



**Executive**  
13<sup>th</sup> March 2006

**Report from the Director of  
Housing and Community Care**

For Action

Wards Affected:  
ALL

**Main Grants Programme Funding 2006/07**

Forward Plan Ref: H&CC-05/06-22

**1.0 Summary**

1.1 This report provides members with details of local voluntary organisations that have applied for funding from the Council's Main Grant Programme for 2006/07.

1.2 It summarises:

- information on the organisations and the projects for funding
- the assessment process and eligibility criteria
- a statement of the funds available for distribution and,
- the monitoring arrangements for organisations approved for funding

1.3 It seeks decisions from Members on the allocation of the Main Grant Programme budget.

1.4 A number of appendices are attached to this report. These are:

Appendix A: shows all the organisations that have applied for funding including the amount requested and the proposed projects or activities for funding. It also includes the amount received in 2005/06 where applicable.

Appendix B: the organisations recommended for funding including the level of funding suggested for each organisation in 2006/07 and details of the project or activity to be provided.

Appendix C: individual assessment reports of all organisations that have applied for the grant

Appendix D: the eligibility criteria and priorities for funding 2006/07, this includes the Main Grants Programme Criteria and the Council's Corporate Priorities.

Appendix E: Grant Conditions

## **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 Members note and approve the recommendations for the allocation of the Main Programme Grants for April 2006/07 as summarised in Appendix B and detailed in the individual reports attached as Appendix C.
- 2.2 Members confirm that all funding is made subject to the Council's Grant Conditions, and to each organisation agreeing a statement of purpose with the Council, and abiding by that.
- 2.3 Agree an allocation of £15,000 to deliver training and capacity building to voluntary sector organisations by the Voluntary Sector Team.
- 2.4 Members to note that there is one organisation (SIRI Behavioural Health) which received funding in 2005/06 but which is not being recommended for funding in 2006/07.

## **3.0 Detail**

- 3.1 The Council allocates the Main Grants Programme to local voluntary organisations on an annual basis, and the Constitution requires that these grants are approved by the Executive.
- 3.2 There is a combination of new and existing organisations applying for funding this year. A total of 105 applications were received of which, 52 were from previously funded organisations and 53 were from new organisations.
- 3.3 The Grant application process for 2006/07 was advertised in the local press, namely the Willesden and Brent Times and the Wembley Observer. Details of the grant and the application process also appeared on the Council website, BRAIN website and BrAVA newsletter. The advertisement invited organisations to apply within a specific timescale. The closing date for applications was 30<sup>th</sup> November 2005.
- 3.4 Organisations that expressed an interest were sent an application form along with the Grant Criteria, Grant Conditions, the Council's Corporate Strategy, and Priorities for Funding and Guidance Notes for completing the application.

### Assessment Process

- 3.5 In assessing the grant applications, officers ensured that every application was treated fairly and according to the grant criteria, grant conditions and

funding priorities. Officers noted the aims and objectives of each organisation, the activities or projects for funding, the outcomes and outputs to be achieved and the internal monitoring arrangements for the funded activity.

- 3.6 The assessment process also included detailed consultation with other officers in the Council to identify organisations receiving funding from other Council programmes. This ensured local area strategies were also considered when making recommendations. Officers consulted with staff from Community Safety, Housing, Children and Families and Environment and Culture departments, and the information obtained is included in the individual reports in Appendix C.
- 3.7 In assessing the grant applications from new organisations, officers assessed the projects for funding against the Council corporate priorities. Funding has been recommended for projects that complement and support the Council's overall aims and objectives. Also, where organisations indicated they could deliver a number of services, officers assessed each project and chose the one that best met the Council's priorities.
- 3.8 Performance information held by the Voluntary Sector Team for previously funded groups was also considered. As a result of monitoring throughout the year, it has become clear that one organisation, SIRI Behavioural Health fell significantly below agreed targets in terms of the number of people benefiting from the service. As a result, and with due consideration of value for money issues, officers recommend that funding is not continued for the coming year.
- 3.9 In addition to the above, each application was assessed by a management accountant to ascertain the financial viability of the organisation. This process was carried out in accordance with the Council's contract standing orders guidance and included detailed financial analysis of each organisation.
- 3.10 Because the grants budget is limited, officers have not recommended the requested amount for all organisations. In most cases the funding levels proposed in this report are based on the organisation's outlined budget to deliver the service and in the case of previously funded organisations a 2% inflation increase on the amount received in 2005/06 unless no increase in funding was sought.
- 3.11 As well as providing funding for voluntary sector agencies through the Main Grant programme to which this report relates, the council also manages the Edward Harvist Trust. This funding source can be used for one-off capital or other non-recurring expenditure. A number of the organisations which have bid for funding from the Main Programme but who are not recommended for funding might be able to benefit from the Edward Harvist Trust. These are identified in Appendix B. Applications for funding from the Edward Harvist Trust will next be invited in Spring 2006.
- 3.12 The Voluntary Sector Team recommend that a small amount of the allocated budget for the year (£15,000) should be held aside to enable capacity building and training work with the voluntary sector organisations to support their work and growth.

### Monitoring Arrangements

- 3.13 In previous years organisations receiving less than £5,000 were not monitored by the Voluntary Sector Team. Officers relied on the information about their services before grants payments were made. Because officers did not visit these organisations we were unable to confirm whether the information provided was accurate.
- 3.14 If members agree to the funding recommended in this report the Voluntary Sector Team will monitor each organisation regardless of funding level. Organisations will be monitored according to established procedures which will include planned and unannounced visits to administrative offices and service locations, feedback from service users and regular analysis of service targets set out in the original grant application.

## **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 Full Council on 6<sup>th</sup> March agreed a budget of £1,924k (including £955k to the ALG Grant Scheme) for Main Programme Grants in 2006/07. The total budget available is therefore £969k.
- 4.2 Members will wish to know that:
- i 52 currently funded organisations applied for the Main Programme Grant (April 06 – March 07) at a total of £1,710,492.
  - ii. 4 organisations with total Grant Aid of £21,100 in 2005/2006 did not re-apply for the Main Programme Grant in 2006/07
  - iii 53 new groups applied for the Main Programme Grant at a total of £ 1,447,828
- 4.3 The total recommended funding to the voluntary sector is £953,972. Additionally it is proposed that £15k is identified for capacity building and training. This therefore allocates the budget available for 2006/07

## **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 Responsibility for making decisions on the allocation of funding from the Main Programme currently rests with the Executive of the Council.
- 5.2 Officers in the Council's Legal Services Unit have considered the individual reports on the grant applications and consider that the Council has the power to make the grants recommended.

## **6.0 Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 The current grant arrangements means that a wider range of voluntary sector organisations, including those that work with under-represented or hard to reach groups, were encouraged to apply for funding.

- 6.2 As part of the applications process organisations were asked to submit a copy of their Equal Opportunities Policy and these were evaluated by officers to identify how each organisation will promote equality and eliminate discrimination. Details of the Equal Opportunities Policy assessment are included in the appraisal reports in Appendix C.
- 6.3 Given the demographic profile of the borough, a number of community specific projects based on identified need and Council priorities have been recommended for funding. Due consideration has been given to ensure that a broad spectrum of projects are funded reflecting the very diverse service issues and needs within the borough.
- 6.4 In keeping with the Council's drive to achieve Level 3 of the Equality Standard, steps will be taken to ensure that all funded projects are duly supported and monitored for achieving equality outcomes thereby encouraging all projects to mainstream equality across all aspects of employment and service delivery. Such an approach whilst strengthening partnership working will result in creating a positive impact across the voluntary sector.
- 7.0 Staffing Implications**
- 7.1 The new monitoring arrangements for grants will be met from existing resources.

### **Background Papers**

Grant application forms from each organisation held on file in Quality and Support Unit, Voluntary Sector Team Mahatma Gandhi House

### **Contact Officers**

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