

**London Borough of Enfield
Equalities Board**

30 March 2023

Subject: Funding and support to the Voluntary and Community Sector provided by Enfield Council

Cabinet Member: All

Executive Directors: Tony Theodoulou/Fay Hammond/Ian Davis

Key Decision: N/A

Purpose of Report

1. This report provides an overview on grant making by the local authority to Enfield's voluntary and community sector with reference to 'live' grant streams that offer widest accessibility to all community partners and the support offered to community groups to access internal and external funding opportunities. These currently are the Enfield Neighbourhood Fund and the Edmonton Community Chest Fund.

Proposal(s)

2. The Equalities Board to note the contents of the report and to discuss ways in which the availability of opportunities could be best communicated and to feed in thoughts on any future direction community grants funding could move towards given the current ongoing financial constraints affecting local government.

Reason for Proposal(s)

3. To ensure the Equalities Board is aware of the approach of the local authority and is alive to current/future funding opportunities.

Relevance to the Council Plan

4. The prescribing of community grants and the funding directed to support the development and sustainability of our voluntary and community sector cuts across all themes in our Council Plan and helps us attain targets set out in our 'Fairer Enfield' policy.

Background

5. The local authority has a longstanding and positive working relationship with the voluntary community sector who it sees as a vital partner in helping our residents thrive and as a mainstay of community cohesion in the borough.
6. The Council commissions work with the VCS in several ways all of which seek to meet evidenced need. Some of these are highly prescriptive and relate to the delivery of key services to residents in areas such as adult social care and children's services whilst others help us work together to deliver broader benefits to local people.
7. The council also sponsors wider work to develop and sustain the VCS in our borough. This is primarily delivered through our council for voluntary services,

Enfield Voluntary Action who work with over 650 voluntary, community and faith organisations, providing guidance, advice, infrastructure support and acquire external funding streams for local VCS groups to access as well as support the local authority on signature new funding schemes such as the Enfield Neighbourhood Fund.

8. The council is committed to transparency and fairness when it comes to how it commissions and prescribes grant funding to the VCS. Each year the annual 'A to Z' of funding is published on the council website setting out how we have funded the sector in the previous operational year. Supplementing this many delegated authority reports will be agreed to facilitate funding activities following commissioning rounds and these too will be published.
9. The local authority often seeks the advice of the sector when considering how best to frame funding opportunities and will also seek to collaborate with our council for voluntary services to ensure that we can help as many groups as possible take the opportunities presented to bid for funding to support local people.
10. The attached high-level briefing report at Appendix A in combination with the presentation materials submitted by officer colleagues and Enfield Voluntary Action in the wider briefing pack for this meeting are designed to give a comprehensive picture of how we support the VCS and enable them to access ringfenced local authority funding opportunities and wider external funding, including those secured by our council for voluntary services.

Main Considerations for the Council

11. The Council continues to reflect on the current overarching approach set out in this paper and any implications arising, including feedback from the Equalities Board at their meeting held on 30 March 2023.

Conclusions

12. The attached report sets out an overview of how we work with the VCS to deliver vital outcomes for residents and seek to underpin and support a vibrant, dynamic, and inclusive VCS.

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Date of report: 14/03/2023

Appendices

The report for this item attached at Appendix A.

Background Papers

The following documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report: