

FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS 2016/17

Cabinet Member	Councillor Douglas Mills
Cabinet Portfolio	Community, Commerce and Regeneration
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Papers with report	Appendix A : Voluntary Sector core grant Recommendations 2016-17 Appendix B : Transport grant recommendations 2016-17 Appendix C : Assessment of core grant applications 2016-17

HEADLINE INFORMATION

Summary	Cabinet is asked to agree the Council's 2016/17 Voluntary Sector Grants budget (core funding) and Transport grants. In addition, to agree the Council's 2016/17 contribution to the London Councils Grants scheme.
Putting our Residents First	This report supports the following Council objectives of: <i>Our People; Our Built Environment; Our Natural Environment; Our Heritage and Civic Pride; Financial Management</i> The grants budget is used to support a range of Voluntary Sector activity, which supports the Council in achieving its priorities and objectives. The transport grant is used to facilitate the transport needs of members of a number of small voluntary organisations.
Financial Cost	The report proposes the allocation of £1,706,200 core funding grants for the 2016/17 financial year and the allocation of £50,840 to support the provision of transport. The report also proposes making provision to enable a contribution to the London Councils Grant scheme of £291,843 .
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Corporate Services and Partnerships
Ward(s) affected	All.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Cabinet agrees:

- 1. The overall allocation of grants to Voluntary Sector of £1,706,200 for the provision of core grant funding for the 2016/17 financial year and specific awards as set out in the schedule - Appendix A.**
- 2. Grants totalling £50,840 to organisations to enable the provision of transport as set out in Appendix B.**
- 3. The Council's 2016/17 contribution of £291,843 to the London Councils Grants scheme.**

INFORMATION

Reasons for recommendation

The Council continues to be a long term financial supporter of the Borough's voluntary sector and acknowledges the important role the sector provides for residents. As such, the Council has committed significant levels of funding to a range of voluntary sector organisations based in the Borough.

The Council seeks to maximise the benefits to residents from investment in Hillingdon's voluntary sector and to ensure value for money in the current challenging time for local government finances.

The consistent commitment of significant financial support to the borough's voluntary sector by the Cabinet has served to sustain a wide range of voluntary sector activity. Furthermore the certainty of core funding has provided a platform for many groups to either expand activity, diversify to meet new demands, or pursue new initiatives.

Alternative options considered / risk management

The Cabinet has the following alternative options:

- 1 Agree the recommendations subject to any changes the Cabinet wishes to make or;
- 2 Reject one or more of the recommendations.

In respect of the Council's contribution to the London Councils Grant Scheme, the Council has the option of not approving its contribution. However, for the overall London grants scheme to be approved, at least two thirds of the 32 London boroughs plus the City of London must approve their individual budget contribution. If there is no agreement, under the legislation governing the grants scheme, the overall level of expenditure for the Grants Committee reverts back to the previous year's budget.

Comments of Policy Overview Committee

As in previous years, the Corporate Services and Partnerships Policy Overview Committee will consider the grants proposed at its meeting on 7th January 2016 and report any comments back to the subsequent Cabinet meeting.

Supporting Information

The voluntary sector core grants budget is unique in offering core funding to organisations that are key partners, and offer services that contribute to the Council's priorities and the well-being of residents. Recipients with stable core support are often able to secure additional income either via other funders or by securing contracts. Detail of the funding secured by each organisation is contained in the assessments of each application, Appendix C.

2016/17 Recommendations

An analysis of each application together with financial comments is attached as Appendix C. Where applicable, in the individual assessment of applications, reference is made to issues that the organisation is asked to address in respect of the funding offered.

Changes in the Level of Funding

- **Age UK Hillingdon** (Age UKH) is a key partner in supporting older residents to live independently in their own homes, to feel safe and secure and enjoy a good quality of life. At £295k in 2015/16 it was the largest core grant awarded. Age UKH has been working hard at reducing its reliance on statutory grants and is moving towards a more business orientated model which would have a greater focus on income from contracts and social enterprise earnings. It has successfully increased its overall contracts from the Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group both individually, with the "primary navigators" scheme and as a consortium with H4All. Its total subsidy from Hillingdon Council stands at 16% this year (core grants and rate relief). In addition Age UKH is also commissioned to deliver services through adult social care and any review of support should take into account all "added value" type services and a holistic discussion with Age UKH about priorities against support for overheads and strategic core costs.

Given the level of support and the level of reserves held by Age UKH it is considered feasible that a reduction of £25k from the level of support offered in 2015/16 could be considered. It is recommended, therefore, that discussions are held with Age UKH to assess impact of £25k reduction.

- **Hillingdon Autistic Care and Support** (HACS) supports families coming to terms with diagnosis of autism offering support groups, coping strategies and advice and information. HACS has benefitted from two years of uplift in its core grant, initially proposed as a one-off uplift, which has put it in a stronger financial position as well as allowing real income benefits from sustained fundraising. Prior to the 2014/15 increase, HACS received a grant of £25k but

in view of their expanded activities, a £40k grant is considered a more realistic and sustainable figure.

The 2014/15 grant of £70k was awarded as a one off in order to allow the organisation to deliver their business plan. The funding level of £70k was maintained for 2015/16 as the group had yet to achieve their objectives.

HACS have bid for 2016/17 for a further £70k on the basis that they wish to recruit a part time information officer. The 2014/15 accounts show a surplus generated of £139k which although most of it is in restricted, represents substantial running costs. Bank balances at September 2015 stand at approx £200k.

It is recommended, therefore, to consult HACS on the full impact of re-instigating a core grant for 2016/17 at a level of £40k, in line with the decisions taken by Cabinet in 2014 and 2013 which were aimed at providing increased support on a temporary basis.

- **Groundwork South.** The Groundwork grant allocation of £33k has remained static for a number of years, the scale of joint activity with the Council has, however, reduced and a full grant at this level may not prove necessary. The group delivers a range of projects under the umbrella of sustainable and community development across the whole of the South of England. These include management of Colne Valley Park, the Com cafe, Heathrow Villages project, (ended this year) various school environmental and mentoring projects, Healing Gardens and Elsdale Floating Classroom. The Healing Gardens project is in part reliant on the corporate core grant.

Groundwork has requested the grant for central staff salary and overhead costs i.e. 54% with a further 25% which contributes towards a regional Thames Valley officer with direct input in Hillingdon. The application states that 6 f/t and 3 p/t staff work on Hillingdon projects and 49 volunteers contributed 5,000 hours. It expects to raise £0.5m per annum approx in external funding to benefit the Borough. The organisation made a modest surplus of £76k last financial year on a turnover of £9.5m. Their unrestricted reserves are £1.8m of which £1.2m is in fixed assets.

Whilst, this does provide a good value return to the Borough on the Council investment of £33k, some of those monies could only be loosely described as services for Hillingdon charitable benefit i.e. delivery of Heathrow Community Trust grant programme (9 boroughs are eligible to apply) or the Charity Shop. Further there is a concern that there is not always clear evidence of need and possibly some duplication of services i.e. school achievement coaches.

It would appear possible to reduce the grant to a level around £18k without causing too much disruption to services, given the high proportion of external funding that supports Hillingdon projects. It is recommended, therefore, to reduce the grant to £18k, subject to consultation.

Holding of Reserves

The voluntary sector core grants budget is intended to meet the costs identified in applications in year and not to create substantial reserves. The Council's grants funding cycle is timed so that if the Council were to reduce or cease funding for the forthcoming financial year, organisations would have at least a three month notice period.

Many organisations choose to maintain balances or reserves in case the organisation encounters short term cash flow issues or, in the event of having to make staff redundant, to meet such exceptional costs.

Officers will be working with a number of organisations to question the levels of reserves held and focusing on how these reserves can be used to deliver services to benefit residents. Subject to progress over the coming months; consideration will be given to suggesting a 'grants holiday' or reduced payment in future years where it is thought that reserves are excessive.

New Applications

The Council has received three applications from organisations previously not funded by the Council. The detailed assessment of each of these applications is included in Appendix C. These comments are summarised below.

- **Hillingdon Connected (formally HAVS).** HAVS application for core grant was declined by Cabinet in 2015/16 based on the organisation having failed to meet the Council's expectations. It has now reinvented itself as Hillingdon Connected and has both restructured and reviewed its priorities. Hillingdon Connected has continued to provide advice to small groups, kept the Hillingdon Volunteering bureau functioning and, together with partners, delivered the Hillingdon Advice for Residents Project, funded by the BIG lottery fund, providing 26 trained advice giving volunteers to partner organisations.

Hillingdon Connected is, however, using up its reserves and its long term viability is questionable. The HARP project funding which made up a significant proportion of their income ends in December 2015. It has secured a contract with Hounslow for funding advice and has other bids planned. However, concern remains over the organisation's financial viability. Officers have not had sight of the latest accounts, and there is no indication of further secured funding. It is likely that the organisation will require more than the £19k requested to sustain itself and, therefore, it is not recommended to award a grant for 2016/17.

- **Centre for ADHD & Autism Support (CAAS).** This organisation provides support to children, young people and adults affected by Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and autism as well as training and support for families/parents. Services include individual drop in's, family counselling and general information workshops and training courses. CAAS was originally based in Harrow with a majority of clients from that borough, but has recently

moved to premises in Hillingdon, where they are now supporting over 70 Hillingdon families affected by either condition.

The Council already provides support to Hillingdon Autistic Care and Support (HACS) based in the south of the Borough. However, CAAS also works with ADHD, a condition that often accompanies autism but can be experienced on its own. It provides a different focus of services such as parenting courses and support to autistic adults.

In addition CAAS provides specialist training including parenting courses for those with affected children, intensive courses of managing difficult behaviour, youth programmes, drama therapy, adult autism and ADHD support groups and cognitive behavioural therapy programmes. They run regular awareness raising programmes for professionals, NHS and schools. A grant of £10,000 is recommended to enable CAAS to further develop its services in Hillingdon.

- **Recycle a bike (RAB).** RAB is a relatively new charity which supports people with mental health issues to gain skills in bicycle repair and work experience in retail. It successfully supported 30 residents last year, operating as a social enterprise, recycling discarded and donated old bikes, refurbishing and selling them on.

RAB is currently located in Uxbridge but will be moving to Council owned premises in Fassnidge Park in the new year. A key challenge for the organisation will be to make this move a success. Their business plan envisages they can be a sustainable social enterprise within three years. Funding from the Council at this stage would significantly assist in securing their long term future.

Officers would recommend a commitment over the next two financial years which would enable the employment of a full time co-ordinator. Officers recommend a grant of £13k for 2016/17 matched by some employment training funding which is available. Any final support for 2017/18 would be considered on its merits at the next grants round based on progress with the social enterprise.

- **Hillingdon Outdoor Activities Centre (HOAC).** HOAC is an established outdoor activity centre in the Borough which has received support from the Council through Youth Services for a number of years. It is now felt more appropriate for this provision to come within the scope of the Core Grants budget and the application, therefore, confirms this transfer. A grant of £54,500 is recommended

Transport Grants

In addition to the funding the Council offers to support the core costs of organisations, it has traditionally awarded grants to support some of the Borough's smaller voluntary groups which have been used to meet the transport needs of group members. The organisations supported from this budget cater mainly for clients with disabilities who require specialist transport and that would find it challenging to

travel by public transport. The proposed grants budget to support these organisations for 2016/17 is £50,840. Details of the organisations and the level of grant recommended are attached as Appendix (B).

It is intended that, in line with the Council's Medium Term Financial Forecast, that a full review is undertaken over the year, in consultation with groups to understand their needs and whether these might be able to be delivered in a more effective way and whether continuing the Transport grants offers best value.

London Councils Grant Scheme

The scheme supports voluntary sector activity and specifically funds voluntary organisations across all 32 London authorities and the City of London.

For the 2015/16 financial year the Council committed £306,665, to the London Councils Grant Scheme.

On 18th November 2015 London Councils Grants Committee agreed that overall borough contributions for 2016/17 would again total £9,000,000. Hillingdon's contribution is £308,502, an increase of £1,837 over the Council's 2015/16 contribution. Individual borough contributions are based on the Office of National Statistics mid-year population estimates for June 2014, with Hillingdon's percentage of London's total population increasing slightly from 3.41% to 3.43%.

The 2016/17 contribution is offset by a one off reduction in funding achieved by decreasing the amount of reserves the Grants Committee holds. Hillingdon's one off reduction is £16,659 making its actual contribution for 2016/17 to the London Council's Grants scheme £291,843.

It is anticipated that the individual boroughs will agree to accept the recommendations on their contributions.

Financial Implications

The individual applicant's accounts have been reviewed and financial comments prepared for each application are contained in the assessment of each application, Appendix C.

As part of the 2016/17 MTF, it has been proposed that the Voluntary Sector Grants budget should be realigned to match committed spend each year which will equate to a budget of £1,698,600.

In addition to this budget, it was agreed at September Cabinet that £54,600 funding for the Hillingdon Outdoor Activity Centre should be transferred from Children's and Young Peoples Services and added to the central budget, resulting in a revised total VSG budget of £1,753,200.

Overall there is sufficient funding held within the proposed voluntary sector grants budget for 2016/17 to cover the proposed grant commitment of £1,706,200.

The transport grants budgets within Adults Social Care for 2016/17 is £54,100; the proposed grant commitment of £50,840 leaves £3,260 of funding uncommitted.

The reduced contribution to the London Councils Grants scheme of £291,843, will lead to one off reduction of £16,659 in 2016/17.

EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

Consultation / What will be the effect of the recommendation?

The overall effect of these proposals will be to strengthen and support Hillingdon's voluntary sector with new growth and initiatives, which will directly benefit residents.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

Consultation will take place with relevant organisations as outlined in this report.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and confirms that sufficient budgetary provision is in place in 2016/17 to support the range of grant awards outlined throughout this report, detailed in appendices A to C. Alongside the broader support offered to the voluntary sector through the Council's voluntary sector leasing policy and non-domestic rate discounts, this programme of grants enables these groups to support delivery of services to residents.

To ensure value for money is achieved the current financial standing and longer term financial viability of recommended organisations, in conjunction with service provision provided to Hillingdon residents, have been reviewed and considered by Officers alongside grant bids.

Legal

Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a power of general competence which provides local authorities with the power to do anything that individuals may generally do. It includes the power for Council to make grant payments to voluntary organisations.

With regard to the London Councils Grant Scheme, this Scheme is established under Section 48 of the Local Government Act 1985. As stated in the report, if two-thirds of the London boroughs do not approve their individual budget contribution, the previous year's budget will continue to apply to the Scheme.

Relevant Service Groups

Relevant teams in Residents Services, Finance, Adult Social Care and Children and Young Peoples Services have been consulted on the proposals.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Previous reports to Cabinet.

Appendix A

Corporate Voluntary Sector Grant Recommendations 2016-17			
Organisations	Grant Award 15-16	Grant Request 16-17	Grant Rec 16-17
Adult Social Care			
Age UK Hillingdon	295,000	295,000	270,000*
Community Cancer Centre	20,000	25,000	20,000
Carers Trust Thames (previously Crossroads Care)	135,000	135,000	135,000
Crown Centre for the Deaf	10,000	10,000	10,000
DASH	98,000	98,000	98,000
EACH - Pukaar	30,000	30,000	30,000
Heathrow Travel Care	30,000	30,000	30,000
Hillingdon Aids Response Trust	15,000	20,000	15,000
Hillingdon Carers	105,000	120,000	105,000
Hillingdon Citizens Advice Bureau	280,000	292,000	280,000
Hillingdon MIND	70,000	85,000	70,000
Hillingdon Shopmobility	22,000	25,000	22,000
Hillingdon Women's Centre	25,000	32,000	25,000
Mencap Jubilee Pool	5,000	5,000	5,000
MHA - Northwood Live at Home	15,000	15,000	15,000
RELATE London North West	12,000	16,500	12,000
Samaritans Hillingdon	3,000	5,000	3,000
Victim Support Hillingdon	10,000	15,000	10,000
RVS (Royal Voluntary Service)	40,000	40,000	40,000
CHILDREN & FAMILIES SERVICES			
Bell Farm Christian Centre	50,000	55,000	50,000
Hestia	45,000	44,950	44,950
Hillingdon Autistic Care & Support	70,000	70,000	40,000*
Hillingdon Federation of Community Association - Playschemes	23,500	24,000	23,500
Homestart Hillingdon	120,000	120,000	120,000
P3	42,000	42,000	42,000
Uxbridge Child Contact Centre	2,950	3,000	3,000
RESIDENTS SERVICES			
Friends of No 11(F) Group Operations Rm	6,000	12,000	6,000
Groundwork South*	33,000	33,000	18,000*
Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust	2,500	2,500	2,500
Hillingdon Community Transport	32,000	32,000	32,000
Hillingdon Federation of Community Association	15,000	16,000	15,000
Hillingdon Natural History Society	1,000	1,000	1,000
London Wildlife trust (Hillingdon)	10,000	10,000	10,000
Pinner & Ruislip Beekeepers' Assoc	750	750	750

SMALL GRANTS SCHEME	50,000	25,000	25,000
NEW APPLICATIONS 2015/16			
Hillingdon Connected		19,500	0
Hillingdon Outdoor Activities Centre		54,500	54,500
Recycle-A-Bike		25,000	13,000
Centre of ADHD and Autism Support		18,722	10,000
TOTAL	1,723,700	1,902,422	1,706,200

*provisional allocation subject to outcome of consultation

Appendix B

TRANSPORT GRANT RECOMMENDATIONS 2015/16

GRANT TO	AWARD 2014/15 £'s	RECOMMENDED 2015/16 £'s	COMMENTS
As One Club	900	900	Club has been in existence since 1982. Supports 15 people with a physical disability aged over 25. The group meets once a month at Grassy Meadow Day Centre.
Hayes and Harlington Social Club for the Blind	4,300	2,600	Club was started in 1939. Supports 5 older residents and meets alternate Mondays at Barnhill Community Centre. The reduction on previous year reflects the amount applied for by the group.
Hayes Stroke Club	3,400	3,400	Club has been in existence since 1978. Supports up to 18 people who are living with stroke and meets on a fortnightly basis at Barnhill Community Centre.
Jubilee Club	3,640	3,640	Club started in 1987. It meets on a monthly basis at Grassy Meadow Day Centre and Christchurch, Uxbridge and supports 20 disabled residents, most of whom are older people.
Mencap (North)	7,000	7,000	Club also started in 1958 and is based at the Wren Centre, Bourne Court in South Ruislip. Group supports up to 80 people with learning and physical disabilities and their families with weekly meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays. It also provides 15 outings a year for up to 40 people and one holiday a year for up to 26 people.
Mencap (South)	8,500	8,500	Club started in 1958 and meets at Grassy Meadow Day Centre. It supports up to a 150 people with learning disabilities with evening clubs on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, dance classes on Saturdays and monthly meetings on a Sunday.
Phoenix Blind Club	1,000	1,000	Group was established in 1997 and is for residents who are registered blind or partially sighted. It supports 21 residents and meets monthly at the 4th Ruislip Scout HQ.
Shopmobility	2,000	2,000	Shopmobility has been based in The Chimes since 2001 and provides access to powered and manual wheelchairs and powered scooters to anyone with limited mobility to enable them to mobilise around Uxbridge town centre. The funding contributes to the maintenance of equipment.
Social Activities for Multiple Sclerosis (SAMS)	2,000	2,000	SAMS started in 1989 and now supports 648 people living with MS and their partners/carers. The funding is for wheelchair accessible transport to enable club members to attend a social evening once a month and also a club outing once a month.
Society for Disabled Artists (SODA)	5,000	5,000	Group started in 1982 to encourage a greater understanding and appreciation of the visual arts by disabled people and to use these arts as a therapy, recreation and possible route to employment. The group supports 50 Hillingdon residents, most of whom are older people.
Uxbridge Social Club for the Blind	3,000	1,300	Founded in 1938, meets once a month at Christchurch, Uxbridge and supports residents mostly over 75 who are blind or partially sighted. The reduction on previous year reflects the amount applied for by the group.

Windmill Club for People with Disabilities.	13,000	13,000	Group started in 1974. It meets once a week at Hillingdon Baptist Church and supports 19 disabled residents aged between 36 and 56.
Pelican Club	400	500	Group supporting blind and partially sighted residents aged 75+.
Total	54,140	50,840	