

Leaders' Committee

Grants Programme 2021-25

Item: 7(c)

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Summary

The current London Borough Grants Programme is a four-year programme that is due to complete at the end of March 2021. The programme operates across three priority areas:

- Priority 1 - Combatting Homelessness
- Priority 2 - Tackling Sexual and Domestic Violence
- Priority 3 - Tackling Poverty through Employment

Following discussions in July and September, Grants Committee, in November 2019, agreed that there should be a 2021-25 Grants Programme. Grants Committee agreed that the current principles governing the Programme remained fit for purpose. The Committee considered the existing three Programme Priorities and reflected on the broader Pledges to Londoners that Leaders have committed to. Following that, it concluded that Combatting Homeless and Tackling Sexual and Domestic Violence remained important Priorities but should be reviewed through consultation to establish the specific services that will support boroughs best. The Committee concluded that Tackling Poverty through Employment should be reviewed with a view to establishing a more focussed programme on Tackling Youth Poverty.

Recommendations Leaders' Committee is asked to:

- agree that a 2021-2025 Grants programme is established based largely on the current Programme Priorities
- agree that a 2021-2025 Grants programme is established based on the current level of funding - £26.7million over four years, subject to annual agreement of the Grants Budget

1 Background

- 1.1 London Councils manages the London Borough Grants Programme on behalf of all the boroughs and the City of London Corporation. The Programme makes grants to voluntary organisations to deliver improved outcomes for Londoners.
- 1.2 The Programme operates within a scheme made under Section 48 of the Local Government Act 1985. It is a collective scheme, i.e. all the boroughs fund the Programme, through a levy contribution based on the boroughs proportion of the capital's population. Boroughs must exercise their functions in respect of the scheme 'with due regard to the needs of the whole of Greater London'.
- 1.3 Leaders' Committee determines the principles and priorities of the Programme and its overall budget. The Grants Committee commissions services, makes awards of funding, manages the performance of projects and may advise Leaders' Committee on the progress of the Programme.
- 1.4 The agreed principles under which the Programme operates are:
 - 1.4.1 Commissioning services that deliver effectively and can meet the outcomes specified by London Councils, rather than funding organisations
 - 1.4.2 Commissioning services where there is clear evidence of need for services that complement borough and other services to support organisations that deliver services
 - 1.4.3 Commissioning services where it is economical and efficient to deliver services on a London wide basis or where mobility is key to delivery of a service to secure personal safety
 - 1.4.4 Commissioning services that cannot reasonably be delivered locally, at a borough or sub-regional level
 - 1.4.5 Commissioning services that work with statutory and non-statutory partners and contribute to meeting the objectives of the Equality Act 2010.
- 1.5 Grants Committee, at its 2019 AGM, did not propose any amendments to the principles.
- 1.6 The existing Programme Priorities were agreed by Leaders in 2016 following an extensive review of the Grants Programme in 2015, which included a wide-ranging public consultation. The current Programme Priorities are:
 - 1.6.1 Priority 1 - Combatting Homelessness
 - 1.6.2 Priority 2 - Tackling Sexual and Domestic Violence
 - 1.6.3 Priority 3 - Tackling Poverty through Employment

2 Proposed Priorities

- 2.1 At the November meeting of Grants Committee, members agreed to recommend a 2021-25 Grants Programme, with priorities that focussed on Combatting Homelessness and Tackling Sexual and Domestic Violence. Specific services would be commissioned following consultation. In addition, it concluded that Priority 3 should be slightly re-focussed to Tackling Youth Poverty.

3 Response Fund

- 3.1 Grants Committee re-affirmed its view that a sustained four-year grant period was a positive commitment and would help to maintain support for the boroughs and very vulnerable residents, as well as having the potential to leverage in other funds.
- 3.2 Grants Committee would also like the ability to respond to changing needs in London during a four-year programme cycle. This could be achieved through re-repurposing an element of reserves as a 'response fund' that would still operate within the agreed Priorities set by Leaders' Committee. Should Leaders' Committee agree to proceed with the 2021-25 Programme, more specific proposals about the principle and operation of a Response Fund would be developed for consideration by Grants Committee and Leaders' Committee.

4 Recommendations

- 4.1 To meet the timetable to enable a Grants Programme to start from April 2021 (see Appendix A), Leaders' Committee is asked to:
- 4.1.1 agree that a 2021-2025 Grants programme is established based largely on the current Programme Priorities
- 4.1.2 agree that a 2021-2025 Grants programme is established based on the current level of funding - £26.7million over four years, subject to annual agreement of the Grants Budget

Date	Activity
July 2019 (actioned)	Grants Committee (AGM) - Consider report on developing a 2021-25 Grants Programme
Sept 2019 (actioned)	Grants Executive Committee Meeting - Consider and shape report on proposed approach
Sept 2019 (actioned)	London Councils - Legal advice regarding consultation and developing a new programme
Nov 2019 (actioned)	Grants Committee - Consider consultation questions for boroughs and stakeholders - Recommend to Leaders' Committee a 2021-25 Programme
Dec 2019	Leaders' Committee Consider Grant Committee's recommendations for 2021-25 programme
From Dec 2019 to Jan 2020	London Councils - Consultation launched - Research of external context (policy, need, current borough provision) - Equalities Impact Assessment completed
Jan-Mar 2020	London Councils - Develop specifications with borough officers and stakeholders
Feb 2020	Grants Executive Committee - Consider draft specifications
Jan-Mar 2020	London Councils - Undertake further work specified by Grants Executive Committee
Mar 2020	Grants Committee Meeting - Consider draft specifications
Apr-Jul 2020	London Councils - Finalise specifications with Grants Committee and instigate open and competitive process to award 2021-25 Grants Commissions
October 2020	London Councils - Prepare recommendations flowing from open and competitive process.
Nov 2020	Grants Committee Meeting - Agree awards and recommend budget to Leaders' Committee
Dec 2020	Leaders' Committee - Agree budgets
March 2021	Grants Committee Meeting
April 2021	New projects start

Financial Implications for London Councils

A decision on the funding for any future programme will need to be agreed by Leaders' Committee.

Legal Implications for London Councils

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Leaders' Committee determines the principles and priorities of the Programme and the overall budget of the Programme. The Grants Committee commissions services, makes awards of funding, manages projects' performance and may advise Leaders' Committee on the Programme.

Equalities Implications for London Councils

In reaching decisions for the implementation of any future grants programme, the Committee is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equalities Act 2010, particularly the Public Sector Equalities Duty.

London Councils' funded services provide support to people within all the protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010), and targets groups highlighted as particularly hard to reach or more affected by the issues being tackled. Funded organisations are also required to submit equalities monitoring data, which can be collated across the grants scheme to provide data on the take up of services and gaps in provision to be addressed. The grants team reviews this data annually.

Background Documents

Grants Committee (AGM), 10 July 2019, Item 14 - Grants Programme 2021-25

Grants Committee, 13 November 2019, Item 9 - Grants Programme 2021-25