

**LONDON COUNCILS GRANTS COMMITTEE - AGM
16 July 2014**

Minutes of the Grants Committee AGM held at London Councils, 59 ½ Southwark Street, London SE1 0AL on Wednesday 16 July 2014

London Borough & Royal Borough:	Representative:
Barking and Dagenham	Cllr Cameron Geddes (dep)
Bexley	Cllr Gareth Bacon
Brent	Cllr Muhammed Butt
Bromley	Cllr Stephen Carr
Camden	Cllr Abdul Hai
City of London	Jeremy Mayhew
Ealing	Cllr Ranjit Dheer
Hackney	Cllr Jonathan McShane
Harrow	Cllr Sue Anderson
Islington	Cllr Rakhia Ismail
Kensington & Chelsea	Cllr Gerard Hargreaves
Lambeth	Cllr Paul McGlone (Chair)
Merton	Cllr Edith Macauley
Newham	Cllr Forhad Hussain
Redbridge	Cllr Dev Sharma
Richmond upon Thames	Cllr Meena Bond
Sutton	Cllr Simon Wales
Waltham Forest	Cllr Liaquat Ali
Wandsworth	Cllr James Maddan

London Councils officers were in attendance. Kerry Starling (Head of Employment & Skills of Catalyst Gateway) and Helen Cantrell (Managing Director of Catalyst Gateway) were in attendance for item 11.

Nick Lester, Director, Services at London Councils chaired items 1-4.

1. Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Darren Rodwell (LB Barking and Dagenham), Cllr Daniel Thomas (LB Barnet), Cllr Maureen O'Mara (LB Greenwich), Cllr Sue Fennimore (LB Hammersmith & Fulham), Cllr Peter Morton (LB Haringey), Cllr Melvin Wallace (LB Havering), Cllr Sue Sampson (LB Hounslow), Cllr Julie Pickering (RB Kingston upon Thames), Cllr Joan Millbank (LB Lewisham) and Cllr Ian Wingfield (LB Southwark).

2. Deputies Declaration of Attendance

2.1 Cllr Cameron Geddes deputised for Cllr Daren Rodwell.

3. Acknowledgement of new members of the Grants Committee

3.1 New members were welcomed to the Grants Committee.

4. Election of Chair of the Grants Committee for the 2014/15 Municipal Year

4.1 Cllr Paul McGlone was re-elected as Chair of the Grants Committee.

5. Election of Vice-Chairs for the Grants Committee for the 2014/15 Municipal Year

5.1 Cllr Forhad Hussain was elected as the Labour Vice-Chair.

5.2 Cllr Stephen Carr was elected as the Conservative Vice-Chair.

5.3 Cllr Simon Wales was elected as the Liberal Democrat Vice-Chair.

6. Election of the Grants Executive for the 2014/2015 Municipal Year

6.1 The following members were appointed to the Grants Executive:

- Cllr Paul McGlone
- Cllr Forhad Hussain
- Cllr Stephen Carr
- Cllr Simon Wales
- Cllr James Maddan
- Cllr Gerard Hargraves

6.2 The Labour group said that they would appoint two more members in due time.

7. Minutes of the Grants Committee AGM held on 10 July 2013

7.1 The minutes were agreed as the accurate record of the meeting which took place on 10 July 2013.

8. Minutes of the Grants Committee held on 26 March 2014

8.1 The minutes were agreed as the accurate record of the meeting which took place on 26 March 2014.

9. Operation of the Grants Committee

9.1 The Chair introduced this report, which informed members of the Terms of Reference for the Grants Committee and listed the members of the Grants Committee.

9.2 The report also set out the programme of London Councils Grants Committee meetings for the coming year, below. From November 2014 each Grants Committee meeting will look in detail at one of the four priorities: Homelessness, Sexual and domestic violence, ESF tackling poverty through employment, Capacity building in the voluntary and community sector.

Grants Main Meeting		
Date	Time	Main Business
26 November 2014	11.00 am	
25 March 2015	11.00 am	
15 July 2015 (AGM)	11.00am	AGM

Grants Executive		
Date	Time	Main Business
17 September 2014	2:00 pm	Grants Executive
4 March 2015	2:00 pm	Grants Executive

9.3 Members noted the report.

10. Grants Programme 2013/15 – Year one update report

10.1 Simon Courage, Head of Grants and Community Services at London Councils, introduced the report. All projects had been rated under the RAG (red, amber or green) system, made up of:

- Performance - delivery of targets: 60%
- Quality - provider self-assessment and beneficiary satisfaction: 20%
- Compliance - timeliness and accuracy of reporting, responsiveness and risk management - 20%.

Only one project was amber: London Training and Employment Network. Two projects had gone from amber to green: Paddington Development Trust and St Mungo Community Housing Association. There were no red-rated providers.

10.2 Mr Courage then went through all the priorities and described how the commissions within those priorities had performed relative to their profile in the last quarter. The headline figures in the report showed that:

- Commissions in Priority 1: 'Homelessness' performed 33% above their profile.
- Commissions in Priority 2: 'Sexual and Domestic violence' performed 5% above their profile
- Commissions in Priority 3: 'ESF tackling poverty through employment' performed 4.35% below their profile, although there had been 15% improvement between Quarter 3 and Quarter 4.
- Commissions in Priority 4: 'Capacity building in the voluntary and community sector', performed 36% above their profile.

10.3 Mr Courage explained that the system was that any projects that underperformed by more than 15% compared to their profile were brought to the Committee's attention, with recommendations for addressing the underperformance. In this quarter, there were no projects in this category.

10.4 Members made the following questions and comments in the ensuing discussions:

Priority 1:

- Boroughs were seeing a significant rise of homelessness, due to issues such increasing rents and high prices, and asked how the commissions were dealing with that. London Councils officers explained that this was not within the remit of the Grants committee, but that the Housing team in London Councils was working with housing associations and local authorities on these issues.

Priority 2

- Incidents of domestic violence seemed to be on the increase, as evidenced by magistrates' courts. London Councils officers replied that the work done by commission 'Tender', which focused on prevention of sexual and domestic violence, indicated that reporting rates could increase even if incidents did not.
- One of the explanations given for the underperformance of the 'Ashiana Network', a commission that tackles sexual and domestic violence, was the characteristics of the beneficiaries; however, this could have been predicted and incorporated into the performance profile.

Priority 3

- Evidence showed that autistic adults were more likely to be unemployed. Did any of the commissions under priority 3 focus on autism as a barrier to unemployment? London

Councils officers said that they would provide an answer to this question outside the meeting.

Priority 4

- Boroughs were seeing voluntary organisations fold due to a lack of funding.

General

- It was difficult to get an objective view of how individual projects were going when a large percentage of it depended on provider self-assessment and beneficiary assessment. They asked if this was the reason that the vast majority of projects were rated green? The Chair and London councils officers pointed out that, when the current programme had started, many more projects were rated red and amber, and those commissions had improved as a result of rigorous monitoring and intervention under the rigorous performance management arrangements that had been put in place by the Grants Committee. This was corroborated by some longstanding members of the Committee.
- There were specific questions arising from the 'borough spread' Tables in Annex B. London Councils officers agreed to reply to these outside the meeting.
- There were significant project-level variations within the aggregate figures, so a positive overall score sometimes masked areas of underachievement. London Councils agreed that this could be the case, but said that the organisations that were not performing ran a real risk of having their funding reallocated.
- The Chair said that it was important to bear in mind that the London Councils commissions which dealt with employment worked with beneficiaries furthest away from the job market, and yet the scheme produced better results and was better value for money than any other London scheme.

10.5 The majority of Committee members accepted that the Report 10 'Grants Programme 2013-15 – Year One Update Report' showed sound progress against the agreed priority commissions.

11. Thematic Review – Priority Three Poverty (ESF) – Presentation

11.1 Kerry Starling (Head of Employment & Skills, Catalyst Gateway), and Helen Cantrell – Managing Director, Catalyst Gateway), gave a presentation on their project WISH and said:

- The WISH project's main aim was to remove barriers to work for women living in social housing.
- The project involved working with a number of local authorities, housing associations, education and employment providers on this project.
- One of the main successes of the project was its work with women from the traveller community, 80% of whom were illiterate. This involved recognising the cultural barriers and adapting delivery to address these barriers.
- The WISH project resulted in 106 work placements and 101 jobs.

11.2 Members congratulated Ms Starling and Ms Cantrell on their successful scheme. However, it appeared that the south west London boroughs, particularly Kingston and Richmond, were not covered and did not have targets. The organisers said that this issue would be looked at and reported back on.

12. Review of the Grants Scheme: timetable

12.1 The Chair introduced Report 12 'Review of the Grants Programme: Timetable'. Accepting that there had been discussions at previous Committee meetings about the nature of the review, the June 2012 Leaders Committee decision had outlined the approach, namely, '...to review the programme in autumn of 2014 and, subject to that review, commissions that are delivering the agreed outcomes to continue to be funded to March 2017...'. London Councils officers therefore proposed to carry out a review of the funded projects' performance and report back to the meeting of the Grants Committee in November 2014.

12.2 Several members, in particular Cllr Carr, said that they did not support Recommendation 1.b.i: 'the Grants programme should continue on the current basis until March 2017 on the basis of performance to date' as this appeared to tie the Committee into supporting commissions into 2016-17 without having had a chance to discuss performance in more detail. They wanted this recommendation to be deferred to the Grants Executive meeting in September. The Chair gave an assurance that, in following the broad steer of the 2012 Leaders' Committee on the review, the Committee would receive a rigorous assessment based on the officer-proposed 'Best Value' commissioning model for the review, which had been developed by the National Audit Office and the National Council for Voluntary Organisations. This would test if boroughs were getting value for money from the commissions, and their general view on the scheme going forward.

12.3 Members agreed the report with the proviso that rigorous performance monitoring would continue to be carried out in accordance with the commissioning and monitoring framework, before any additional funding beyond 2016-17 was to be released to commissions.

13. Pre-Audited Financial Accounts for 2013/14

13.1 Frank Smith, Director, London Councils, introduced this report, which detailed the provisional pre-audited final accounts for London Councils Grants Committee for 2013/14. The summary figures are detailed in the box below:

Revenue Account	Budget £000	Actual £000	Variance £000
Expenditure	10,000	9,048	(952)
Income	<u>(10,000)</u>	<u>(9,271)</u>	<u>729</u>
Sub-Total	-	(223)	(223)
Net Transfer from Reserves	∓	∓	∓
Deficit/(Surplus) for the year	∓	<u>(223)</u>	<u>(223)</u>
Balances and Provisions	General Reserve £000	Unusable Reserves £000	Total £000
Restated as at 1 April 2013	1,727	(871)	856
Transfer (to)/from revenue	-	(59)	(59)
Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year	<u>223</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>233</u>
As at 31 March 2014	<u>1,950</u>	<u>(920)</u>	<u>1,030</u>

13.2 Mr. Smith said that there had been a slight reshuffling of all London Councils accounts, which was reflected in the report. He added that the Grants Committee had previously approved a surplus of £800,000 to go back to the boroughs, which has now been done.

13.3 Members:

- Noted the provisional pre-audited outturn position and the indicative surplus of £223,000 for 2013/14; and
- Noted the provisional level of reserves and the financial outlook for the Grants scheme.

14. Minor Amendments to the Grants Scheme

14.1 The Chair introduced this report and said that minor changes recommended to the London Councils Leaders' Committee Governing Agreement were intended to provide flexibility to conduct business in a way that meets the needs of the organisation.

14.2 Members agreed the report.

15. AoB

15.1 There was no other business.