

**REPORT FOR: PERFORMANCE AND
FINANCE SCRUTINY
SUB-COMMITTEE**

Date of Meeting:	9 December 2015
Subject:	Community Grants Scheme 2014/15
Responsible Officer:	Alex Dewsnap Divisional Director, Strategic Commissioning
Scrutiny Lead Member area:	Policy Lead Member – Councillors Chris Mote Performance Lead Member - Margaret Davine
Exempt:	No – except for appendices 1 and 2. which are exempt from publication under Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) as they contain information relating to any individual.
Wards affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix 1: Extracts from Outcome Based Grants (OBG) monitoring forms Appendix 2: Extracts from Small Grants monitoring forms

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out information on the monitoring of projects awarded grant funding in 2014-15 and presents a summation of service delivery provided by those organisations as part of the end of year monitoring process. It also tries to demonstrate the outcomes delivered to and for the community of Harrow to determine the value that the grants programme has brought to the borough.

Recommendations:

The Performance and Finance Scrutiny sub-committee is requested to note the contents of the report.

Section 2 – Report

2.1 Introductory paragraph

2.1.1 Harrow council offers discretionary funding to Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations through an open, competitive application process. The funding enables delivery of a range of services to people living, working or schooling in Harrow. The application process is administered in line with the principles set out in the Third Sector Investment Plan (2012-15), the aim of which is to ensure that funding is awarded to projects and services that support the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities and core outcomes. This report provides a summary of the monitoring feedback received from organisations in receipt of grant funding during 2014-15 through both the Outcomes based and Small Grants programmes.

2.2 Background

2.2.1 In March 2014, Harrow Council approved the award of grant funding to 40 projects and services as follows:

- The renewal for a second year, (as part of their three year Service Level Agreements 15 SLAs for projects/services funded through the Outcomes Based Grants (OBG) programme
- The renewal of the SLA for the delivery of Third Sector Support services
- The award of 25 annual Small Grants

2.2.2 Organisations in receipt of funding are expected to participate in a process of annual monitoring as part of the SLA requirements. The monitoring of projects takes place at mid-year (six months into the grant funding year) and at the end of the year. All grant funded organisations are expected to complete an on-line self-assessment

monitoring form, providing an update on their performance and a report on the expenditure of grant funds. The closing date for submission of their end of year reports was 15th May 2015 and this was extended to the end of May at the request of the voluntary sector.

- 2.2.3 Information is checked and queries raised with organisations, and in year monitoring visits were carried out during 2014. Where issues arose as a result of these monitoring visits the Council fed back to those organisations with regards its expectations and that these should be met by the full year monitoring process. This year, the follow up process at year end was not able to happen due to capacity constraints from sickness absence and also the resources of the Council being reduced from 1.5 FTE to 0.5FTE since the start of the 2015 year. This capacity constraint was further exacerbated on the basis of the delay in the Small Grants process for 2014/15 as the administering of these grants came at the time of the year where the annual monitoring process would normally take place for the outcome based grants.
- 2.2.4 Appendices 1 and 2 provide extracts from the monitoring forms received from organisations with a conclusion as to the success of the project or services being funded by the grants budget based on the outcomes agreed through the award of the outcomes based grant and small grants budget. On the basis of the delays created by capacity constraints highlighted in paragraph 2.2.3, there are a number of areas which officers are still seeking clarification on and these are highlighted.
- 2.2.5 One such area is with regards the numbers of beneficiaries that are indicated in the report. The target number of beneficiaries is agreed with organisations after SLAs have been agreed, on the basis that the wider outcomes put forward by organisations during the bidding process were what were used to come to the decision to award the grant, rather than the number of beneficiaries. These are still valid though as organisations annually set out how many beneficiaries they intend to support in the borough, and these are therefore highlighted on the monitoring forms. The total number of beneficiaries highlighted in this report are based on returns received from organisations as part of the annual monitoring process. There are however, a number of discrepancies between what organisations are saying in their monitoring report and what they are setting out in their detailed returns, where numbers of both target and actual beneficiaries do not fully add up. Officers are following these up, and will also consider changes to the 2015/16 monitoring arrangements so that this can be more clearly identified.
- 2.2.6 The monitoring of the Third Sector Support Service is subject to a separate process. Monitoring meetings are held quarterly with the provider of this service, Harrow Community Action (HCA). A summary of the services provided during the monitoring period is presented in section 2.5.

2.3 Current situation

2.3.1 Grant funding awarded during 2014-15 has supported the delivery of a range of activities to a diverse cross-section of people from across the borough. The number of beneficiaries expected to benefit from grant funded services during the monitoring period of October 2014 to March 2015 was **60,780**. Based on the monitoring information received, the actual number of beneficiaries that have benefitted is **69,989**.

2.4 Financial Implications

2.4.1 In 2014-15, out of a total available budget of £600,000, the amount of funding awarded to projects and services was £597,362, with small grant payments made in one lump sum and OBG payments made quarterly.

Grant Award Total	Total Amount Awarded
Outcomes Based Grant	£433,707
Small Grants	£88,655
Third Sector Support Service (Harrow Community Action)	£75,000

2.4.2 The following tables for both Outcome Based Grants (OBG) and Small Grants set out what each organisation received, what was spent, the targeted beneficiaries and the actual beneficiaries.

Outcomes Based Grants:

Organisation	Grant Awarded	Grant Spent	Target B'ficiaries	Actual B'ficiaries
Age UK Harrow	£20,178.00	£15,576.05	1000	1590
Harrow Citizens Advice Bureau	£45,000.00	£45,000.00	3500	3126
St Luke's Hospice Harrow and Brent	£45,000.00	£45,000.00	153	146
South Harrow Christian Fellowship	£8,001.00	£8,001.00	33	70
Relate London North West	£15,657.00	£15,657.00	900	1005
Roxeth Youth Zone	£26,025.76	£26,025.76	826	1454
Harrow Shopmobility	£16,564.20	£16,564.20	3000	3686
Centre for ADHD & Autism Support	£11,774.40	£11,774.40	100	101
The WISH Centre	£30,615.60	£30,615.60	2000	2869
EACH Counselling and Support Harrow	£45,000.00	£45,000.00	0	0
Mind in Harrow	£34,986.24	£34,986.24	3821	9949
Ignite Trust	£39,098.20	£39,098.20	375	529
Harrow Association of Disabled people	£24,960.00	£24,960.00	570	570
Harrow Law Centre	£28,100.00	£28,100.00	1000	1165

NB: Harrow Churches Housing Association were awarded £42,736.60 for the 2014/15 year, but failed to recruit a key member of project staff during that year. As such a decision was taken to withdraw the funding for the fourth Quarter and recover the money for the third quarter of the financial year. This amounts to £25,243 which the Council recouped in year.

Small Grants:

Organisation	Grant Awarded	Grant Spent	Target B'ficiaries	Actual B'ficiaries
African Women Welfare	£3,200.00	£3,200.00	25	15
Asperger's Syndrome Access to Provision	£4,243.20	£4,243.20	30	30
Harrow Anti-Racist Alliance	£3,197.82	£3,197.82	300	302
Harrow Athletic Club	£3,107.20	£3,107.20	100	133
Harrow Bengalee Association	£3,200.00	£1,890.00	280	272
Harrow Community Radio	£4,116.58	£4,113.00	2250	3000
Harrow Environmental Forum	£3,110.40	£2,429.00	2500	1500
Harrow Heritage Trust	£4,250.00	£4,250.00	24,000	24,000
Harrow Kuwaiti Community Association	£4,250.00	£4,050.00	30	36
Harrow Over-50 Club	£3,200.00	£3,191.00	128	236
Harrow Shopmobility	£3,200.00	£3,200.00	3688	3688
Harrow Tamil Association	£4,207.50	£3,037.00	30	32
Harrow Town Cricket Club - Ladies Section	£3,697.50	£3,200.00	60	45
Harrow United Deaf Club	£4,250.00	£4,250.00	100	615
Herts Inclusive Theatre	£2,550.00	£2,550.00	125	200
Indian Association of Harrow	£4,250.00	£4,250.00	250	200
London Kalibari	£3,200.00	£3,200.00	450	400
Navnat Yuva Vadil Mandal	£3,200.00	£3,200.00	1060	765
Radio Northwick Park	£3,019.29	£3,016.29	7500	7700
Russian Immigrants Association	£3,156.48	£3,156.48	214	222
Somali Cultural and Educational Association	£3,168.00	£3,168.00	30	30
South Harrow Christian Fellowship	£4,231.30	£4,231.30	85	90
Tamil Association of Brent	£3,200.00	£3,200.00	130	77
Voluntary Action Harrow Co-operative	£4,249.66	£3,687.96	137	141

2.5 Performance Issues

2.5.1 As stated above in paragraph 2.3.1, the number of beneficiaries exceeded the targeted amount. This therefore represents value for money on the basis that the funding committed by the Council of £597,362 was based upon a set of outcomes which have broadly been delivered, plus an additional positive impact on 69,989 people against an initial target of 60,780.

2.5.2 The appendices cover in detail the expected impact for each organisation and/or project which was funded by the grants budget in 2014/15. This is followed by a conclusion from Officers on whether the service or project funded was successful. It is difficult to draw out trends in performance, other than at the top level for beneficiaries and volunteer hours delivered (please see paragraph 2.2.5 for the accuracy of beneficiaries reporting). Due to the diverse nature of the projects and work being funded, some of the outcomes being funded are more difficult to measure. Where this is the case, Officers will follow up to ensure that there is clarity for both parties on expectations of the outcomes and how these can be shown to be successfully measured for 2015/16.

2.5.3 In some instances, especially with those organisations in receipt of small grants, where officers feel that the organisation has either not fully delivered, or has not provided the full monitoring details, referrals can be made to Harrow Community Action, who have been specifically set up to build capacity in the sector. Where Officers have formed this view, this is indicated in the conclusions section for each organisation.

Harrow Community Action (Third Sector Support Services)

2.5.4 The Council commissioned a new third sector support service in February 2013, which was awarded to Harrow Community Action (HCA), a consortium of voluntary and community sector organisations. The full year cost of HCA is £75,000. The objectives for the service were:

- a) Fundraising and capacity building within the voluntary and community sector in Harrow;
- b) The provision and promotion of independent representation of the sector; and
- c) Develop and deliver a volunteer recruitment and placement service.

2.5.5 The following sets out the deliverables that HCA achieved during 2014/15 against the headings of capacity building, fundraising volunteering and representation.

Capacity Building:

- 10 consortium projects
- 6 sets of policies and procedures
- 1 health and safety plan
- 11 partnerships with business
- 7 partnerships with public sector agencies
- Helping one organisation to start working towards a quality Mark
- Developing individual strategies for 7 organisations
- Leading on the development of a new consortium based charity
- Focused on charities working with young people

- Helping to establish 4 new social enterprises.

Fundraising:

- Created and circulated 11 funding newsletters
- Assisted 26 VCS organisations - leading to 28 fundraising bid/plans/ applications of which:
 - 13 were successful(raising £90k)
 - 5 are awaiting decisions (for a total of £748,959)
 - 7 applications and crowd funding bids are in the process of being completed
 - 3 were unsuccessful.

Volunteering:

- HCA runs Harrow Volunteer Centre, which helps to match organisations and volunteers. HCA has:
 - Provided a clean of the Do-It system (national online volunteering portal)
 - Overseen the transition to a new Do-It website
 - Developed a multi-agency plan for a new project to assist Northwick Park Hospital with reducing unnecessary take up of A&E services
 - Successfully brokered 588 volunteers, leading to current status of 240 volunteering opportunities listed and 160 volunteers registered
 - Coordinated 2 surveys specifically for the volunteering service
 - Organised 2 volunteer days
 - Developed a high impact volunteering strategy
 - Supported Harrow Council with the launch of Harrow Heroes.

Representation:

- In coordinating the independent VCS Forum and providing the sectors' communications, HCA have achieved:
 - An increase of the database from 244 to 473 unique email addresses, increasing thumbed of organisations from 138 to 287
 - Distribution of monthly newsletters, sent out at the beginning of every month
 - Offering VCS organisations the opportunity to advertise news and events through the monthly newsletter.

2.6. Environmental Impact

- 2.6.1 Some of the organisations such as Harrow Heritage Trust deliver projects that have a positive impact on the environment.

2.7 Risk Management Implications

2.7.1 The main risk in running the grants programme is that organisations enter into financial difficulty and do not use the grant awarded for the terms of the award. Although SLAs are in place, if an organisation has become insolvent there is a risk that the Council would not receive its monies back. This is mitigated by applicants having to supply audited accounts which would demonstrate they were solvent at the point of receipt of the monies. The Council also undertakes monitoring of the organisations that it has given grants to on Outcome Based Grants on a half yearly basis.

2.8 Equalities implications

2.8.1 A number of the organisations that the Council funds through Community Grants provide positive impact on those with protected characteristics. An analysis has not been carried out specifically on these impacts, but the nature of a lot of the client groups of those organisations in receipt of grants and the fact that the number of beneficiaries within 2014/15 exceeded the initial expectations of the Council would indicate a positive impact.

2.9 Council Priorities

The Council's vision:

Working Together to Make a Difference for Harrow

Given the diverse nature of the Grants programme, all of the Councils' priorities are positively impacted by it, namely:

- Making a difference for the vulnerable
- Making a difference for communities
- Making a difference for local businesses
- Making a difference for families

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Given the nature of this report, which is setting out the impact of Community Grants spend in 2014/15, statutory officer clearance has not been deemed necessary.

Ward Councillors notified:	NO
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Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Michelle Moran, Commissioning & Funding Officer, Resources & Commissioning, 020 8736 6291

Background Papers:

Cabinet report: Small Grant and Outcome Based Grant recommendations 2014-15 March 2014

<http://modern.gov:8080/documents/g61437/Public%20reports%20pack%20Thursday%2013-Mar-2014%2018.30%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10>

Performance & Finance Scrutiny Sub-committee report: Mid-Year VCS (Voluntary and Community Sector) grant monitoring report

<http://www.harrow.gov.uk/www2/documents/s117677/Mid%20Year%20monitoring%20report%20to%20PF%20Scrutiny%20sub%20committeev5.pdf>