

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

Minutes of the Grants Committee Executive meeting held via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, 10 February 2020 at 2pm

### **Members:**

Cllr Richard Watts (Chair, LB Islington)  
Cllr Caroline Kerr (Vice Chair, LB Kingston upon Thames)  
Cllr Viddy Persaud (LB Havering)  
Cllr David Leaf (Vice Chair, LB Bexley)  
Cllr Joseph Ejiofor (Vice Chair, LB Haringey)  
Cllr Jonathan Cook (LB Wandsworth)  
Cllr Sue Anderson (LB Harrow)  
Cllr Jonathan Slater (LB Lewisham)  
Cllr Charlene McLean (LB Newham)  
Dhruv Patel OBE (City of London)

### **London Councils officers:**

Yolande Burgess, Strategy Director  
Samara Armitt, ESF Technical Advisor  
Frank Smith, Director of Corporate Resources  
Daniel Houghton, Liberal Democrat Political Advisor  
Jade Appleton, Conservative Political Advisor  
Mehboob Khan, Labour Political Advisor  
Ana Gradiska, Principal Governance and Projects Officer  
Lisa Dominic, Senior Governance Support Officer

The Chair welcomed Grants Executive members and London Councils' officers to the meeting.

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

1.1 There were no apologies for absence.

### **2 Declarations of Interests**

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

### **3 Minutes of the Grants Executive held on 16 September 2020.**

3.1 The minutes of the Grants Executive meeting held 16 September 2020 were agreed.

### **4 Minutes of Grants Committee AGM held on 11 November (for noting)**

4.1 The minutes of the Grants Committee AGM were noted with the following changes:

Cllr Jonathan Slater has expressed interest in becoming a sponsor for Youth Poverty, rather than Homelessness. It was Cllr Jonathan Cook who expressed an interest in Homelessness

## **5 Draft Agenda for Grants Committee on 17 March 2021 and a verbal update on consultation for the Grants programme 2022-2026**

- 5.1 The draft agenda for the Grants Committee on 17 March 2021 was agreed, with the following change: Month 9 Revenue Forecast to be taken off the agenda.
- 5.2 The Strategy Director said that so far there had only been ten responses to the consultation on the Grants programme for 2022-2026, comprising of six borough officer responses and four voluntary and community sector responses, although some organisations had indicated that they would be submitting their responses shortly. This represented a significantly lower response rate than last year, when over 200 responses were received. This reflected the current challenging environment that boroughs and organisations were operating in. The Grants team was planning on contacting boroughs week starting 15 February 2021 to encourage them to respond to the consultation. The report for the development of the new programme, which will include a summary of consultation responses, would be sent to the Chair and the Executive members before being presented to the full Grants Committee in March 2021. The Strategy Director confirmed that the Youth Poverty Alliance will be approached for a response.
- 5.3 Members asked to be copied into correspondence sent to officers in their boroughs in order to be able to keep track of the consultation responses. They also asked that the Grants team keep the Party Group Leads up to date with the progress on the consultation response rates so that they could intervene if necessary.

## **6 Month 9 Revenue Forecast**

- 6.1 The Director of Resources said that:
  - The projected surplus was £31,000 for the year, as at 31 December 2020.
  - All commissions are projected to spend their allocated budgets in full. The current monitoring arrangements which have been in place for the past seven years, where an organisation is only paid once evidence of milestones reached and financial position statements have been submitted, ensures that no overpayments are incurred.
  - It had previously been agreed by the Grants Committee that a proportion of uncommitted S.48 ESF reserves would be utilised for priority 1 and 2 providers to support advice around No Recourse for Public Funds (NRPF). It was forecast that £945,000 would be paid to providers in 2020/21. Expenditure in relation to the above NRPF payments would be transferred from S.48 ESF reserves held by the Grants Committee.
  - Projected total reserves of £937,000 were forecast at the year-end, following the finalisation of the audit accounts for 2019/20. This funding could potentially be used for a 'response fund' or for other undertakings that members deemed suitable, with the proviso that any recommendations would need to be endorsed by the Leaders' Committee.
- 6.2 Members:
  - noted the projected surplus of £31,000 for the year; and
  - noted the projected level of Grants Committee reserves.

## **7 Discussion item: Utilising reserves through a respond fund**

- 7.1 The Strategy Director said that discussions have been ongoing for some time on the best way to spend the reserves funding, and several options were available to the Grants Committee. She invited members to give their thoughts on how the reserves funding should be spent.
- 7.2 Members agreed that the funding needed to be targeted at the supporting people who have been particularly hard hit by the pandemic, including hospitality workers, freelancers and rough sleepers with no recourse to public funds. In addition, once the evictions ban has been lifted, it was expected that there would be surge in homelessness. A pan-London programme which provided good value for money and did not duplicate current borough initiatives was essential. Sub-regional programmes may be one way of ensuring that the funding was targeted. However, it was important to avoid a 'cliff edge' at the end of one-off funded support.
- 7.3 The Chair said that any decision needed to be guided by the Terms of Reference of the Grants Committee. The programme chosen needed to be either specialist or provide significant economies of scale. It would also need to be something that worked better when implemented pan-London rather than by individual boroughs.

## **8 AOB**

- 8.1 The Strategy Director said the Domestic Abuse Bill was currently going through parliament, and legislation would change during the life of the 2022-26 programme, which would affect Priority 2 - Tackling Sexual and Domestic Violence. The new Grants programme would need to be flexible in order to adapt to the new legislation, and suggestions on how this could be carried out would be presented in a paper at the full Grants Committee meeting in March 2021.

*The Chair invoked Standing Orders to ask members of the press and public to be excluded from the meeting for a private conversation.*

*The meeting finished at 2:30pm*