

**REPORT FOR: Grants Advisory Panel**

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**Date of Meeting:** 2 March 2011

**Subject:** INFORMATION REPORT – London Boroughs Grants Scheme

**Responsible Officer:** Brendon Hills, Corporate Director  
Community and Environment

**Exempt:** No

**Enclosures:** None

**Section 1 – Summary**

This report sets out the current position relating to the London Boroughs Grants scheme.

**FOR INFORMATION**

## Section 2 – Report

- 2.1 The London Boroughs Grants Scheme supports projects and services that work across London or across a number of London Boroughs such as a London-wide telephone helpline for children at risk of abuse, second tier support for Councils for Voluntary Service, legal services and support for victims of domestic violence. There is a benefit to the voluntary and community sector and local residents, although the extent to which this funding directly benefits Harrow organisations and residents is unclear.
- 2.2 Each London borough makes an annual contribution to the scheme based on population figures. In 2010 Harrow Council's contribution to the scheme was £747,000.
- 2.3 Last year London Councils undertook a consultation on the future delivery of the grants scheme. The London Councils Leaders' Committee considered the results at their meeting in December 2010 and decided at this meeting to revise the way that the scheme would be delivered in the future. It concluded that it would maintain existing funding agreements where services had been categorised as being London-wide and cease all other funding for services categorised as being delivered across more than one London borough or a local service which could be commissioned and delivered within a single borough by June 2011. This means that the contributions from London boroughs would be reduced.
- 2.4 In January 2011 Cabinet approved its contribution to the scheme for 2011/12 as advised by London Councils. The Council's contribution to the scheme this year was reduced by £357,000. The total contribution from Harrow for 2011/12 is therefore £390,000.
- 2.5 In February 2011, Harrow Council was notified of the outcome of a Judicial Review taken against London Councils by clients of the Roma Support Group. The case alleged failures to properly consider the public sector equalities duty and deficiencies in the consultation process. The judgement now requires London Councils to;
- (i) reconsider the categorisation of all funded services to determine whether or not they are Category A: London-wide, Category B: working across more than one London borough or Category C: could be commissioned and delivered within a single borough.
  - (ii) review the initial equalities impact assessment and undertake an assessment for each service affected by the revised funding arrangements.

- 2.6 The re-categorisation of all services could result in more being considered as Category A which could have a potential impact on the budget agreed by the Leaders Committee in December.

### **Section 3 – Further Information**

- 3.1 A further report on the potential impact of the Judicial Review for Harrow, particularly in terms of the Council's own review of funding and the outcome of the re-categorisation of services by London Councils will be provided once further information is available.

### **Section 4 – Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The financial implications for Harrow Council are as yet unknown. Until London Councils has completed its requirements under the ruling of the Judicial Review to reconsider the categorisation of all services and undertake an equality impact assessment on all funded services it is unclear as to whether or not the Council will be required to make a further contribution to the London Boroughs Grants Scheme. The timescales are as yet unknown.

### **Section 5 – Corporate Priorities**

- 5.1 The Council recognises the valuable contribution that the VCS makes in helping it achieve its corporate priorities including the following corporate priorities;
- United and involved communities: a Council that listens and leads
  - Supporting and protecting people who are most in need. The Council's decision to support the London Boroughs Grants Scheme helps supports these priorities.

Name: Kanta Hirani



on behalf of the  
Chief Financial Officer

Date: 17<sup>th</sup> February 2011

## **Section 6 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

Contact: Kashmir Takhar, Head of Service – Community Development, 020 8420 9331

### **Background Papers:**

(1) Cabinet report: London Boroughs Grants Scheme 2011-12

<http://www.harrow.gov.uk/www2/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=12461&T=9>