Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Grants Programme

Priorities and Outcomes Feedback Session

24 April 2018

Agenda for today

4.00   Introductions

4.05   Recap
- the story so far
- Strategic Drivers
- Policy Framework

4.15   Theme priorities and outcomes (*choose your table*)
- Introduction
- Table discussion (*one or two themes per table*)
- Feedback

5.00   Other scheme specifics – eligibility, funding levels etc.
- Introduction
- Table discussion and feedback

5.20   Processes
- Introduction
- Discussion (full group?)

5.45   Next steps…

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The Story So Far…

- Oct   Mayor launches first phase
- Nov/Dec   co-production work
- Jan   draft policy framework published
- March   policy framework agreed at Cabinet
- March   second phase co-production begins
- April   draft schemes published

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Strategic Drivers

Community Plan

1. Strong, resilient and safe communities
2. Better health and wellbeing
3. Good jobs and employment
4. A better deal for young people – aspiration, education and skills

Strategic Plan

1. Creating opportunity by supporting aspiration and tackling poverty.
2. Creating and maintaining a vibrant and successful place.
3. Working smarter together as one team with our partners and community.

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Grants Policy Framework

- Characteristics of grants

- Funding themes

- Eligibility criteria

- Levels of funding

- Decision making and accountability

- Scheme template

Themes

- **Innovation**   to encourage innovation or pilot something new, especially where there is a gap;

- **Prevention**   to promote grass roots activity to reduce the need for statutory services;

- **Neighbourhood action**   to promote local neighbourhood initiatives;

- **Community cohesion**   to develop community resilience, promote cultural opportunities and reduce social isolation;

- **Capacity building**   to enable smaller organisations to become more sustainable, where appropriate providing core funding to lever in other resources, and to support infrastructure organisations, and

- **Partnership working**   making the sector more effective through closer partnership working within the sector and across sectors.

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Table Discussion Questions

1. Is the description of the theme clear? Is there anything missing?

2. Which are the most important three or four theme priorities? Is there anything missing?

3. Are the theme outcomes right? Which are the most important three or four? Is there anything missing?

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Eligibility

- No restriction on size

- Local leadership (with some caveats)

- Local area of benefit

- Include communities of interest

- Proportionate standards of governance and management – non-constituted groups supported by established organisations

- Not individuals

- Good track record

Levels of Funding

1. Up to £500 – one off

2. Over £500 up to £5,000 – up to one year with potential extension for second year

3. Over £5,000 to £50,000 – up to two years with potential extension for third year

Table Discussion Questions

1. Are the standard eligibility criteria (set out in the policy framework) sufficient for this theme?

2. Where there are other criteria proposed for specific themes, are they appropriate?

3. Should there be others?

4. Are the proposed levels of funding appropriate for this theme?

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Process - Application

1. Up to £500

   Single stage – simplified form

2. Over £500 up to £5,000

   Single stage – standard form

3. Over £5,000 to £50,000

   Two stage
   a. Stage 1 Expression of interest
   b. Stage 2 Full application

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Process - Monitoring

1. Up to £500

   end of project report

2. Over £500 up to £5,000

   Six month progress report and annual/end of project report and visit

3. Over £5,000 to £50,000

   Six month progress report and project visit

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Discussion Questions

1. Are these proposals appropriate and proportionate?

2. Are there better ways?

And What's Next

- Mar/Apr – Grant scheme development

- Early May – final feedback session

- May/June – internal Council process

- July – Grants Programme launched

- April 2019 – First projects start

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Contacts

Survey – https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/councilgrants

THCVS website – https://thcvs.org.uk/help-create-councils-new-grants-policy

Council website –
https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/advice_and_benefits/voluntary_organisations/VCS_Grants_programme.aspx

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