

Grants Committee

Leadership in the Third Sector: Update on London
Councils Work Plan

Item 12

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Summary

At its meeting of 23 November 2016, the Grants Committee agreed that London Councils officers should:

1. Accept City Bridge Trust's invitation to work with them in a strategic partnership and with other major stakeholders to ensure boroughs' intelligence was represented in decisions on independent funding of voluntary sector infrastructure
2. Work with London Funders and other stakeholders on the implementation of the review into infrastructure, *The Way Ahead - Civil Society at the Heart of London*.

This was set out in a detailed work plan which was agreed by the Grants Committee. This report provides an update on the work done to date, including the preparatory evidence base which is being prepared via a survey of boroughs for the first meeting of the Member Sub-Committee, which is scheduled for Tuesday, 18 July 2017.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Note the progress against the agreed work plan (at Appendix 1).

Specific attention is drawn to:

The development and rollout of a survey that London Councils has carried out with lead officers in all 33 boroughs. This has set out to gather information on boroughs' relationship with third sector infrastructure organisations in their area. It asks questions about boroughs' funding of this infrastructure, their approaches to commissioning from the sector and related issues. To date, 24 boroughs have replied to this, London Councils officers are analysing the results and encouraging the remaining boroughs to respond. This research provides the evidence base for the first meeting of the member sub-committee and is a sound platform for the work on the remainder of the work plan. A borough officer sub-group has been set up to provide advice to the work.

1 Background

- 1.1 The London Councils Grants Review (July 2015 to March 2016) highlighted that there should be a Grants Programme from 2017 but that this should not include a priority solely focused on capacity building in the third sector. The Grants Review concluded that there was merit in pan-London support to build the third sector and that London Councils could continue to play an important role through its strategic leadership.
- 1.2 At its meeting of 9 March 2016 members of the Grants Committee agreed that London Councils' officers develop a proposal to work with City Bridge Trust on the implementation of the review into infrastructure support to voluntary and community sector organisations in London - *The Way Ahead - Civil Society at the Heart of London* (the review).
- 1.3 These proposals were reported to the meeting of the Grants Committee in July 2016 where the committee also received a presentation from David Farnsworth of City Bridge Trust outlining the findings of the review. Grants committee members were invited to consider working with City Bridge Trust in taking forward the review's recommendations.
- 1.4 Members agreed that officers make provision in the 2017-18 budget proposals for resources to cover London Councils officer time to support this work and to provide a work plan to accompany the budget proposal. The budget and workplan were agreed at the November 2016 meeting of the Grants Committee.

2 The Way Ahead

- 2.1 In 2015 City Bridge Trust commissioned London Funders, the London Voluntary Service Council (LVSC) and Greater London Volunteering (GLV) to produce a report on the future of support to civil society (the third sector) in London. The final report, *The Way Ahead - Civil Society at the Heart of London*, was published in April 2016. Members were provided with the Executive Summary at their meeting 13 July 2016.
- 2.2 The report focuses on some key themes:
 - the changing role of the state, voluntary and community sector (VCS) and funders of VCS
 - the need to support communities to co-produce shared solutions drawing on the strengths of the community (geographical or otherwise)
 - the need to provide strategic leadership and the role of pan-London resourcing (with the potential to bring together sources of funding in a London pool to fund the provision of support to the VCS)

- that the VCS should be supported to create consistent quality services and manage the risks associated with their increased role in delivering outcomes.

2.3 In particular, a role has been outlined for London Councils to:

- Support the involvement of VCS in decision making
- Ensure consistent commissioning/funding of local support, working alongside the Greater London Authority (GLA), London Funders and the London Hub.

2.4 London Councils' officers have discussed with borough officers and the City Bridge Trust London Councils role in supporting consistent commissioning. A role has emerged for London Councils to play a key part in representing borough interests in influencing both the roll-out of the model and the allocation of a central pot of funding, now called "The Cornerstone Fund" (c£1.5m per annum for two years, plus any additional funding from other funders) for third sector support services. The following section provides some further detail.

3 Third sector support - the role of London local authorities and London Councils

3.1 London Councils provides key support functions to boroughs delivering efficiency, representation, leadership, the sharing good practice and influence for member authorities. In terms of a potential role in implementing recommendations for the future of support to civil society, London Councils aims to support boroughs by:

- Influencing the distribution of funding for support services to the third sector, reflecting on local knowledge and strategic issues.
- Providing a voice for London boroughs in the implementation of the findings, enabling boroughs to input in a way that is an efficient use of their resources.
- Enabling the boroughs to provide leadership to the third sector, utilising the policy knowledge gathered through London Councils (using relevant borough officer networks where appropriate).
- Sharing best practice and support to London boroughs.

3.2 Key to the role is representing the boroughs' needs to independent funders, helping funders to draw up strategies in response to those needs and supporting performance management and reporting back to the boroughs. As a new model of support is adopted across London, the sharing of best practice amongst boroughs (through events or briefings) could also be built into the role.

3.3 A workplan was developed after consultation with borough officers and following a steer from the Grants Committee, which was approved by members in November 2016 (included in **Appendix One**). Progress against the workplan has been reported in detail to the sub-group meetings of borough officers which took place on 28 March, 3 May

and 5 July 2017, to the wider meeting of all borough grants officers and is detailed in section four below.

4 Progress on workplan

4.1 Aim 1 - To provide local government leadership in the third sector on behalf of the boroughs, representing their coordinated voice

4.1.1 *Objective:* London Councils utilises the democratic legitimacy of the 33 boroughs to gather intel on relevant areas

Progress to date: In order to gather intelligence that can inform London Councils response to this area of work, an online survey was launched to establish what civil society infrastructure is currently being funded/ commissioned in boroughs as well as information about commissioning styles, tools and timetables. The survey was developed with the input of the borough officer sub-group and the GLA (the latter to avoid any duplication of information that they plan to capture). The survey was circulated to borough grant officers on 17 May 2017, with an original closing date of 2 June. At the time of writing this report, 24 individual borough responses had been received. As London Councils recognises there is value in having information from as many boroughs as possible, the survey has been reopened and is still accepting responses. The data will continue to be updated.

The early results of this survey will be reported to the first meeting of the Leadership in the Third Sector Sub-Committee scheduled for Tuesday, 18 July 2017.

4.1.2 *Objective:* London Councils publishes its grant funding on 360 Giving (www.threesixtygiving.org) and encourages local authorities to do so as well

Progress to date: London Councils has identified the recently awarded 2017-21 Grants Programme funding as suitable to be published on 360 Giving and will be uploading the information in due course. 360 Giving gave a presentation to borough grants officers at their network meeting on 3 May 2017 and have also offered to host a workshop focussed on the practicalities of boroughs publishing data. They have also offered pro bono bespoke assistance to any boroughs who wish to publish data. Publishing data on 360 Giving will join up and enhance available funding information allocated to different areas and organisations in London and will enable funders to improve their strategic planning.

4.2 Aim 2 - To provide a voice for London's boroughs in the implementation of change across the third sector allowing boroughs to input in a way that is an efficient use of their resources

- 4.2.1 *Objective:* To set up a sub group of Borough Grants Officers to distil views of the whole; membership to take into account sub-regional, inner/outer, differing social and economic profiles

Progress to date: The sub group of borough grant officers has been set up and to date, has met three times. Volunteers were sought from the main Borough Grants Officer network to join a sub group of officers to examine issues from the Leadership in the Third Sector work in more detail and provide a borough context to any recommendations from The Way Ahead. Ten boroughs are represented. The group has agreed Terms of Reference, provided guidance on the workplan and the borough survey and also commented on the draft report from the Way Ahead Task and Finish group on Consistent Commissioning before its final submission to the Systems Change group (see 4.2.3).

- 4.2.2 *Objective:* To begin to gather borough intel on how they are engaging with civil society

Progress to date: see paragraph 4.1.1 above. The results of this survey will be collated and circulated to officers and other interested parties such as London Funders and the wider third sector (where appropriate) as well as using this information to inform the Cornerstone Fund in identifying cold spots and areas of specific need.

- 4.2.3 *Objective:* London Councils to be a member of the Systems Change group to take forward any changes resulting from the Way Ahead Report on behalf of the boroughs

Progress to date: London Councils joined the System Change Group which oversees the implementation of *The Way Ahead* and has contributed to the quarterly meetings since the agreement of this workplan. London Councils has contributed to various activities of The Way Ahead such as two of the five task and finish groups - Consistent Commissioning and Funding, and Data Sharing and has facilitated dialogue between the boroughs and The Way Ahead for example including the recent Stakeholder Conference which brought together boroughs, independent funders, third sector support organisations and the wider voluntary and community sector to the launch of The Way Ahead Change Plan

Through London Councils' representation at these meetings, it has emerged that several other London-wide agencies are also interested in data gathering/sharing and links have been formed to ensure there is no duplication and to share results, where possible. London Councils has worked closely with representatives from a number of organisations such as GLA, City Bridge Trust, Healthy London Partnerships.

- 4.2.4 *Objective:* Establish 3 to 5 key indicators that show how boroughs can benefit from this collaborative work

Progress to date: it is envisaged that these indicators will develop from discussions both at member and borough officer level by the initial 6 month deadline.

4.3 **Aim 3 - To work in partnership with City Bridge Trust regarding the distribution of funding for support services to the third sector reflecting on local knowledge and strategic issues**

- 4.3.1 *Objective:* To establish governance arrangements of a central pot of funding and define London Councils role, on behalf of the boroughs.

Progress to date: The members sub-committee is currently being established to oversee the work of the strategic partnership between City Bridge Trust and London Councils, on behalf of the boroughs, to provide leadership in the third sector and influence the spend of a central pool of funding from independent funders, which has been named the Cornerstone Fund.

The first meeting of this sub-committee has been scheduled for Tuesday, 18 July 2017.

- 4.3.2 *Objective:* London Councils to work actively with City Bridge Trust to help shape their support to third sector organisations as part of their Investing in Londoners programmes

Progress to date: Officers have met with City Bridge Trust to discuss partnership work and the Cornerstone Fund. City Bridge Trust has agreed £1.5m per annum for two years to establish the Cornerstone Fund, which is intended to support a “transformational” agenda working towards improved support and skills for civil society in London. It is City Bridge Trust’s hope that other funders will contribute towards the Fund, in the spirit of The Way Ahead’s strategic and collaborative approach.

A representative of City Bridge Trust will be invited to attend the first meeting of the Grants Sub-Committee: Third Sector Leadership to discuss partnership working with London Councils.

- 4.3.3 *Objective:* To gather intel on local issues, approaches, concerns, gaps and needs and an analysis of lessons learnt from London Councils London-wide commissioning of regional infrastructure to inform the London pool

Progress to date: As noted in paragraph 4.1.1, boroughs are currently being surveyed about local infrastructure funding, concerns, gaps and needs. A summary of findings is currently being drafted.

The results of this survey will also be circulated to borough grants officers and other interested parties such as London Funders and the wider third sector (where appropriate) as well as using this information to inform the Cornerstone Fund to identify cold spots and areas of specific need. This will be in addition to lessons learned from the London Councils commissioning of Priority Four.

London Councils provided City Bridge Trust with information to support the introduction of The Bridge Fund, £1m of ring-fenced funding for previous recipients of Priority Four funding, enabling them to retain expertise after the end of the 2013-17 London Councils Grants Programme. 15 organisations received grants of up to £50,000 to retain expertise and engage their stakeholders in co-producing plans for The Way Ahead.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Members are asked to:

- Note the progress against the agreed work plan (at Appendix 1).

Specific attention is drawn to:

The development and rollout of a survey that London Councils has carried out with lead officers in all 33 boroughs. This has set out to gather information on boroughs' relationship with third sector infrastructure organisations in their area. It asks questions about boroughs' funding of this infrastructure, their approaches to commissioning from the sector and related issues. To date, 24 boroughs have replied to this, London Councils officers are analysing the results and encouraging the remaining boroughs to respond. This research provides the evidence base for the first meeting of the member sub-committee and is a sound platform for the work on the remainder of the work plan. A borough officer sub-group has been set up to provide advice to the work.

Financial Implications for London Councils

None

Legal Implications for London Councils

None

Equalities Implications for London Councils

None

Appendices

Appendix One - Work Plan agreed by Grants Committee on 23 November 2016

Background Papers

Grants Committee, Leadership in The Third Sector: The role of London Boroughs and London Councils. 13 July 2016 and 23 November 2016

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

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

Appendix One

Agreed Workplan for Priority 8: Leadership in the Third Sector

Aims	Objectives - short term 1-6 months	Objectives - Longer Term 6 months +	Outcomes - one year
1. To provide local government leadership in the third sector on behalf of the boroughs, representing their coordinated voice	<p>London Councils utilises the democratic legitimacy of the 33 boroughs to gather intel on relevant areas for example: Issues which the Committee can potentially work on</p> <p>Initial view of need at pan-London and sector levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - what third sector /infrastructure support is happening in each borough (liaising with LVSC) <p>and,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - commissioning styles, tools/ intentions and timetables across the 33 boroughs <p>London Councils publishes its grant funding on 360funding (www.threesixtygiving.org) and encourages local authorities to do so as well</p>	<p>Providing analysis and information on strategic issues.</p> <p>Helping to shape the framework for third sector infrastructure in London (developing existing intelligence or commissioning new research).</p> <p>Understanding the economic backdrop of London as a whole as well as individual boroughs and sub regional and to be able to make the link between this and the any resulting needs and the third sector.</p> <p>London's leaders to provide representation and leadership in specific areas e.g. housing, children's services and how the work of the third sector informs this.</p>	<p>Outcome 1 – Strategies, tools and good practise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared set of strategic priorities and a shared commitment to tackle these together - Improved communication between the boroughs, London Councils and the third sector about these priorities. - Members are better informed of borough wide third sector successes; - More informed overview of the third sector and its achievements across London. - London Councils provides leadership and good practice in commissioning models

Aims	Objectives - short term 1-6 months	Objectives - Longer Term 6 months +	Outcomes - one year
<p>2 To provide a voice for London's boroughs in the implementation of change across the third sector, allowing boroughs to input in a way that is an efficient use of their resources.</p>	<p>To set up a sub group of Borough Grants Officers to distil views of the whole; membership to take into account sub-regional, inner/outer. Differing social and economic profiles.</p> <p>To begin to gather borough intel on how they are engaging with civil society.</p> <p>London Councils to be member of the Systems Change group to take any changes resulting from the Way Ahead Report.</p> <p>Establish 3-5 key indicators that show how boroughs can benefit from this collaborative work.</p>	<p>To gather borough intel on how the boroughs are engaging with civil society, become a central resource of information on London's civil society infrastructure and making meaning of this learning.</p> <p>London Councils to embed itself within this group and other relevant regional/sub regional networks to enable the democratic input of the 33 boroughs.</p> <p>Boroughs are able to advocate for their needs in a collective, saving on resources and duplication of resources.</p>	<p>Outcome 3 – Future shape of voluntary sector infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Articulation of the needs of London as a whole in forums on the future of the third sector in the Capital (while ensuring the differing needs of areas/regions of London are recognised) - Boroughs' differing strategic approaches to third sector are analysed and shared for boroughs and third sector organisations <p>Outcome 5 – Demonstrable Borough Benefit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Boroughs have evidence needed to determine whether the needs of their residents and locality are being met by the collaborative work with each other and with independent funders; leading, if appropriate, to more opportunities for joint commissioning
<p>3. To work in partnership with City Bridge Trust regarding the distribution of funding</p>	<p>To establish governance arrangements of a central pot of funding (c£1.5m plus potential</p>	<p>Membership of a board influencing funding for support services to the infrastructure organisations, to help shape any future</p>	<p>Outcome 6 – Strategic Partnership with Independent funders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Borough needs are articulated

Aims	Objectives - short term 1-6 months	Objectives - Longer Term 6 months +	Outcomes - one year
<p>for support services to the third sector reflecting on local knowledge and strategic issues</p>	<p>additional funding from other funders) and define London Councils' role, on behalf of the boroughs.</p> <p>London Councils to work actively with City Bridge Trust to help shape their support to third sector organisations as part of their Investing in Londoners programmes.</p> <p>To gather intel on local issues, approaches, concerns, gaps and needs and an analysis of lessons learnt from London Councils London-wide commissioning of regional infrastructure to inform the London pool.</p>	<p>available funding for London third sector.</p> <p>To collaborate on piloting approaches of support to infrastructure organisations.</p> <p>To analyse the views of boroughs on third sector support and articulate said views and analysis of lessons learnt on London Councils previous London-wide commissioning to a London pool (City Bridge Trust and other independent funders).</p> <p>To be the facilitators of the relationship between the London Pool and the boroughs.</p> <p>To collaborate on drawing up a model of performance management to measure the implementation of this area of work.</p>	<p>to independent funders, helping them to develop strategy to address those needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - London Councils has clear role in governance on behalf of boroughs <p>Outcome 7 – Stronger Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - London's third sector infrastructure is provided with support which can be demonstrated to meet the needs of the boroughs and their residents and workers. - All civil society support provided identifies problems as well as act as a stimulus for change; leading to a stronger, more resilient third sector and increased economic, social and environmental development. <p>Outcome 8 – Borough Influence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any London pool of funding for Voluntary sector infrastructure is fully informed by boroughs' needs. <p>Outcome 9 – Stronger Sector</p>

Aims	Objectives - short term 1-6 months	Objectives - Longer Term 6 months +	Outcomes - one year
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through this funding pool, support is commissioned to enable local communities to become more resilient by a capable, stable third sector.