on the timetable is provided at **Appendix Four.**

5. Monitoring and Performance Management policy and framework

In addition to the areas outlined above, a number of additional issues have been raised through the consultations and at Grants Committee. These include the need to ensure,

- non-duplication and best fit with existing services at a borough (or regional) level
- robust outcomes; and
- a clear communications, referrals and reporting plan with boroughs
- value for money

The first two issues are addressed in this report through the co-production of specifications with borough officers and other relevant stakeholders.

Officers have undertaken a review of the performance management framework as agreed by members in February 2013. Officers have sought the views of relevant borough officers and other stakeholders in reviewing particular elements such as reporting progress, working with boroughs and ensuring value for money. A detailed review covering these elements is included in Item 15 of this agenda as a discussion paper to be further considered by members in November 2016.

Recommendations

Members are asked to,

1. Note the process which has led to the co-production of service specifications in **Appendix One**, as outlined in Section Two, including the involvement of relevant borough officers, key stakeholders and Grants Executive (22 June 2016).
2. Agree the specifications in **Appendix One**, for services to be delivered from April 2017 to March 2021.
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4. Note the timetable outlined in **Appendix Four** as presented to Grants Committee 9 March 2016, with further detail.

Financial Implications for London Councils

Any decisions on the breakdown of the overall budget for 2017/18 onwards will be reflected in the budget reports that will be presented to the Grants Committee in November and onto the Leaders' Committee in December

Legal Implications for London Councils

Legal implications relating to the Grants Review were outlined in the reports to Leaders' Committee and Grants Committee March 2016.

Equalities Implications for London Councils

As above. Information was considered by the Grants Committee and Leaders' Committee on equalities implications at their meetings in November and December 2015 and March 2016. Specifications will be drawn up with equalities target groups outlined and equalities objectives.

Appendices

Appendix One A- I Service Specifications

Appendix Two Indicative service area budget allocations: options for discussion

Appendix Three Summary of information from the Grants Review process that has been used to develop the service areas under each priority.

Appendix Four Timetable

Background Papers

Leaders' Committee, Grants Programme 2017-21, 22 March 2016

Grants Committee, Grants Programme 2017-21, 9 March 2016

London Councils Grants Additional Consultation 2017/21 (including equalities impact assessment)
December 2015 – January 2016

London Councils Grants Consultation 2017/21 (including equalities impact assessment) July – October 2015

Leaders' Committee, Item 9 - Review of Delivery of a London Grants Programme – 8 December 2015

Grants Committee, Review of London Councils Grants Programme, Item 8, 18 November 2015
(including equalities impact assessment)