

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 15 September 2014

Wards: All

Subject: Strategic Partner Funding 2015-18

Lead officer: Ged Curran, Chief Executive

Lead member: Councillor Edith Macauley, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Equalities and Engagement

Contact officer: Kate Herbert, Head of Policy, Strategy & Partnerships

Recommendations: That Cabinet:

- A. Notes the amendments made to the proposed criteria for the Strategic Partner Funding stream as a result of consultation; and
 - B. Approves the proposals for Strategic Partner Funding 2015-18, including the criteria, total funding pot and process for allocating this funding.
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. To make recommendations for the 2015-18 Strategic Partner Funding stream and agree the criteria and allocation process for this grant stream.

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. The Strategic Partner Fund was first allocated in 2012 for a period of three years to the end of March 2015. Strategic Partner Funding 2012-15 provides core funding to voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations that undertake a strategic role in the borough (for example umbrella bodies representing other VCS groups, support services for the VCS) or cross-cutting services for local people that do not fall into service department funding categories (for example advice services covering accredited debt, welfare benefits, employment and housing).
- 2.2. The types of costs that this funding is intended to cover includes all or some of the following: costs of a Chief Executive officer, administrative costs of running the management board, audit costs, fundraising and finance function, health and safety, ICT systems, and accommodation.
- 2.3. Current Strategic Partner funding for 2012-15 will cease at the end of March 2015. Funding committed for 2014/15 is just under £780,000.

Proposals for Strategic Partner Funding 2015-18

- 2.4. Looking to 2015-18, it has been important to take stock and review the criteria for Strategic Partner funding to ensure that the services funded going forward reflect local need. As such we have been engaging with stakeholders across the VCS, the council, etc, to take views on the criteria applied for 2012-15 and how they relate to needs for 2015-18. Comments and suggestions received are set out at Appendix I.
- 2.5. The proposed funding criteria for Strategic Partner Funding and supporting definitions are set out in Appendices II and III. These incorporate the amendments made as a result of the consultation feedback detailed in Appendix I.

- 2.6. It is proposed that the annual funding available for the Strategic Partner Funding stream for 2015/16 is £780,000. This funding will be met within existing resources. Although we are currently planning for the same level of funding to be available for each of the years 2016-18, the outcome of the forthcoming comprehensive spending review and implications for the council's government grant may mean that this will have to be revisited. Any changes to the funding available will be communicated to the sector and managed in accordance with the timescales and practices set out in the Merton Compact.
- 2.7. The timetable for publicising Strategic Partner Funding is set out in Section 5 below. A grants panel will be convened to assess the bids received and will include a voluntary sector representative as an observer, in accordance with Compact principles. The panel will make recommendations to the responsible Chief Officer who will take a decision on the funding allocation.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1. There are numerous funding models for infrastructure services across the country. We could choose to identify other models of funding provision, though this is likely to delay the timetable for the implementation of the next phase of strategic support for the VCS. Furthermore, the Strategic Partner model has been successfully employed in Merton and in neighbouring boroughs and has been approved as a model by the VCS. It should also be noted that Merton's Strategic Partner model was developed in partnership with the VCS as part of a wider Review of the Voluntary Sector undertaken in 2011.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. The consultation on the criteria for this fund was launched on 4 June and ran to 27 August 2014. This was a 12 week consultation, in accordance with Compact principles.
- 4.2. General communications have included:
- Online consultation at <http://www.merton.gov.uk/community-living/vcs-support/vs-funding/strategic-partner-funding-consultation.htm> and using iConsult
 - Article in Merton Together
 - Emails drawing attention to the consultation and inviting contributions from voluntary sector organisations
 - Direct communications to organisations currently in receipt of Strategic Partner funding.
- 4.3. Presentations and discussions have also taken place with the following bodies:
- Merton Compact Board
 - INVOLVE
 - Merton Partnership Executive Board
 - Joint Consultative Committee with Ethnic Minority Organisations
- 4.4. Meetings have been offered to all organisations currently funded from the existing Strategic Partner Funding Grant Scheme and have taken place where the offer was taken up. In accordance with the undertakings of the Merton Compact, a summary of comments received and action taken in

response to these comments has been provided to ensure transparency in the way contributions were responded to as part of the consultation process. This is attached at Appendix I. The response has been broadly positive with slight amendments suggested. Most have been incorporated into the criteria.

5 TIMETABLE

5.1. The outline timetable for Strategic Partner funding 2015-18 is as follows:

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| Deadline for comments on the Strategic Partner Fund | 27 August 2014 |
| Cabinet decision on criteria for bids to the Strategic Partner Fund | 15 September 2014 |
| Strategic Partner Funding opens to bids | 22 September 2014* |
| Deadline for Strategic Partner Funding bids | 3 November 2014 |
| Notification of funding decision | By 30 November 2014 |
| Funding commences for successful applicants | 1 April 2015 |

* Date subject to no 'call in' of the Cabinet decision

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. With the information available at the time of writing, it is proposed that the funding available for the Strategic Partner Funding stream in 2015/16 is £780,000. Although there is no uplift for inflation, this maintains the funding level for 2014/15 and can be met within existing resources.

6.2. Although we are currently planning for the same level of funding to be available for each of the years 2016-18, the outcome of the forthcoming comprehensive spending review and implications for the council's government grant may mean that this will have to be revisited.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

7.1. The Local Authority has power to fund grants by virtue of section 137 Local Government Act 1972 and section 2 Local Government Act 2000.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

8.1. When decisions are made as to which voluntary organisations will continue to be funded and which are not to be funded, regard will need to be had to the public sector equality duties and decision-making will be informed by equality analysis.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9.1. None specific to this report.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

10.1. None specific to this report.

11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

- Appendix I – Summary of comments received during consultation and responses
- Appendix II – Proposed criteria for Strategic Partner Funding 2015-18

- Appendix III – Proposed Strategic Partner Fund Definitions
- Appendix IV – Draft application form
- Appendix V – Draft application guidance notes

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1. Cabinet Report on Strategic Voluntary Sector Funding 2012-15
- 12.2. Cabinet Report on Voluntary Sector Review

Strategic Partner Funding Stream – Summary of comments received during consultation and responses

| Source | Comment | Response |
|------------|--|---|
| Merton CIL | Strategic Partner Funding should include requirements for services to be accessible. | The criteria has been amended to include the requirement that Strategic Partners "deliver accessible services that meet the needs of Merton's diverse communities" |
| | We feel that the strategic partner funding we received for 2012-15 has played a very significant role in enabling us to grow and develop as an organisation. The fact that it was primarily core funding, and the stability offered over 3 years, has enabled us to secure additional funding, and pilot, and deliver additional services as well as delivering our outputs and outcomes for the strategic partner funding itself. | No action required. |
| | We are happy to see that you propose to maintain the existing criteria for the fund and we support these. | No action required. |
| | In order to fully reflect local need we feel that it would be helpful for the criteria to include advocacy as well as advice services. Our new advocacy service is oversubscribed and we have identified a significant advocacy gap in the borough as advice services such as CAB and the Welfare Benefits Team are typically unable to attend tribunals, assessments, reviews etc where many people require support to speak up and access their rights. In addition, we feel that statutory advocacy is under-used in the borough. | The funding criteria have been amended to incorporate a reference to advocacy services. The definition of cross-cutting accredited advice services has not been amended as it makes reference to "information, advice and where necessary, representation". |
| | We do broadly support the proposed definitions but feel some changes / clarifications are necessary. Changes suggested: a) the definition of strategic support services is clear, and it would also be helpful to clarify that the funding includes support for organisations to build their strategic support capacity, which we understand is what the funding has done in the past. | a) The funding criteria have been amended to include the following additional information: "We will consider funding organisations to build their strategic support capacity, where this is specified in funding bids." |

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| | <p>b) while we agree that advice services should be accredited, we have some concerns over the AQS standard. AQS is currently undergoing some changes around the audit process and a completely new standard is being developed so we are concerned about how robust this is. In addition, although AQS is specifically for advice services, it doesn't appear to audit the quality of advice given or outcomes received. We therefore feel that a quality mark which audits the processes and procedures of the entire organisation, like PQASSO would be more appropriate.</p> | <p>b) AQS has been given as an example of a nationally recognised advice standard. Other standards include the Specialist Quality Mark, and Lexcel for legal services. Having also looked at best practice in other local authorities, these additional examples have also been included in the definition for clarity. Organisations with the AQS will have been through an audit process that checks how they manage their advice service. Whilst the AQS does not directly assess the quality of advice at the moment, it contains a number of specific requirements, or proxy measures, that help to ensure that staff have relevant and up to date expertise and that quality of advice remains high. While PQASSO is a recognised quality standard, it is not specific to advice services. We will consider funding organisations to work towards a recognised advice standard, where this is specified in funding bids. Organisations will be asked to give details of any quality assurance standards they hold as part of the application process.</p> |
| Merton & Lambeth Citizens Advice Bureau | <p>We support the proposed criteria for strategic partner funding but make the following comments:</p> | <p>No action required.</p> |
| | <p>a) Contributing to the delivery of Merton's Community Plan could be extended to include <i>other</i> plans</p> | <p>a) Merton's Community Plan is the overarching strategic plan of the Merton Partnership. It sets out the Partnership's long term vision and priorities for the borough up until 2019, so it is regarded as sufficient that applicants can evidence that they are contributing to the delivery of this strategy and meeting the council's strategic objectives. The criteria have been amended to strengthen the need for Strategic Partners to actively contribute to the Community Plan's aim of 'bridging the gap' between the east and west of the borough.</p> |
| | <p>b) As the Merton Compact has been in place for some time it might be worth considering whether the principles remain valid.</p> | <p>b) A new, refreshed Merton Compact was agreed in November 2011 and there is an ongoing commitment to the principles of the Compact, supported through the work of the Compact Board. We will flag this to the Merton Partnership Compact Board which keeps the Compact under review.</p> |
| | <p><i>Changes needed to reflect local need:</i> Without going into the detail of delivery there are no immediate or obvious changes that we feel need to be made.</p> | <p>No action required.</p> |
| | <p><i>Strategic partner funding definitions:</i> We support the definitions.</p> | <p>No action required.</p> |

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| | <i>Changes that need to be made to strategic partner funding definitions:</i> There are no immediate or obvious changes that we feel need to be made. | No action required. |
| Joint Consultative Committee with Ethnic Minority Organisations – extra meeting on BAME Voice on 23 August 2014 | The Strategic Partner funding criteria should reflect the fact that 35% of the population are BAME. There is a need for support to deliver the BAME Strategic Plan and the Strategic Partner Fund should fund cohesion, integration and access. | The proposed criteria include provision for services “providing voice, advice and capacity building support” Additional criteria have been added to require Strategic Partners to “promote cohesion, integration and access”, “actively contribute to ‘bridging the gap’ between the east and the west of the borough” and "deliver accessible services that meet the needs of Merton’s diverse communities" |
| MVSC | <i>Do you support the proposed criteria for Strategic Partner Funding?</i> a) Criteria appears fine and broad enough, however there appears to be no weighting for borough or locally based organisations. In order to keep investment local is it not possible to add an extra criteria that providers should be based in the borough or currently delivering activities in Merton? b) I also wonder if you need to be more specific in the point about being not for profit. Are you including social enterprises in this definition? If so, maybe it would be wise to state ‘not for profit organisations (including social enterprises)’. | a) The proposed criteria include a requirement that Strategic Partners “are able to demonstrate a strong local connection to Merton, including an established local presence in the borough for at least 12 months.” b) The Fund is open to not for profit organisations including social enterprises. The criteria have been amended to make this more explicit. |
| | <i>Are there any changes that need to be made to these criteria to reflect local need?</i> No, the link to community plan and council’s strategic priorities is sufficient. | No action required. |
| | <i>Do you support the proposed definitions of Strategic Partner Funding?</i> Capacity building must include activities that support volunteering in the borough. As long as this assumption is made, we are happy with this definition. | We recognise the contribution volunteering makes to the borough and we are committed to support the development of volunteering in Merton. Under this definition of Strategic Partner Funding, capacity building may include activities that support volunteering in the borough. |

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| | <p><i>Are there any changes that need to be made to these definitions?</i></p> <p>Maybe adopt this definition of infrastructure services: Infrastructure services can be described as the physical facilities, structures, systems, relationships, knowledge and skills that exist to support and develop, coordinate, represent and promote frontline providers of services, thus enabling them to deliver their services more effectively. These can include advocacy and providing a voice to other organisations, facilitating partnerships between providers and increasing awareness of the voluntary and community sector amongst key audiences. The services should then enable organisations to better:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • define and achieve their objectives; • engage in consultation and planning; • manage projects; • take part in partnerships, social enterprise and service delivery. | <p>In order to promote clarity for all regarding this funding stream, and having also looked at best practice in other local authorities, the definition of infrastructure services has been built in to the wider definition of strategic services.</p> |
| | <p><i>What other comments do you have about the proposed 2015-18 Fund?</i></p> <p>As there is no mention of the total pot of funding in the consultation document, we are assuming the level of funding for this programme remains the same or with an inflationary rise.</p> <p>As it is three years since the last application process, there have been some inflationary pressures on organisations in the borough. We understand that LBM are experiencing budgetary pressures and need to make efficiencies, however it needs to be recognised that in order to attract and retain employees, we need to be able to offer competitive packages.</p> <p>In line with this, we believe that the total pot of funding available should have a small increase to reflect inflation. Otherwise it is a reduction in funding available in real terms.</p> | <p>Funding committed for 2014/15 is just under £780,000. It is proposed that the annual funding available for the Strategic Partner Funding stream for 2015/16 is £780,000, maintaining the level of funding. We are currently planning for the same level of funding to be available for each of the years 2016-18, however the outcome of the forthcoming comprehensive spending review and implications for the council's government grant may mean that this will have to be revisited. Any changes to the funding available will be communicated to the sector and managed in accordance with the timescales and practices set out in the Merton Compact.</p> <p>In light of the financial pressure the council is facing we are unable to apply inflationary uplift to this funding. We note that none of our neighbouring boroughs (Kingston, Sutton, Richmond and Croydon) apply inflation.</p> |

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| Springfield Advice & Law Centre | <p><i>Do you support the proposed criteria for Strategic Partner Funding?</i></p> <p>Yes, in particular, insofar as they relate to supporting those most vulnerable in our communities, and giving voice to their needs and concerns, and in seeking to protect their well-being and prevent harm.</p> <p>We would, however, seek to clarify whether the criteria would be met by those providing services that fulfil all of the criteria of whether those that can meet some of the criteria would qualify.</p> | <p>Applicant organisations will be expected to demonstrate clearly how their application meets all the priorities of this funding. Under the scoring criteria, applications will be scored on how well their service(s) meet the outcomes that Strategic Partners are expected to deliver. This will be reflected in the application guidance notes.</p> |
| | <p><i>Are there any changes that need to be made to these criteria to reflect local need?</i></p> <p>No, subject to the above.</p> | <p>No action required.</p> |
| | <p><i>Do you support the proposed definitions of Strategic Partner Funding?</i></p> <p>Yes, but again, it would help to clarify whether an organisation needs to fall within both activity areas, or whether either would be sufficient?</p> | <p>Strategic Partner Funding is targeted at two areas of activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Strategic support services for the voluntary and community sector; and – Cross-cutting accredited advice services <p>Applications are welcome for either area of activity or both areas of the activity; although it should be made clear in the application which activity relates to which part of the service. This will be reflected in the application guidance notes.</p> |
| | <p><i>Are there any changes that need to be made to these definitions?</i> No</p> | <p>No action required.</p> |

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| | <p><i>What other comments do you have about the proposed 2015-18 Fund?</i></p> <p>We have had the benefit of Strategic Partner Funding during 2012-15. This funding has proved to be a vital lifeline to those we assist within Merton, especially as these are some of the most vulnerable, discriminated against and stigmatised within our communities. In addition, at a time when other vital/support services were being cut or drastically reduced, the target-group we serve (those with mental health needs) would otherwise have had nowhere to turn. The fund stepped in where other funding ended or was removed. The funding is essential and it has had a benefit, not only directly to the individuals we have assisted, but also to other services provided by Merton, in reducing pressure of time and resources on those services - either because we have been provided additional support services to the relevant target-group; or because in so doing, other Merton services have not been put under increasing pressure to do so (e.g. as our target group have become unwell and unable to cope, and thus needed more intensive/expensive care services).</p> | No action required. |
| South West London Law Centres | <p><i>Do you support the proposed criteria for Strategic Partner Funding?</i></p> <p>Yes we support this for Cross-Cutting accredited advice service and of course broadly give our support for strategic support services. The funding from Strategic Partner Funding has made a real difference to the Law Centre and has helped us to survive and continue to fully operate. It is important that specialist services are funded as well as those just providing information and advice. There is a real need for people to effectively address and resolve their legal problems so that they do not have a significant negative impact on their lives. It is important that capacity is retained in a strong vibrant not for profit sector as it is very difficult to rebuild services that are lost. Despite the huge changes in the funding environment from other sources we are still able to provide our three core services. More details can be found at our website www.swllc.org.</p> | No action required. |

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| | <p>a) Casework and representation We continue to provide services in debt, employment, housing, immigration and asylum. We are also able to provide some welfare rights help where a case has been appealed to the Upper Tribunal. We have this month just taken on a community care contract. Most of our work continues to be funded with the support of legal aid. However we have started to charge for employment and immigration work. In employment we are still able to offer an initial free appointment through other funding. Currently we have three full time housing solicitors/caseworkers based at the Merton Office with other caseworkers based at our other offices. From September we will have our employment caseworker partly based in Merton and we are bidding for further debt casework to have a caseworker also partly based in Merton. Some examples of our casework is attached as an Appendix.</p> <p>b) Housing court duty scheme We have solicitors at Croydon County Court every weekday where most of Merton's cases are heard. We also operate at Wandsworth and Kingston County courts.</p> <p>c) Pro Bono Advice Clinics On top of the two weekly clinics we run with the CABx in their offices we have opened a further evening at the Wimbledon Guild from August 2013. All the clinics are full. We are also running family and personal injury clinics with local solicitors practise during the day time.</p> | |
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| | <p>We work collaboratively with other VCS Organisations. We are part of the steering group for the Merton Advice Services Transition Fund. We wrote the bid for this which has brought in additional monies for 3 part time outreach workers for other advice agencies, is partially funding some employment advice and will develop a website for the advice sector as well as some training and public events. We receive many referrals from Siobhan McDonagh MP.</p> | |
| | <p><i>Are there any changes that need to be made to these criteria to reflect local need?</i> No It is important that services are open and accessible for all the residents of Merton. The Law Centre is open to all and we see people from all parts of the borough. We are centrally located by the Civic Centre.</p> | No action required. |
| | <p><i>Do you support the proposed definitions of Strategic Partner Funding?</i> Yes. It is really important that funded advice services have a recognised national accreditation for advice services. There are now a limited number of advice providers and it is important that users are made fully aware of those that are properly accredited. The Law Centre has the Lexcel quality mark for which we undergo an annual audit and inspection.</p> | No action required. |
| | <p><i>Are there any changes that need to be made to these definitions?</i> No</p> | No action required. |
| | <p><i>What other comments do you have about the proposed 2015-16?</i> None</p> | No action required. |

Proposed criteria for Strategic Partner Funding 2015-18

NB: Amendments made as a result of the consultation are underlined

The proposed criteria for 2015-18 funding are as follows:

- Strategic Partner Funding is targeted at two areas of activity:
 - Strategic support services for the voluntary and community sector, including umbrella organisations providing voice, advice and capacity building support; and
 - Cross-cutting accredited advice and advocacy services

We will consider funding organisations to build their strategic support capacity, where this is specified in funding bids.
- Strategic Partners:
 - are able to demonstrate a strong local connection to Merton, including an established local presence in the borough for at least 12 months;
 - deliver services that generate a quantifiable benefit to Merton;
 - support the delivery of Merton's Community Plan, actively contributing to 'bridging the gap' between the east and the west of the borough;
 - contribute to meeting the council's strategic objectives, including its commitment to equality and diversity;
 - promote community cohesion, integration and access;
 - deliver accessible services that meet the needs of Merton's diverse communities;
 - operate in accordance with the principles of the Merton Compact;
 - work strategically with the council and contribute to policy development relating to the service they provide/ organisations they represent;
 - give service users a voice and articulate these at a borough level;
 - work collaboratively with other VCS organisations;
 - are not for profit organisations (including social enterprises) and do not include any public body or local authority; and
 - have a corporate body or have a formal constitution if not incorporated

Strategic Partner Fund Definitions

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| Strategic support services | <p>Strategic support services include any services provided for the voluntary and community sector, including umbrella organisations providing voice, advice and capacity building support.</p> <p><u>Strategic support services can be described as the physical facilities, structures, systems, relationships, knowledge and skills that exist to support and develop, coordinate, represent and promote frontline providers of services, thus enabling them to deliver their services more effectively. These can include advocacy and providing a voice to other organisations, facilitating partnerships between providers and increasing awareness of the voluntary and community sector amongst key audiences. The services should then enable organisations to better:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>define and achieve their objectives;</u> • <u>engage in consultation and planning;</u> • <u>manage projects;</u> • <u>take part in partnerships, social enterprise and service delivery.</u> <p>Strategic support services are largely provided by infrastructure or umbrella organisations.</p> |
| Cross-cutting accredited advice services | <p>Cross-cutting <u>advice and advocacy</u> services offer information, advice and where necessary, representation on matters relating to social welfare law covering areas such as accredited debt, welfare benefits, employment and housing advice services. These services are cross-cutting as they are provided for local people and do not fall into service department funding categories.</p> <p>Services will have a recognised national accreditation for advice services such as the Advice Quality Standard (AQS), <u>Specialist Quality Mark (SQM) standard or Lexcel practice management standard</u> and there will be limited duplication with other services in the borough.</p> |

LBM Strategic Partner Funding 2015 - 2018

Application Form for funding from April 2015 to March 2018

Please refer to the [guidance notes](#) (*link to be to added*) for this funding stream when completing this application form

| SECTION A: SUMMARY OF APPLICATION | | | |
|---|--------|-----------------------------------|---------|
| Name of organisation: | | | |
| Brief description of your proposal (Maximum 25 words) | | | |
| Is your application for a new or existing service(s)? | | | |
| Funding applied for: | Cash £ | Donated services and facilities £ | Total £ |
| Year 1 2015/2016 | | | |
| Year 2 2016/2017 | | | |
| Year 3 2017/2018 | | | |

| SECTION B: ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION | |
|--|----------|
| Contact name: | |
| Position in organisation: | |
| Address: | |
| Telephone: | Email: |
| What kind of organisation are you? (Please delete as applicable) | |
| Community group/ club/ society | Yes / No |
| Registered charity | Yes / No |
| Charity Number: | |
| Company limited by guarantee | Yes / No |
| Company Number: | |
| Branch of a National organisation | Yes / No |
| Other (please specify) | Yes / No |
| Do you have a base in the Borough? (Please delete as applicable) Yes / No | |
| Do all staff and volunteers who have contact with vulnerable adults have a current DBS disclosure? (Please delete as applicable) Yes / No | |
| Does your organisation have a quality assurance standard? (Please delete as applicable) Yes / No | |
| If yes please tell us which one/s (e.g. Advice Quality Standard (AQS), Specialist Quality Mark (SQM), Lexcel practice management standard, PQASSO, Investor in People (IIP), Investing in Volunteers): | |
| Expiry date: | |
| If your organisation has its own internal systems, there is an opportunity to tell us about these in Section C of the application form. | |
| What year was your organisation established? | |
| Why was your organisation established and what services and activities do you currently provide? (Please refer to the guidance notes) | |

SECTION C: ABOUT YOUR SERVICE(S)

a) Which type of service does your application relate to (tick)?

Strategic support services for the voluntary and community sector, or

Cross-cutting accredited advice and advocacy services

b) How will you use the grant? Please provide a detailed and specific description of the services or activities you will be undertaking with this grant **(Please refer to the guidance notes)**

If you are applying for more than one service or activity, number them separately below.

Note: These are your 'outputs' and will be used when monitoring your service if your bid is successful

c) How did you identify the need or continuing need for the service(s)? (Please refer to the guidance notes)

d) How do you involve your service users in the design and delivery of your service(s)? (Please refer to the guidance notes)

e) Who will benefit from your service(s)? (Please refer to the guidance notes)

**f) What geographical area does your service(s) cover?
Please circle or highlight the relevant areas**

| | | |
|---------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Abbey | Hillside | Raynes Park |
| Cannon Hill | Lavender Fields | St Helier |
| Colliers Wood | Longthornton | Trinity |
| Cricket Green | Lower Morden | Village |
| Dundonald | Merton Park | West Barnes |
| Figges Marsh | Pollards Hill | Wimbledon Park |
| Graveney | Ravensbury | ALL WARDS |

g) How will people know about your service(s)? (Please refer to the guidance notes)

h) What changes do you expect your service(s) to make? (Please refer to the guidance notes)

Note: These are your 'outcomes' and will be used when monitoring your service(s) if your bid is successful.

Please give four specific outcomes that your service(s) will achieve during the period of the grant:

| | |
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| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |

i) How will your service(s) meet the following outcomes that Strategic Partners are expected to deliver:

- are able to demonstrate a strong local connection to Merton, including an established local presence in the borough for at least 12 months;
- deliver services that generate a quantifiable benefit to Merton;
- contribute to meeting the council's strategic objectives, including its commitment to equality and diversity;
- promote community cohesion, integration and access;
- deliver accessible services that meet the needs of Merton's diverse communities;
- operate in accordance with the principles of the Merton Compact;
- work strategically with the council and contribute to policy development relating to the service they provide/ organisations they represent;
- give service users a voice and articulate these at a borough level;
- work collaboratively with other VCS organisations.

(Please refer to the guidance notes)

j) How will your service(s) support the delivery of Merton's Community Plan, actively contributing to 'bridging the gap' between the east and the west of the borough'

k) How will you know the service(s) is/ are successful? **(Please refer to the guidance notes)**

l) How do you collaborate with other organisations to minimise duplication and reduce spend on infrastructure? **(Please refer to the guidance notes)**

m) What will happen when the grant ends? **(Please refer to the guidance notes)**

| SECTION D: FINANCES | | |
|--|--------|-------|
| n) Your organisation's finances. From your organisation's most recent audited or independently examined accounts, please complete the following (Please refer to the guidance notes): | | |
| Financial year ended: | Month: | Year: |

| | £ | £ | £ |
|---|---------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Incoming Resources | Unrestricted | Restricted | Total |
| Grants – Trusts & Charities | | | |
| Grants – Statutory (e.g. NHS; Local Authority) | | | |
| Other Generated Funds | | | |
| Charitable Activities | | | |
| Other incoming resources | | | |
| TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES | | | |
| Resources Expended | | | |
| Costs of Generating Funds | | | |
| Charitable Expenditure | | | |
| Governance Costs | | | |
| Other Resources Expended | | | |
| TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED | | | |
| NET INCOMING (OUTGOING) RESOURCES/ EXPENDITURE | | | |
| Transfers between funds | | | |
| Other gains (losses) | | | |
| NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS | | | |
| Donated services and facilities <u>not</u> included above: | £ | £ | £ |
| | Unrestricted | Restricted | Total |
| | | | |
| | | | |

| Net Assets | £ |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Tangible Fixed Assets | |
| Other Tangible Assets | |
| Net Current Assets (Liabilities) | |
| TOTAL NET ASSETS (LIABILITIES) | |

| Reserves | £ |
|--------------------|---|
| Unrestricted Funds | |
| Restricted Funds | |
| TOTAL FUNDS | |

| | |
|---|--|
| Number of full-time equivalent paid staff in the organisation | |
| Number of volunteers in the organisation | |
| Volunteer hours per year | |

| |
|---|
| Do you have a Reserves Policy? (Please delete as applicable) Yes / No |
| Do you have a Finance Policy? (Please delete as applicable) Yes / No |

FUNDING REQUIRED FOR YOUR SERVICE(S)

o) What is the total cost of the proposed service(s)? (Please refer to the guidance notes)

List amount and sources

| Expenditure heading | Year 1 £ | Year 2 £ | Year 3 £ | TOTAL |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Donated services & facilities | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Total Expenditure | | | | |

Total revenue of the proposed activity/ service(s) (including other grants, contributions from service users, etc) Please indicate if other income is confirmed with *

| Source of funding | Year 1 £ | Year 2 £ | Year 3 £ | TOTAL |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Donated services & facilities | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Total Revenue | | | | |

Funding requested from the Strategic Partner Fund

| Cash grant required for each service/ activity outlined in Section C(a) above (Please use the same numbering for each service/ activity) | Year 1 £ | Year 2 £ | Year 3 £ | TOTAL |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 1. | | | | |
| 2. | | | | |
| ... | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Total cash grant requested | | | | |
| Donated services & facilities | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Total funding (cash + notional) requested | | | | |

| | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | TOTAL |
|--|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| Total volunteer time for the service (in hours) | | | | |

If you wish to clarify any of the above information please do so here:

SECTION E: DOCUMENTS WE NEED FROM YOU

If your application is successful we will need these documents from you

- Most recent audited accounts or set of accounts examined by an independent examiner
- Latest Annual Report (if you have one)
- Names and addresses of current Management Committee/Trustees or Directors
- Business or Project Plan (if you have one)
- Vulnerable Adults Policy and confirmation that all staff/volunteers meet the current disclosure and barring requirements, including DBS checks (if appropriate)
- Reserves Policy
- Finance Policy
- Governing Document
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Evidence of appropriate insurance cover
- Your bank account details (you will be paid by BACS)

We may also require job descriptions and staffing information and reserve the right to request further relevant information.

If you are a new group (under 1 year old) we will require a reference from someone who knows the work of your organisation. This may be someone from a local support agency, LBM or another voluntary organisation.

SECTION F: SIGN OFF

This form should be signed by two senior members of your organisation's Trustee Board, Management Committee or Board of Directors who have the authority to enter into contractual arrangements. Ideally, these should be different to the contact named on page one.

I confirm that I am authorised to sign this application form on behalf of our group and that the information we have provided in the form is true. I confirm that I have read and understood the Terms and Conditions of Grant overleaf and if our application is successful, we agree to comply with them.

Name (please print):

Position in organisation:

Signature:

Date:

Name (please print):

Position in organisation:

Signature:

Date:

Please email the completed application to:
voluntary.sector@merton.gov.uk by **5 p.m. on 3 November 2014**

Then post a signed hard copy to:

Amanda Roberts, Policy, Strategy and Partnerships Officer, Policy, Strategy and Partnerships Team, Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden SM4 5DX

Terms & Conditions of Grant

In submitting this application form, we understand and agree to the following:

1. If we are awarded a grant, we will use it for exactly the purpose set out in this application, unless a specific condition has been attached to the award.
2. We will not make any major changes to the proposal without first receiving LBM's agreement in writing.
3. We will not use the grant to order or buy any goods before we receive the grant offer letter.
4. We will not use the grant to pay for any item which has been funded under another grants programme.
5. We will take all reasonable steps to:
 - a. offer equality of access to our services;
 - b. provide a safe, healthy and supportive environment which meets the needs of the local community;
 - c. deliver value for money and use sound financial procedures;
 - d. share information that will contribute to the understanding of future client needs.
6. We will acknowledge LBM's grant in our annual report and in all printed materials as appropriate. We will supply copies of these documents to LBM if requested.
7. We will have a bank or building society account in the name of our group (or, if applying as a consortium or partnership, in the name of the accountable group). We confirm that all cheques or withdrawals from this account require at least two signatories.
8. We will keep all financial records and accounts, including receipts for items bought with the grant, for at least six years from receiving the grant. We understand that this does not release us from our legal responsibility to keep records for longer periods.
9. We will provide sufficient insurance cover to meet potential liabilities and produce evidence of payment of the current premiums and note that LBM may request us to provide copies of our employer's liability, public liability and buildings insurance policies.
10. We will allow LBM to use our name in their own publicity materials. We will inform LBM of any situation where confidentiality is a particular issue.
11. We will send LBM all relevant monitoring information at the end of the project and meet all monitoring and financial requirements as requested during the life of the grant, subject to Data Protection regulations.
12. We will allow LBM to visit us to see the work funded by this grant.
13. We note that LBM will ask us to repay the grant, in whole or in part, in the following circumstances:
 - a. if we fail to keep to our funding agreement in any way;
 - b. if the application form was completed dishonestly or the supporting documents gave false or misleading information;
 - c. if any member of our governing body, staff or volunteers acts dishonestly or negligently in respect of this grant;
 - d. if we close down or become insolvent.
14. These terms and conditions will apply until we have spent the grant and submitted all related documentation.

LBM Strategic Partner Funding 2015 - 2018

Application Guidance Notes

Background information to Strategic Partner funding

The Strategic Partner Funding will provide core funding over three years to voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations that undertake a strategic role in the borough or provide cross-cutting services for local people that do not fall into service department funding categories. Further detail about definitions for the types of services this funding covers is provided below.

- Strategic Partner Funding is targeted at two areas of activity:
 - Strategic support services for the voluntary and community sector, including umbrella organisations providing voice, advice and capacity building support; and
 - Cross-cutting accredited advice and advocacy services

We will consider funding organisations to build their strategic support capacity, where this is specified in funding bids.

- Strategic Partners:
 - are able to demonstrate a strong local connection to Merton, including an established local presence in the borough for at least 12 months;
 - deliver services that generate a quantifiable benefit to Merton;
 - support the delivery of Merton’s Community Plan, actively contributing to ‘bridging the gap’ between the east and the west of the borough’;
 - contribute to meeting the council’s strategic objectives, including its commitment to equality and diversity;
 - promote community cohesion, integration and access;
 - deliver accessible services that meet the needs of Merton’s diverse communities;
 - operate in accordance with the principles of the Merton Compact;
 - work strategically with the council and contribute to policy development relating to the service they provide/ organisations they represent;
 - give service users a voice and articulate these at a borough level;
 - work collaboratively with other VCS organisations;
 - are not for profit organisations (including social enterprises) and do not include any public body or local authority; and
 - have a corporate body or have a formal constitution if not incorporated.

The following definitions have been developed to provide clarity around the areas of activity Strategic Partner Funding is aimed at:

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Strategic support services</p> | <p>Strategic support services include any services provided for the voluntary and community sector, including umbrella organisations providing voice, advice and capacity building support.</p> <p>Strategic support services are largely provided by infrastructure or umbrella organisations.</p> <p>Strategic support services can be described as the physical facilities, structures, systems, relationships, knowledge and skills that exist to support and develop, coordinate, represent and promote frontline providers of services, thus enabling them to deliver their services more effectively. These can include advocacy and providing a voice to other organisations, facilitating partnerships between providers and increasing awareness of the voluntary and community sector amongst key audiences. The services should then enable organisations to better:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • define and achieve their objectives; • engage in consultation and planning; • manage projects; • take part in partnerships, social enterprise and service delivery. |
| <p>Cross-cutting accredited advice services</p> | <p>Cross-cutting advice and advocacy services offer information, advice and where necessary, representation on matters relating to social welfare law covering areas such as accredited debt, welfare benefits, employment and housing advice services. These services are cross-cutting as they are provided for local people and do not fall into service department funding categories. Services will have a recognised national accreditation for advice services such as the Advice Quality Standard (AQS), Specialist Quality Mark (SQM) standard or Lexcel practice management standard and there will be limited duplication with other services in the borough.</p> |

Strategic Partner Funding will be allocated from 1 April 2015 for a period of three years. Funding would therefore run until the end of March 2018.

Strategic Partner Funding will be transferred in two batches – in April and October – during the period of funding.

| Year | Overall sum to be allocated |
|---------|-----------------------------|
| 2015/16 | £780,000 |
| 2016/17 | £780,000** |
| 2017/18 | £780,000** |

** Please note that although we are currently planning for the same level of funding to be available for each of the years 2016-18, the outcome of the forthcoming comprehensive spending review and implications for the council's government grant may mean that this will have to be revisited.

General guidance for completing the application form

- Please answer all the questions and aim to address all the points requested. Organisations must submit only one application. If you are applying for more than one service or activity list them separately on the form. Applications are welcome for either area of Strategic Partner Funding activity or both areas of activity.
- We do not expect small organisations to have sophisticated documentation or processes. However, we will expect you to have something in place which is reasonable for your size and income and to fill in every section of this form.
- Use a *maximum of 400 words* in each box (apart from question Cb), where the maximum is 600 words). You will not be penalised for using fewer words and we would prefer your answer to be clear and focused rather than trying to use the full quota.
- Type your answers. If you do not have access to a computer contact Merton Voluntary Service Council who can help (020 8685 1771).
- Demonstrate clearly how your application meets the priorities of this funding (see background information above and on page 8).
- Do not send any supplementary information at this stage.
- Please note the following key dates:

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| Deadline for Strategic Partner Funding bids | 3 November 2014 (5 pm) |
| Panel meeting to make funding recommendations, followed by Chief Officer decision | w/c 10 November 2014 |
| Notification of funding decision | By 30 November 2014 |
| Strategic Partner Funding commences for successful applicants | 1 April 2015 |

- The funding decision is final and any appeals in relation to the procedure for considering applications or the funding decision will not be considered unless in exceptional circumstances.

Section A: Summary of application

- Summarise your proposal in a maximum of 25 words.
- Tell us whether the application is for a new or existing service(s).
- In the box at the bottom of the page please give the total amount you are applying for in each year.

Section B: About your organisation

- Please give the contact details of someone who will be available to answer questions about the application. Ideally, this should be a different person to the signatories at the end of the form.
- **What kind of organisation are you?**
Please tick all that apply.
- **Services and activities of your organisation**
What are the aims of your organisation and why was it established? This may be in your governing document or mission statement. What activities and services do you currently provide to meet these aims?
- **Does your organisation have a quality assurance standard?**
We will consider funding cross-cutting advice services to work towards a recognised advice standard, where this is specified in funding bids.

Section C: About your service(s)

All the questions in this section are about the service(s) for which you are applying for funding.

a) Which type of service does your application relate to?

Tell us which of the service types covered by this funding stream your application relates to.

b) How will you use the grant?

Tell us about the services or activities you are seeking funding for. If you are applying for more than one service, number each of them.

For each service, tell us what you will deliver, the number of activities or sessions you will provide, when and how they will be delivered, and how many service users will benefit. Do not list management and administration (sometimes referred to as overheads or core costs) as a separate service or activity.

These are your 'Outputs' and will be used when monitoring your service if your bid is successful.

c) How did you identify the need or continuing need for the service(s)?

You may be aware of issues and unmet needs through your own experience in your local community. It is useful however if you can back this up with some specific evidence to let us know why your service is necessary. This may be research (carried out by your organisation or others), local demographic information, or specific feedback you have received.

- Tell us how you identified the need
- Tell us why you think this service is the best way of responding to that need
- If it is an existing service, tell us how it is continually developing and improving

d) How do you involve your service users in the design and delivery of your service(s)?

For example, you may send out questionnaires or surveys, hold regular focus groups or have a suggestion box. How do these responses make a difference to your service delivery?

e) Who will benefit from your service(s)?

For example, is your service targeted at a specific age group, a particular community of interest or culture, or a geographical area?

f) What geographical area does your service(s) cover?

Please tick all that apply.

g) How will people know about your service(s)?

- Will your service be publicised? If so, how?
- Is your service restricted to members? If so, how do people become members?
- Do people have to be referred to your service? If so, from which organisations and if you use a referral process, please describe it.
- Can people refer themselves? If so, how?
- Do you have a waiting list? If so, what is the average wait?

h) What changes do you expect your service(s) to make?

Tell us the difference your service will make, the changes that will happen as a result of using your service or participating in the activities you told us about in Section Cb) above.

These are your 'Outcomes' and will be used when monitoring your service if your bid is successful.

Outcomes are the changes, benefits, learning or other effects that happen as a result of your work. For example, the outcomes for users of a refugee centre might include:

- improved English language skills
- improved access to services
- reduced isolation

Please give four specific Outcomes that the service(s) will achieve during the period of the grant.

Make your outcomes **SMART**- that is, **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant and **T**ime-bound. In other words your intended outcomes need to include information on numbers and timescales as well as what you do and who for.

SMART outcomes look like this:

- 200 more households on the Cullingworth Estate will be regularly recycling at the end of the project
- 15 local groups who have taken part in the scheme will report greater success in attracting funding by the end of the second year
- 25 local families with autistic children will report reduced stress as a result of respite opportunities

i) How will your service(s) meet the following outcomes that Strategic Partners are expected to deliver:

- are able to demonstrate a strong local connection to Merton, including an established local presence in the borough for at least 12 months;
- deliver services that generate a quantifiable benefit to Merton;
- contribute to meeting the council's strategic objectives, including its commitment to equality and diversity;
- promote community cohesion, integration and access;
- deliver accessible services that meet the needs of Merton's diverse communities;
- operate in accordance with the principles of the Merton Compact;
- work strategically with the council and contribute to policy development relating to the service they provide/ organisations they represent;
- give service users a voice and articulate these at a borough level;
- work collaboratively with other VCS organisations.

How will you deliver the stated activity expected of 'Strategic Partners'?

Applications will be scored on how well their service(s) meet the outcomes that Strategic Partners are expected to deliver.

j) How will your service(s) support the delivery of Merton's Community Plan, actively contributing to 'bridging the gap' between the east and the west of the borough'

Applications will be scored on how well their service(s) contribute to 'bridging the gap'..

k) How will you know the service(s) is/ are successful?

- How will you monitor your service?
- What systems will you have in place to measure whether the service is on track, doing what you said it would do and making a difference to your users?
- What evidence will you provide to let us know you are achieving the *Outputs* you identified in Section Cb) and the *Outcomes* you identified in Section Cg)?

l) How do you collaborate with other organisations to minimise duplication and reduce spend on infrastructure?

Please explain:

- Which other organisations you work with and how you work with them?
- How your services complement those of other organisations?
- How you know your services do not duplicate those of other organisations?

m) What will happen when the grant ends?

What will happen to the service(s) at the end of the grant? If there is still a need, how will the service continue?

Section D: Finances

n) Your organisation's finances

Please give us an overview of the income and expenditure of **your organisation**. Your governance structure will determine how this is completed. The amounts should be for the whole legal entity the service is part of. If you are a branch of a registered charity you should complete this for the whole charity. If you are a subsidiary company and the company is a distinct legal entity then it would be prepared for that company only.

These amounts should come from your latest audited or independently reviewed accounts. The headings follow the format of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice 2005 (SORP2005). If you are not a charity then please complete the form using the definitions from that document which is available on the Charity Commission website at www.charity-commission.gov.uk.

If you are a very small organisation that prepares receipts and payments accounts, please complete the form following the format of CC16a, also available on the Charity Commission website.

If you require help, contact Merton Voluntary Service Council on 020 8685 1771.

Since your accounts will be more than one year old at the time of completing this application **please enclose your most recent management accounts** with the form. The format of these accounts will not affect the scoring of your application; they are to demonstrate your current financial position.

- Incoming Resources section – SORP2005 includes all *Incoming Resources from Generated Funds* and we would like to have these grants detailed separately. Other Generated Funds is your total Incoming Resources from Generated Funds less these grants. The other headings in Incoming Resources are the same as SORP2005.
- Donated services and facilities (sometimes known as *in kind* donations or *notional grants*) should be included in your accounts in accordance with the SORP2005. If they are **not** then please provide details of these amounts in the space provided. Examples of donated services and facilities would include rent, utilities, transport and other services such as payroll.
- The information on staff and volunteers should also be for the whole organisation. The number of staff is the same as disclosed in your audited/independently examined accounts in accordance with the SORP2005. It should include all part-time and sessional staff employed during the year *rounded up* to the full time equivalent.
- If you receive funding you will be required to send in your Reserves and Finance policies. Merton Voluntary Service Council can provide you with model policies as an aid to developing these (020 8685 1771).

o) Funding required for your service(s)

Please tell us about the finances *relating to the service(s) that you are requesting funding for*. Tell us the total income and expenditure associated with this piece of work even if you are not asking us to fund the full amount.

- Only complete the column(s) relating to the year(s) for which you are applying for funding
- The Expenditure headings should give sufficient detail to show where the money is spent. For example list staff costs (including on-costs) as one heading, volunteer expenses, rent, utilities, transport, etc. Include any donated services or facilities that relate specifically to this service separately in accordance with SORP2005.
- If you have already received funding from elsewhere to supplement this application please indicate this in the Revenue section and indicate whether or not this funding has been confirmed with *. Detail any other income you expect to receive in connection with this service (e.g. charging for meals). Also include all donated services and facilities received from elsewhere and state the source (e.g. LBM Positive Activities Fund, NHS, etc.).
- Please tell us how many hours you anticipate volunteers will contribute to your service each year. This should include time your Trustee/ Management Committee members spend on governance.
- The amounts detailed in the 'funding requested' section should list the separate costs for each service or activity numbered in question Cb). Do not list management and overheads costs separately, instead include an appropriate contribution for management and overheads in the cost of each service/ activity, using full cost recovery. Also include the in kind amount for donated services and facilities to provide a figure for the total funding requested. The total of this box should equal the difference between the income and expenditure boxes.
- It is important that you identify *all* your service costs and overheads. We will only fund you if you can demonstrate that your organisation and the service are financially viable.

Section E: Documents we need from you

- We will ask for these documents **if your application is successful**. Please do not send them in now.
- If you need help producing any of these policies or with DBS checks, please contact Merton Voluntary Service Council on 020 8685 1771.

Section F: Sign off

- The form should be signed by two senior members of your organisation's Trustee Board, Management Committee or Board of Directors who have the authority to enter into contractual agreements. Ideally, these should be different to the contact named in Section B.

- Please send the form electronically by 5 p.m. on Monday 3 November 2014, followed by a signed hard copy.
- If you have any questions about the form or guidance notes please contact Amanda Roberts on 020 8545 4685 or amanda.roberts@merton.gov.uk.

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