

Appendix A: Enfield Equalities Board: 30 March 2023

Briefing on funding and support to Enfield's Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) provided by Enfield Council

This report to the Enfield Equalities Board seeks to set out how the council aims to deliver fair and inclusive support to residents in partnership with our VCS.

1 An Overview

Our People Department is the major sponsoring department for services delivered by the VCS in the borough

- Commissioning with the VCS - open and competitive grants processes

For many years now the council has sought to offer funding opportunities on a ringfenced but open and competitive basis to our VCS partners. This has proved to be successful in terms of supporting sustainability in our VCS, generating, and encouraging the development of new community groups, and encouraging the development of consortia to deliver multiple positive outcomes for residents.

Whilst our commissioning capacity has been severely affected by austerity the council is still committed to making funding opportunities available whenever it is able to do so. It recognises that often our VCS is the best vehicle to deliver support to residents both in terms of its connectivity to local people and its ability to deliver high levels of value for money.

Despite the financial constraints the council is managing it still managed to deliver services in partnership with the VCS in 2021-22 amounting to £3.9m.

- Enabling support

The local authority knows that it does not have the resources to support all the activities and services that residents need in the borough. It also knows that there are external funding streams that councils are excluded from applying for but that are in the range of our VCS.

We continue to sponsor our local council for voluntary services, Enfield Voluntary Action to bring in funding for our VCS groups to apply for and to provide the vital infrastructure support to enable a thriving and sustainable VCS.

2 Current council grant funding programmes for wider VCS engagement

Whilst the local authority, like all councils, has been severely impacted by austerity measures taken by the Government it still seeks to make wider grant funding opportunities available to our VCS.

Our two main Council grant funding programmes that provide for a wide range of applications to be received are currently the Enfield Neighbourhood Fund and the Meridian Water Community Chest Fund.

- **Enfield Neighbourhood Fund**

The Enfield Neighbourhood Fund is a funding programme made available by the London Borough of Enfield. The funding comes from the Community Infrastructure Levy and LBE have allocated a pot of funding to a grants programme to support the development of an area through the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure or anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area. This funding is aligned to the recommendations in the 2020 Poverty and Inequality Report 'All Things Being Equal'.

There has already been one successful round of bidding that has made £350,000 of new funding available to local groups to support our residents in a variety of ways. A second round recently closed, and announcements are expected imminently with a third round of the fund is likely to launch before the end of 2023.

Weblink: [Community development | Enfield Council](#)

- **Meridian Water Community Chest grant programme**

The Meridian Water Community Chest grant programme, which accompanies the development which is being designed to ensure local people are the primary beneficiaries of the development, was launched in November 2021 until January 2022, with a funding pot of £950k available to the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in small and large grants. The areas targeted were Upper Edmonton, Edmonton Green and Lower Edmonton.

This grant programme has already awarded more than £317k in funding to 19 projects delivering to the communities in Edmonton, which address social cohesion; local issues around deprivation and poverty; and activities which build a bridge to enable access to new opportunities. These themes are also based on the 2020 Poverty and Inequality Report 'All Things Being Equal'.

Round two is expected in late 2023.

Weblink: <https://www.meridianwater.co.uk/community-chest/>

3 Additional supports sponsored by the council to access external funding and provision of infrastructural support to the VCS

As well as providing direct funding opportunities and supporting our council for voluntary services to bring funding into the borough we also have a number of supporting resources available to our VCS to help them develop their organisations, connect with peer groups and access wider external funding opportunities.

- **Open4Community - Online funding search facility**

Open4Community is a public-facing funding portal supported by the council that offers a funding service to local voluntary organisations and community groups.

It is a free to use service that provides our local community with ready access to local and national funding opportunities. It is monitored for impact, and it generates

significant added value by connecting local community groups to funding opportunities.

Weblink: <https://www.idoxopen4community.co.uk/enfield>

- **Council for Voluntary Services: Enfield Voluntary Action/Volunteer Centre Enfield**

We commission Enfield Voluntary Action based at Community House in Edmonton, to provide support and capacity building to the voluntary sector in Enfield, coordinate volunteering opportunities for Enfield residents and supply strategic support to Enfield Council.

You can find out more about Enfield Voluntary Action here:
<http://www.enfieldva.org.uk/>

4 Wider General information of interest to Equalities Board members and our VCS partners

The following resources are available to our VCS partners to help them target their activities, access further help and gain wider knowledge and information that will support them to develop more robust networks.

In addition to those resources linked to funding there are also resources that can help groups create networks and map how what they do relates to other similar activities in the borough.

- **Find My Nearest – (Boroughwide mapping of voluntary and community sector groups)**

‘Find My Nearest’ provides a comprehensive online mapping of our VCS database of over 650 voluntary organisations and community groups. The ‘Find My Nearest’ map assistance link can be found on the Council’s website.

To find details of local voluntary organisations and community groups, select ‘voluntary organisations’ from the list and this will take you to the Community Development Team page, in the map choose the relevant category for the type of service required.

You can click on the ‘pins’ on the map to show the organisation, website and contact details, a description of their services and activities and where the service operates (by ward).

The resource is currently being updated but provides the best overarching high-level resource for officers and local people alike. If officers would like to discuss the ‘Find My Nearest’ resource, then please email: Debbie.gates@enfield.gov.uk

Weblink: <https://new.enfield.gov.uk/find-my-nearest/>

- **MyLife - Enfield's Health & Social Care website**

Officers in our Adult and Social Care Teams have collaborated with community partners to collate a wide range of community resources and information to create 'MyLife Enfield.' This is a dedicated website/resource with a primary focus on health and social care support services for adults and families. This includes a comprehensive resource directory, information and advice, and information for professionals and providers.

Weblink: <https://mylife.enfield.gov.uk/homepage>

- **The Children's Portal**

The Children's Portal is a highly valuable, web-based single point of access for children and family services, including an inventory of information, advice, and guidance services. Safeguarding concerns can be raised with the MASH team through the Portal, as well as Early Help requests with the Early Help Team.

It is maintained by lead officers in our People Directorate (Children and Young People).

Weblink: <https://cp.childrensportal.enfield.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/enfieldinfo>

- **Simply Connect Enfield – A Social Prescribing service managed by Enfield Voluntary Action**

A new web resource that is currently being developed and enabled by our council for voluntary services, Enfield Voluntary Action following a successful external funding bid. Simply Connect Enfield provides a searchable online directory connecting residents to local community services. It has strong read across to our Public Health agenda.

Residents who are seeking a new leisure or social activity, need advice or information, or want to meet other people with similar interests, Simply Connect Enfield will help to make connections with local groups who can offer opportunities for participation.

Weblink: <https://enfield.simplyconnect.uk/>

5 Information on where we spend our money with our VCS partners

- **A-Z of Council funding – Transparent register of VCS organisations & community groups funded or commissioned by the Council**

Members, officers, and VCS partners can view an annual breakdown on where we spend funding with our VCS to provide services or activities to Enfield residents. They show the amount we have contributed and the purpose of the expenditure. The last five years' reports are available, the most recent being 2021/22. This year's expenditure (2022/2023) will be gathered and published later in 2023.

Weblink: <https://www.enfield.gov.uk/services/your-council/community-development#organisations-and-groups-funded-or-commissioned-by-us>

6 An illustrative summary analysis of support to BAME led VCS organisations

We are seeking to improve our ability to breakdown data to enable us to give more confident analysis and feedback on how the equalities agenda is being supported by our commissioning activities. This will evolve over time as we gain further traction in implementing our 'Fairer Enfield' policy but set out below is a broad summary of commissioning data relating to funding specific to BAME groups in the borough.

The Council's A-Z funding shows that in the financial period April 2019 to March 2022 the total amount of funding to BAME voluntary organisations and community groups was over £612k.

Most of these voluntary organisations and community groups are BAME led with a CEO/Manager from a BAME background.

This data includes the Council's current corporate grant commission (to November 2024) to Enfield Racial Equality Council (EREC), a dedicated race and ethnicity-based equalities service in Enfield providing support to individuals and guidance to organisations in the borough. We provide a small grant to enable the organisation to continue to advocate for many of our diverse ethnic groups.

The Council also currently commissions Enfield Voluntary Action (EVA) (to November 2024) to provide support to the voluntary sector in Enfield, coordinate volunteering opportunities for Enfield residents and supply strategic support to Enfield Council. In 2019-20, 51 BAME type organisations received grant funding using the EVA Funding Advice Service. The value of these grants was approx. £1 million with a mix of small, medium, and large grants. EVA also directly raised a further £1 million during this year for EVA projects and partners.