

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

Date of Meeting:	20 March 2017
Subject:	Community Grants Scheme 2015/16
Responsible Officer:	Alex Dewsnap Divisional Director, Strategic Commissioning
Scrutiny Lead Member area:	Performance Lead - Cllr Philip O'Dell Policy Lead - Cllr Stephen Wright
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 OBG monitoring forms (RESTRICTED) Appendix 2: Extracts from Small Grants monitoring forms (RESTRICTED) <i>[Note: Restricted documents not circulated with the Cabinet Agenda]</i>

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out information on the monitoring of projects awarded Council grant funding in 2015/16 and presents a summation of service delivery provided by those organisations as part of the year end monitoring process. It also endeavours to demonstrate the outcomes delivered to and for the community of Harrow to assess the value that the grants programme has brought to the borough.

Recommendations:

The Performance and Finance 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 and competitive application process. This 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 2015/16 through both the Outcomes Based (OBG) and Small Grants programmes as well as the performance of the Third Sector Support Services SLA

2.2 Background

2.2.1 On the 19 March 2015, a report was presented to Cabinet, recommending that they approve a 46% cut in the budget that funded Discretionary Grants and approve the renewal of the Outcomes Based Grants for 2015/16. It was recommended that this cut take effect from July 2015 in order to comply with the three month notice period as set out in the Service Level Agreement and it was further recommended that 100% of the SLA quarterly funding for April-June 2015 only, to be awarded to OBG recipients to enable organisations to prepare for the reduction in grant funding from July 2015-March 2016, resulting in a 29% cut overall. In addition it was proposed to run a Small Grants process to run for nine months from July 2015 to March 2016 with an allocated budget of £75k (which represented a 16% reduction of the Small Grants budget) and a maximum award of £4k. It was also recommended that the ring-fenced grant of 75k to fund infrastructure

support services to deliver ongoing support to voluntary and community organisations to remain in place through the existing SLA with Harrow Community Action

Accordingly therefore, Cabinet approved the award of grant funding to 33 projects and services as follows:

- The renewal for a third year, (as part of their three year Service Level Agreements), for 14 SLAs for projects/services funded through the Outcomes Based Grants programme.
- The award of 19 annual Small Grants
- The renewal of the SLA for the delivery of a Third Sector Support Service

2.2.2 To ensure compliance with Section 8 of their SLA, organisations in receipt of grant funding are expected to participate in a monitoring process. The monitoring of projects takes place at mid-year (six months into the financial year) and at financial year end. 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 the end of year reports was October 2016, but this deadline was extended to 10th January 2017 to accommodate requests made by some voluntary sector organisations to be given more time so that they could engage with the VCS funding consultation that was launched in September 2016.

2.2.3 The information provided is checked, with any queries followed up with relevant organisations, with in year monitoring visits to the majority of OBG recipients having taken place in December 2015/January 2016. Appendices 1 and 2 provide extracts from the monitoring returns submitted by the organisations, together with an analysis documenting the projects success or otherwise in meeting their profiled targets and outcomes.

2.2.4 The monitoring of the Third Sector Support Service is subject to a separate process, with quarterly monitoring visits held with the Service Provider, Harrow Community Action. An update of the services provided during the monitoring period is presented in section 2.3.3.

2.3 Current situation

2.3.1 Outcomes Based Grant (OBG):

Organisation	Grant Awarded	Grant Spent	Target B'ficiaries	Actual B'ficiaries
Age UK Harrow	£14,326.38	£14,326.38	1042	1000
Centre for ADHD & Autism Support	£8,359.82	£8,359.82	50	63
EACH Counselling and Support Harrow	£31,950.00	£31,950.00	20	20
Harrow Association of Disabled People (HAD)	£17,721.60	£17,721.60	355	474
Harrow Citizens Advice	£31,950.00	£31,950.00	2,500	3,010

Bureau				
Harrow Law Centre	£19,958.10	19,958.10	300	1,043
Harrow Shopmobility	£11,760.58	£11,760.58	3,730	3,764
Ignite Trust	£27,759.72	£27,759.72	375	649
Mind in Harrow	£24,840.23	£24,840.23	2,661	4,647
Relate London North West	£11,116.47	£11,116.47	80	345
Roxeth Youth Zone	£18,478.29	£18,478.29	800	4,111
South Harrow Christian Fellowship	£5,680.87	£5,680.87	16	38
St Luke's Hospice Harrow and Brent	£31,950.00	£31,950.00	77	99
The WISH Centre	£21,737.08	£21,737.08	1,000	4,525

2.3.2 Small Grants:

Organisation	Grant Awarded	Grant Spent	Target B'ficiaries	Actual B'ficiaries
9 th Kenton Scout Group	£4,000.00	£4,000.00	95	98
Asperger's Syndrome Access to Provision	£4,000.00	£4,000.00	30	26
Bereavement Care	£4,000.00	£4,000.00	210	217
Friends of West Harrow Park (FWHP)	£4,000.00	£4,000.00	400	600
Harrow Anti-Racist Alliance (HARA)	£3,990.00	£3,990.00	300	106
Harrow Athletic Club	£3,592.00	£0.00		
Harrow Bengalee Association	£4,000.00	£4,000.00	298	302
Harrow Foodbank	£4,000.00	**		
Harrow Heritage Trust	£4,000.00	£3,831.00	24,000	24,000
Harrow Iranian Community Association	£3,800.00	£3,800.00	15-20	14
Harrow Over-50 Club	£4,000.00	£4,000.00	151	151
Harrow Tamil Association	£3,051.50	£2,399.00	30	35
Indian Association of Harrow (IAH)	£4,000.00	£4,000.00	250	250
Kuwaiti Community Association	£3,992.00	£3,992.00	250	300
Navnat Yuva Vadil Mandal	£4,000.00	£4,000.00	53	53
Radio Harrow	£3,919.41	£3,515.41	5,000	3,000
Russian Immigrants Association	£3,435.00	£3,435.00	300	327
Somali Cultural and Educational Association (SCEA)	£3,980.00	£3,980.00	25	25
The National Gorkha Veterans' Association	£4,000.00	£4,000.00	70	70

** (A grant award was made to Harrow Foodbank, but it is not clear whether any or all of the allocation was spent. Grant Officer is in discussion with the organisation to clarify their position).

2.3.3 Harrow Community Action (Third Sector Support Services)

The Council renewed the third sector support service SLA for the third year in March 2015, with 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 are:

- 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.

The following sets out the deliverables that HCA achieved during 2015/16 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 focussed on charities working with young people
- Helped establish 4 new social enterprises

Fundraising:

HCA provide fundraising support to local organisations through:

- Fortnightly funding cafes for third sector groups (focussed on fundraising from Trusts, Lottery, Statutory, and Community)
- One-to-One funding advice sessions
- Monthly funding bulletin

As at the end of 2015/16 HCA:

- Created and circulated 11 funding newsletters
- Assisted 26 VCS organisations - leading to 28 fundraising bid/plans/ applications of which:
 - 13 were successful(raising £99,090)
 - 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 provides a volunteer-matching service for volunteers and organisations wanting to recruit volunteers.

- Provided a clean of the Do-It system (an 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 (of which 2 volunteers have assisted with the administration of the Do It website, volunteering 8 hours per week) leading to current status of 240 volunteering opportunities listed and 160 volunteers registered
- Coordinated 2 surveys specifically for the volunteering service; an organisation survey based on volunteering needs of organisations and a survey for individuals from the client groups this application is targeting' mental health, learning disabilities, Black, Asian Minority Ethnic, and Refugee (BAMER)
- Organised 2 volunteer days
- Developed a high impact volunteering strategy
- Supported Harrow Council with the launch of Harrow Heroes, active involvement in Harrow Hero's planning group and event.

Representation:

The Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Forum is a local forum for voluntary and community organisations of all sizes. The forum brings together local groups, organisations, community workers and partners, to identify local issues of mutual interest and need, and work collaboratively to find solutions.

HCA co-ordinates the independent VCS Forum and in 2015/16:

- Co-ordinated 7 Voluntary and Community Sector Forum meetings
- Developed an agreement between HCA and the reps for receiving expenses payment
- Developed protocols for communication through the HCA newsletter between the VCS forum ensuring that all Harrow VCS are able to share news and events whether they attend the forum or not
- Supported discussions within the sector around the future structure of the forum

HCA provide the sectors communications and in 2015/16:

- An increase of the database from 244 to 473 unique email addresses, increasing thumbed 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.

Developing Harrow Community Action for joint bidding & service delivery

Membership to HCA was opened in June 2014. It provides an opportunity for Harrow organisations to work in partnership to secure larger contracts and they continue to receive membership applications which are discussed at HCA board meeting. As of 31st March 2015 HCA has 26 members. It is worthwhile to note

here that this is an additional service that HCA are providing out of the scope of their SLA and it is not therefore incumbent upon organisations to become a member of HCA in order to access/benefit from the services listed above.

HCA was successful in applying to the Big Assist programme and has received £1,200 of vouchers which can be used to support the development of HCA. HCA have commissioned ACEVO to work on three areas; structure of HCA including stage 2 of the membership process; business development (including support in getting HCA tender ready for larger contracts) and marketing (including working with commissioners to ensure they understand the role a consortium will be able to provide in ensuring local organisations have the capacity jointly to bid for larger local contracts.

This process has included setting up a number of protocols which will be used for future collaboration bids including:

- Expression of interest form
- Terms of reference for project steering group
- Process for dealing with conflict of interest around bidding for funding.

In addition HCA has reviewed its structure with support from ACEVO.

2.3.4 2016/17 intentions:

In December 2015, in view of the uncertainty around funding for the VCS and the on-going review being carried out by Councillor Barry Kendler to look at the Council's future relationship with Harrow's Voluntary and Community Sector it was agreed that grant funding be extended by six months to 30th September 2016 to the recipients of Outcome Based Grants and Small Grants to allow for the review to conclude.

2.4 Financial Implications

In 2015/16 out of a total available budget of £428,000.00 the amount of funding awarded to projects and services was £426,349.00, with Small Grant awards made as one lump sum payment and OBG payments made quarterly. This represented a 29% funding cut on the previous year.

Grant Award Total	Total Amount Awarded
Outcomes Based Grant	£277,589
Small Grants	£73,760
Third Sector Support Service (Harrow Community Action)	£75,000

Performance Issues

This year's monitoring process has highlighted some concerns about the quality of performance of some organisations. We are in discussion with these groups to find ways to improve the quality of information provided, including equalities data where the protected characteristics described within the Equality Act 2010, do not reflect the demographic engaged.

On a positive note however, despite absorbing a 29% funding cut and a Small Grants programme that ran for nine, rather than the usual twelve month term, delivery of services and numbers of beneficiaries engaged compares favourably with the project delivery in 2014/15.

Environmental Impact

One organisation, Harrow Heritage Trust is dedicated solely to the delivery of a project that focuses specifically on managing and improving the environment in Harrow's five nature reserves for the benefit of Harrow's residents.

Risk Management Implications

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 half yearly monitoring mechanism and frequent contact with organisations by the Grants Officer also ensures that any potential difficulties are picked up and addressed.

Equalities implications

A number of the organisations that the Council funds through Community Grants provide a 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 2015/16 exceeded expectations, would indicate a positive impact.

Council Priorities

The Council's vision:

Working Together to Make a Difference for Harrow

The nature of the Grants programme attracts applications from a cross-section of organisations that deliver a diverse number of projects/services which ensure that all of the Council's Priorities are, in varying degrees, positively impacted. 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 2015/16, 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, Policy team, 020 8736 6291

Background Papers

Finance & Scrutiny Sub-Committee Report (Community grants Scheme 2014-15)

<http://moderngov:8080/documents/g62742/Public%20reports%20pack%20Wednesday%2009-Dec-2015%2019.30%20Performance%20and%20Finance%20Scrutiny%20Sub-Committee.pdf?T=10>

Voluntary & Community Sector: Outcome of consultation on funding and recommendations for funding 2015-16

<http://moderngov:8080/documents/b19413/Supplemental%20Agenda%20Thursday%2019-Mar-2015%2018.30%20Cabinet.pdf?T=9>