

## Non Key Decision taken by an Officer

**Chief Officers:** Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services

**Date:** 14 January 2020

Agenda item: N/A

Wards: All

**Subject:** London Councils Grants Scheme  
Subscription for 2020/21

Lead officer: John Dimmer, Head of Policy, Strategy and Partnerships

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

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### Recommendation:

- (1) That the Director approves the council's contribution to the London Councils Grants Scheme 2020/21 as per the subscription set by London Councils Leaders' Committee on 3 December 2019.

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## 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The London Councils Leaders' Committee has set a revised budget for the London Councils Grants Scheme (LCGS) for 2020/21. The LCGS is governed by statute which requires the budget to be approved by two thirds of London boroughs by 24 January 2020.
- 1.2 This report seeks the Director's approval for Merton's contribution to the LCGS for 2020/21, which the London Councils Leaders' Committee has determined should be £154,343 which is a slight decrease from 2019/20. This can be met within existing resources.
- 1.3 The formal decision about Merton's contribution to the LCGS is usually taken by Cabinet. However, as the January Cabinet meeting has been deferred to the 27th, Merton would not be in a position to confirm its decision by the statutory deadline. The consequences of two thirds of councils not approving the budget are outlined at 3.4. In Merton's case, we would be required to pay £1,348 more than the amount we were due to pay in 2020/21. To ensure that this year's deadline is met, it has been agreed that as a one-off for this year a non-key delegated chief officer decision is taken by the Director of Corporate Services on 14 January 2020. The authority for this non-key delegated chief officer decision is provided under Article 13 of

the Constitution and the Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 4B of the Constitution.

## **2 DETAILS**

2.1 The LCGS funds a range of services across London with financial contributions from all London boroughs. See Appendix I for a further breakdown. The budget for the grants scheme is determined by the London Councils Leaders' Committee and boroughs are asked to confirm their contributions each year.

2.2 In 2019/20 the London Councils Leaders' Committee determined Merton's contribution to be £155,691. For 2020/21 the London Councils Leaders' Committee has determined that Merton's contribution should decrease by £1,348 to £154,343.

### **Grants Programme 2021-25**

2.3 The current four-year Grants Programme is due to finish at the end of March 2021. The programme operates across three priority areas:

Priority 1 - Combatting Homelessness

Priority 2 - Tackling Sexual and Domestic Violence

Priority 3 - Tackling Poverty through Employment

2.4 Grants Committee members, in July 2019, supported the idea of a 2021-25 Grants Programme. Grants Committee agreed that the current principles remained fit for purpose and that a review of the programme should take account of the priorities - the Pledges to Londoners - that Leaders had already committed to.

2.5 At its meeting on 13 November the Grants Committee agreed that the 2021-25 programme is established based broadly on the current programme Priorities and level of funding, subject to consultation and final approval of Leaders' Committee.

2.6 Subject to the high level Priorities remaining the same, a consultation exercise will be launched between November 2019 and January 2020, which all boroughs and wider stakeholders will be invited to take part in, to inform the 2021-25 programme.

## **3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

3.1 Merton could decide not to approve the proposed contribution. However, if at least two thirds of London boroughs approve the budget it will apply to all councils.

3.2 If at least two thirds of constituent councils do not agree the revised budget within the timescales, then the subscription levied for 2019/20 (£155,691) will apply for 2020/21.

## **4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

4.1 The London Councils Leaders' Committee approved the overall revenue budget for London Councils for 2020/21 and the level of borough subscriptions and charges for the year on 3 December 2019, including those relating to the LCGS.

- 4.2 The LCGS borough subscriptions 2020-21 are attached to this report at Appendix II.
- 4.3 Subject to the high level Priorities remaining the same, a consultation exercise will be launched between November 2019 and January 2020, which all boroughs and wider stakeholders will be invited to take part in, to inform the Grants Programme 2021-25.

## **5 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. The subscription for 2020/21 can be met within existing resources.

## **6 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The LCGS is governed by statute which requires at least two thirds of London boroughs to approve the budget in order for the budget to apply to all councils. If at least two thirds of constituent councils do not agree the revised budget within the timescales, then the subscription levied for 2019/20 (£155,691) will apply for 2020/21.
- 7.2 The LCGS can only be revoked if a majority of the member councils so decide. In such circumstances the revocation would take effect from the end of any financial year after that in which the decision to revoke is made. The Council cannot, therefore, unilaterally withdraw from the scheme and is bound to make a contribution to the scheme in 2020/21.

## **7 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. None for the purposes of this report.

## **8 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. None for the purposes of this report.

## **9 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1. None for the purposes of this report.

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

- Appendix I: London Councils' Grants scheme spending
- Appendix II: London Councils Grants Scheme – Proposed Borough Subscriptions 2020-21

## **11 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 11.1. None.

## London Councils' Grants scheme spending

The London Councils grants scheme was originally set up on abolition of the Greater London Council (GLC). Section 48 of the Local Government Act 1985 enabled London boroughs to fund voluntary action in the capital through a joint scheme provided by London Councils.

All 32 London boroughs and the City of London contribute to the grants programme which is run on their behalf by London Councils and aims to meet key areas of need in the capital.

Applicants to the programme must be non-profit organisations that are able to work across more than one borough and able to demonstrate they provide services in at least one of the following 2017 to 2021 Grants Programme priorities identified by London Councils following a 2015/16 Grants Review:

Priority 1 - Combatting Homelessness

Priority 2 - Tackling Sexual and Domestic Violence

Priority 3 - Tackling Poverty through Employment (ESF match funded).

### *Table One: London Councils Grants Programme 2017-21 (Priority 1 and 2)*

The 2017-21 grants programme has seen £6,173,132 split between 13 different projects dedicated to tackling some of the most serious issues affecting the capital.

Service Area	Organisation	Annual Grant Amount
1.1	Shelter - London Advice Services	£1,003,495
	St Mungo Community Housing Association	£251,378
1.2	New Horizon Youth Centre	£1,008,338
1.3	Homeless Link	£120,239
	Standing Together Against Domestic Violence	£88,977
<b>Priority 1: Combatting Homelessness</b>		<b>£2,472,427</b>
2.1	Tender Education and Arts	£265,000
2.2	Solace Women's Aid	£1,425,238
	Galop	£146,318
	SignHealth	£148,444
2.3	Women's Aid Federation of England (Women's Aid)	£314,922

2.4	Ashiana Network	£840,000
2.5	Women's Resource Centre	£240,783
2.6	Asian Women's Resource Centre	£320,000
<b>Priority 2: Tackling Sexual and Domestic Violence</b>		<b>£3,700,705</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>£6,173,132</b>

*Table Two: London Councils Grants Programme 2017-2021 (Priority 3)*

Priority 3 is funded by boroughs' contributions to the Grants Programme of £3 million and matched by £3 million from the London Councils European Social Fund (ESF) Programme, under an agreement with the Greater London Authority (GLA).

<b>Organisation and Cluster</b>	<b>Grant Amount</b>
Citizens Trust (Brent, Ealing, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Richmond-upon-Thames)	£448,114
London Training and Employment Network (Croydon, Kingston-upon-Thames, Lambeth, Merton, Sutton, Wandsworth)	£483,211
MI ComputSolutions (Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich, Lewisham, Southwark)	£463,156
Paddington Development Trust (Barnet, Hammersmith & Fulham, Haringey, Harrow, Kensington & Chelsea, Westminster)	£464,409
Redbridge Council for Voluntary Service (Enfield, City of London, Hackney, Islington, Tower Hamlets, Camden)	£469,423
Redbridge Council for Voluntary Service (Barking & Dagenham, Havering, Newham, Redbridge, Waltham Forest)	£491,985
<b>Priority 3: Tackling Poverty through Employment Total Programme</b>	<b>£5,640,601</b>
London Councils Management and Administration (6 percent)	£359,399
<b>Priority 3: Grant Funding</b>	<b>£3,000,000</b>
<b>Priority 3: European Social Funding</b>	<b>£3,000,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£6,000,000</b>