

Appendix 4

Work stream 4: Supporting the black community and voluntary sector – grant funding to voluntary sector organisations and procurement

Officer lead(s)
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Action 9
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Timeframe for delivery (including any milestones)
Ranging from Medium (6-12 months) to Long Term (1 year +). Each action in the following section is marked with individual timeframes.
Plans for delivery (detail on how the action will be delivered and partners who need to be involved)
1) <u>Policy change - long-term rather than short-term or one off investments/grants investments into local projects</u> We will develop a comprehensive grants strategy that addresses the concerns about funding not lasting long enough to make impact by the end of this financial year. No resource issue. This will be delivered within 6–12 months.
2) <u>Review our grants and funding streams, and produce options to enable black community projects to flourish including:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Reopen NCIL immediately for applications for communities adversely effected by inequalities</u> Completed in July 2020• <u>Ring-fencing of grants as long as there is compliance with regulations</u> We are unable to ring fence the NCIL grant for addressing inequalities as the grant is based on Infrastructure and the CIL regulations. In light of recent events we are able to prioritise projects subject to meeting the Equalities Act by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• working with organisations from the community directory and those that attended the community meetings with the council that took place in the summer• ensuring website updates advise the purpose of funding rounds• communicating internally to officers for them to pass to relevant organisations, gently discouraging the normal internal bids unless directly related to tackling inequalities

- delivering online group sessions to support people to apply plus ad hoc one to ones where needed and
- CVS Brent providing one to one support.

The NCIL Panel will focus on projects addressing inequalities provided they meet the rest of the normal NCIL criteria. The round is capped at £2M to allow funds for the next round to cover any other applications.

This will be delivered within the next 6 months.

- 3) Providing coaching and advisory support to applicants of grants and funding provided by the Council and those provided by other bodies such as the GLA or central government.

The council will deliver capacity development activities including sessions on partnerships, subcontracting and consortia building. The latter will be of particular assistance to smaller organisations who might want to join a consortia and increase their ability to bid for larger contracts. The council also plans to provide organisations with tailored support to talk through their bids and advising on responding to questions, providing compelling evidence and developing clear outcome measures. These sessions will assist organisations with responding to Brent procurement opportunities.

This action will be implemented from September 2020 onwards.

- 4) Support joint strategic external funding applications between the council and community groups

The council will support appropriate joint bids.

- 5) Enabling collective community conversations about council funding criteria, for example, NCIL, so criteria is guided by what the community needs. This could be done through ensuring community representation on the NCIL decision-making panel.

NCIL is a regulated area but the council can work with groups and individuals to increase capacity to make applications. The grants strategy will include actions to ensure that the grants programme is as inclusive as possible.

We will look to implement participatory budgeting from autumn this year. This will include a mechanism by which members of the community can direct NCIL spend in their local areas. Consultation will mainly take place through Brent Connects, but specific engagement and capacity development activities will take place with black community groups.

Legally, NCIL priorities should be set in consultation with the community. We will ensure that action is taken to include the voice of BAME community groups in Brent and evidence impact of inequality on these communities.

- 6) Bring all the NCIL funded projects relating to black community projects into one programme. This will enable the collective pooling of existing resources to improve community outcomes.

The council can facilitate clustering and supporting conversations between groups to align their goals.

- 7) Providing match funding to existing funding streams for projects.

The council can do this through existing funds but also a greater emphasis through capacity support will be given to supporting the community with external funds and grants programmes. As part of our grants strategy we will encourage organisations to work with us as a match funder.

- 8) Participatory budgeting where community groups and representatives are invited to decide how to allocate spending to projects. This would entail community leaders and representatives working together to negotiate with each other to arrive at a collective position. The voice of young people will be crucial.

Participatory budgeting events will be undertaken through Brent Connects. We will involve young people and related community groups such as the Young Brent Foundation to ensure their voices influence decision making at the council.

The above actions can be delivered within 6-12 months.

- 9) Review the Council's procurement process to:

- proactively work with black community groups of various sizes to make applications including providing training or briefings to help applicants understand the local authority procurement process. Complex application processes can deter small organisations with limited resources or experiences build capacity of black communities to respond to tenders and make bids. A clearer connection needs to be made between social enterprise and procurement with priority given to black communities

The council's procurement strategy, which is going to Cabinet in October 2020, will include how clearer connections can be made between social enterprises, community wealth building and procurement. The council will be delivering capacity building activities from September (referred to in action 3 above) including information about Brent's procurement process.

- that social value is built in and successful contractors are considering the needs of the black community. The cultural competency of providers should be tested.

The council's social value strategy was agreed in April 2020, which will assist departments to incorporate cultural competency in bids as requirements.

- that the council uses its purchasing power to commission local groups to provide local services.

Guidance will be provided to commissioning departments at the council to use social value and procurement strategies to achieve this action.

The above actions can be delivered within 12 months.

10) Review the support given to black voluntary and community sector in the areas of:

- space available to charities for the black community
The council will liaise with the community to understand the particular requirements of the black community organisations and to see if there is anything available that meets their needs. Property Services in the council, with an understanding of the community's needs, can signpost organisations to private sector opportunities if there is nothing available in the council's portfolio. Consideration should be given to future use of the Civic Centre and if space is made available for local community groups.
- starting an informal engagement group for businesses, social enterprises, co-operatives, and corporates who are looking for CSR opportunities.
This can be organised by the Community Action Plan Co-ordinator under the guidance of the Employment and Skills team and Procurement.
- Supporting small voluntary and community sector organisations to join up and form local consortia to consolidate resources and expertise.
The grants strategy will encourage small organisations to form consortia to better enable them to submit bids. The strategy could consider incentivising consortia applicants. The overall NCIL programme will be reviewed to ensure collective outcomes and collaboration are also explored with existing bids and ensure communities are not working across each other but with each other.

Resource implications (e.g. budgets, officer time, departmental capacity)

No immediate financial resource implications for the actions in this work stream and for the most part implementation can be incorporated into existing or planned work. However, there are extra activities such as participatory budgeting and putting on procurement sessions and considerable community capacity building. This will have considerable implications for officer time.

Risks to delivery

Risk is around whether some organisations are ready for longer term contracts especially for the competitive elements. Also, the council does not have access to long term funding streams but a number of short to medium term grants such as the Edward Harvest grants.

Impact on service area/department to consider (e.g. delivering action may mean stopping or scaling back on other departmental priorities)

The majority of the actions under this work stream can be incorporated in current service plans. See 'resource implications' above.

Public engagement and involvement (community stakeholders or groups with interest in the action and suggestions on how to engage them)

We will engage with Step Up Hub and other cultural organisations. Engagement with CVS Brent will also be essential for the actions in this work stream.