

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 16 December 2022	Decision Taker: Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities and Finance
Report title:		Common Purpose grants programme 2019-23: 1 year extension 2023-4: grant allocations	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Director of Communities	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities and Finance approves the Common Purpose grants allocations for an additional year from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The total annual budget for the programme is £801,451. The funding recommendations are listed in Appendix 1.
2. The Cabinet Member approves that one organisation, Cambridge House, will no longer be funded because they no longer meet the criteria for a Common Purpose grant.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. The Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities and Finance approved the extension of the Common Purpose grants programme 2019-23 at the current budget for an additional year from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 by way of an IDM report that was approved on 17 November 2022.
4. The overall aims of the Common Purpose programme are to bring Southwark's diverse communities together, tackle social exclusion and promote a greener borough. It was developed to support the ambitions of the Southwark Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Strategy 2017-2022 '[Common Purpose Common Cause](#)'; this includes a commitment to funding core costs and longer funding cycles. The fund therefore provides 4 year 'strategic partner' grants and 2 year 'community engagement' grants, the majority of which are for core costs. Specific criteria for the 4 year grants are as follows:
 - o Borough-wide service or community anchor in neighbourhoods: works in partnership with other VCS groups; supports grassroots groups and / or emerging communities; contributes to local strategy development
 - o Has substantial non-council funding for services
 - o Makes premises available for grassroots groups to hire at low or no cost.

- Two year ‘community engagement’ grants: currently 15 organisations are funded in 2021-23. Specific criteria for the 2 year grants are as follows:
 - Meets needs of one or more community of interest and brings communities together
 - Works with other VCS organisations serving different client groups
 - Enables clients to move on and brings new clients in
 - Has **some** non-council funding and is not wholly reliant on council funding
 - Provides advice, information and signposting to the correct services.

- 5. Common Purpose grant recipients are required to contribute to outcomes set out in the [Common Outcomes Framework](#) . These are outcomes that contribute to healthier, more engaged and greener communities. The full set of outcomes is set out in the previous IDM. The Framework will be updated to reflect the new Council Delivery Plan and Southwark 2030 priorities. It will be brought to Cabinet in the summer of 2023.

- 6. Funded organisations are required to submit data annually on the indicators they are using to measure how they are achieving these outcomes. This data has been submitted in autumn 2022 and is currently being collated and reviewed by the commissioning team.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 7. The rationale for extending the current grants for one further year is to allow sufficient time for [the recommendations the two independent reviews](#) of council grant making carried out in 2021 to be implemented. In November-December 2022:
 - The Common Outcomes Framework is being reviewed by a cross-council group of commissioners as described in paragraph 5, to bring it in line with the Council Delivery Plan and make it clear, simpler and more fit for purpose
 - An advisory panel of community representations and council commissioners is co-producing a one off grants programme with a total budget of £400k, with £200k of this to be available specifically for groups that self-identify as Black Asian and minority ethnic led. This is due to go live in the first quarter of 2023.
 - Cabinet approved the council-wide Funding Prospectus in December.
 - Systems are being set up for collecting data on the composition of the board or management committee of an organisation, so we are able to identify who is leading the groups we fund as well as those who are not successful in their applications or tenders.
 - A database of the borough’s Black, Asian and minority ethnic led organisations is being built, so we are better able to include and act

positively to encourage and support Black Asian and minority ethnic - led groups to access funding opportunities.

Grant allocations

8. The Commissioning team has written to the currently funded organisations inviting them to register their interest in the additional year's funding, at the current level. They were asked to:
 - Confirm how the grant would be spent
 - Indicate which outcomes from the Common Outcomes Framework the grant would contribute to
 - Indicate Council Delivery Plan priorities the funding would contribute to. These include: making Southwark an anti-racist borough; supporting residents through the cost of living crisis; tackling the climate emergency and welcoming migrants and refugees
 - Tell us how many of their board or management committee members, out of the total, identify as being of a Black Asian or minority ethnic background.
9. Commissioners have also carried out the regular Common Purpose annual monitoring in autumn 2022. Monitoring includes: review of annual accounts for 2021-22, review of governance documentation, and review of the outcomes data referred to in paragraph 6 above.
10. Any recommendation that an organisation is awarded a Common Purpose grant for a further year is made on the basis that the organisation:
 - Continues to comply with the Conditions of Grant Funding
 - Has met monitoring requirements
 - Continues to deliver the outcomes for which grant was first awarded
 - Has completed the expression of interest form and indicated where they will contribute to the new Council Delivery Plan objectives.
11. Since the last time 4 year Common Purpose grants were awarded in late 2018, the situation with Cambridge House has changed significantly. The historic building, which acted as a community hub with a number of not for profit tenant organisations, was sold in 2022. In recent years Cambridge House has evolved into a more London-wide organisation providing services in a number of other boroughs. Cambridge House's 3 Southwark-specific services, Cambridge House Law Centre and disabled and young people's empowerment services are moving to new premises at the Printworks on Amelia St, SE17. Cambridge House will no longer be a community hub offering lower-cost rental space to other not for profit organisations. It no longer has a support role for small, emerging and grassroots community groups. It is therefore deemed to no longer meet the criteria for a Strategic Partner grant which are set out in paragraph 4 above. Therefore it is recommended that Cambridge House will not be

given a Common Purpose grant in 2023-24.

12. It should be noted that the time bank service at Pecan has evolved and is no longer branded as a time bank but 'together'. However the outcomes of the new service are the same. They have advised that over the years, and due to the pandemic, HourBank has worked far less as a TimeBank and more as a community project, creating opportunities for groups of people to get together to learn new skills, swap skills, experiences and thoughts and support each other.
13. It is recommended to continue to fund all other currently funded organisations.
14. The funding amounts are set out in Appendix 1.

Policy framework implications

15. As described in paragraph 5, the Common Purpose grants programme was developed to support the ambitions of the 2016 'Common Purpose Common Cause' [Voluntary and Community Sector \(VCS\) strategy](#), with a focus on supporting resilient and connected communities, improving outcomes for residents and supporting a resilient VCS via core funding and longer funding cycles.

Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts

Community impact statement

16. There is a legal duty on local authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to promote equal opportunities, eliminate discrimination and to promote positive community relations. This grants programme aims to empower and enable diverse communities and those communities which experience discrimination to achieve a better quality of life. This includes those communities who were disproportionately impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic and are now disproportionately impacted by the cost of living crisis.

Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement

17. In 2020 the council-wide [Southwark Stands Together programme](#) was launched in response to the Black Lives Matter movement, to tackle ingrained racism in the borough and make the council an effective anti-racist organisation. As part of this programme of work, two independent reviews of council grant giving were carried out in 2021.
 - The first looked at how to dismantle barriers to funding for Black Asian & minority ethnic led organisations
 - The second looked at the impact the council's investment in the VCS is having in tackling inequalities across the borough more broadly. The council's Communities Team is working with other council teams to

implement the recommendations from these as described in paragraph 7.

18. As part of the application process the council asks organisations to estimate the percentage of their service users that fall into the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010. This information is used to assess the equalities impact of the programme and the impact of any funding reductions. The form used to collect this information has been developed in line with feedback from the Forum for Equalities and Human Rights in Southwark (FEHRS) and with the council's Equalities and Inclusion officer.
19. The short application form for the one year extension asked organisations to provide data on the composition of the board or management committee of organisations. This enables us to identify who is leading the groups we fund. Future application rounds will ask for this information from all applicants so that we can use that information to address any gaps in who is being funded.
20. The data indicates that 9 of the 15 Community Engagement organisations have a trustee board that is majority Black, Asian or minority ethnicity which amounts to 77 trustees. The data from the Strategic partner organisations shows that apart from one, each of the organisations have at least one trustee who is Black, Asian or minority ethnicity. Most of these organisations have 2/3 trustees who are Black, Asian or minority ethnicity which makes a total of 31. The council gathering and monitoring of this data will influence how organisations think about about recruiting, supporting and retaining trustees. We will be in a position going forward to understand whether our funding is supporting organisations with leadership that reflects the demographics of the borough and users of services.
21. As part of the application process VCS organisations must demonstrate who will benefit from their organisations' activities and how they support cohesion and community bridging initiatives. Within their annual reports organisations must evidence the benefits users gain from their services or activities (Conditions of Grant Funding - Section 4. paragraph 1.1).
22. Grant funded VCS organisations are required as part of the Conditions of Grant Funding to sign up to the Southwark Diversity Standard. Contained within this is a requirement that all subcontractors and service providers pay workers the London Living Wage as a minimum. The council has achieved Friendly Funder Accreditation with the Living Wage Foundation. Living Wage Friendly Funders support charities to pay the real Living Wage that meets the cost of living through their grant-making.
23. Outcomes data for 2021-22 received so far suggests that the Common Purpose programme is having an impact in terms of enabling residents with protected characteristics to :

- Get involved in volunteering e.g. Surrey Docks Farm (40 volunteers from a Black Asian or minority ethnic background and / or who have a disability)
- Increase their digital skills e.g. Walworth Golden Oldies (40 clients)
- Benefit from accessing green spaces e.g. London Wildlife Trust (5,551 clients / visitors).

Health impact statement

24. The Common Purpose grants programme aims to improve the wellbeing and resilience of local communities. Several of the outcomes that funded organisations are required to achieve are taken from the 'Healthier Communities' list of outcomes in the Common Outcomes Framework. These relate in particular to enabling access to health services; and ensuring clients maintain and improve their independence.
25. Outcomes data for 2021-22 received so far suggests that the Common Purpose programme is having an impact in terms of enabling residents to:
- Access health or support services e.g. Latin American Women's Rights Service (166 clients)
 - Feel an improved sense of wellbeing after taking up services or activities, e.g. Southwark Day Centre for Asylum Seekers (880 clients)
 - Feel more confident and independent e.g. Latin American Disabled People's Project (430 clients).

Climate change implications [approved by the Climate Change team 6.12.22]

26. As described above, currently funded organisations were asked to complete a simple expression of interest form for the additional year's funding. They were asked to indicate which priorities in the Council Delivery Plan they will seek to achieve. These include:
- Engage Southwark's communities in tackling the climate emergency (11 organisations will contribute)
 - Create more and better parks and green spaces (9 organisations will contribute)
 - Work with local people to create more nature sites, woodlands and urban planting. (9 organisations will contribute)
27. Outcomes data for 2021-22 received to date suggests that the programme is having an impact in terms of:
- People with protected characteristics increasing their walking, cycling and taking public transport when travelling across the borough, e.g. AAINA Women's Group (15 women from Black Asian & minority ethnic communities;) and the Bike Project (90 people of asylum seeker or refugee backgrounds)

- People who feel less confident cycling are taking part in 'Bike Buddy' rides, e.g. the Bike Project (20 Bike Buddy rides)
- Residents are getting involved in conservation work, e.g. Global Generation (61 young people from diverse backgrounds)
- 15 new habitats have been created (reported by Bankside Open Spaces Trust and Global Generation)

28. These outcomes support two themes from the council's Climate Change Action Plan:

- Active and sustainable travel
- Thriving natural environment.

Resource implications

29. The council is committed to providing 3 months' notice of funding decisions.

Legal implications

30. Please see the concurrent report of the Director of Law and Governance below.

Financial implications

31. The total budget for the Common Purpose programme in 2022-23 is £801,451 and this will remain unchanged in 2023-24. The amount that was previously allocated to Crystal Palace Development Trust for the current year will be made available to support funds for Connected at Xmas. This was subject to a separate approval process we suggest that we use the gap to provide uplift to the smaller organisations funded through this programme.

Consultation

32. The two independent reviews of council grant making and commissioning involved wide ranging consultation with the local VCS. The stage 1 Southwark Stands Together review included a survey which 53 Black Asian & minority ethnic led organisations responded to; conversations with 6 community leaders, interviews with 8 council commissioners, and a focus group with Black Asian & minority ethnic led organisations. For the second stage VCS investment review, a survey was carried out which 49 organisations responded to. Interviews were carried out with 14 council officers and 3 external organisations, including an independent funder. 4 focus groups were held with representatives of funded organisations and independent funders.

33. On 29th June an online event was held with approximately 40 representatives from Black Asian and minority ethnic organisations to feed back the findings of the two reviews and the recommendations for action that were approved by the council's Cabinet in February 2022.

34. The findings and key messages from these consultations will inform the development of the new Common Purpose programme to be launched in autumn 2023.
35. A meeting has been held with the Chief Executive of Cambridge House to discuss their current situation and explore whether or not they continue to meet the Common Purpose grants criteria.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Law and Governance

36. This report seeks approval of grant allocations listed in Appendix 1 as part of the extension of the Common Purpose grants programme 2019-23, for the period from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.
37. As all of the proposed grants exceed £2,500 and are to be made to voluntary sector organisations the decision to approve the report recommendation is one which is reserved to the Cabinet Member under Part 3D of the Council Constitution. The proposed grant awards are consistent with statutory duties and with corporate policy in this area, in particular the Common Outcomes Framework.
38. Paragraph 10 notes the various conditions that organisations are required to satisfy in order to be recommended for further grant funding.
39. Paragraphs 23 and 25 describe the positive impact of the grants programme and grant allocations on service users who have a protected characteristic as defined in the Equality Act 2010, following a review of information included in each recipient organisation's annual report and the outcomes data. This information is used to assess the equalities impact of the programme and assists the council to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty imposed by section 149 of the Act.
40. The award of the recommended grant allocations will continue to be regulated by the council's standard conditions of grant funding.

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance (FIN1333 – JB)

41. The report requests approval of the Common Purpose grants programme allocations for 2023-24 as an unchanged extension to the 2019-23 programme. The funding recommendations are listed in Appendix 1. Following approval the current Common Purpose grant allocations would end in March 2024.
42. Paragraph 31 notes the current budget level for the programme and that this will be unchanged for 2023-24.

Other officers

43. N/A

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
IDM report: Common Purpose grants programme 2019-23: 1 year extension 2023-4 dated 1 November 2022	Environment and Leisure / Communities	Katherine Pitt Katherine.pitt@southwark.gov.uk
Decision - Common Purpose Grants programme 2019-23: 1 year extension 2023-4 - Southwark Council		
Cabinet Report on Grants and Commissioning Reviews, February 2022		
Decision - Grants and Commissioning Review - Southwark Council		
Southwark Common Outcomes Framework	Environment and Leisure / Communities	Katherine Pitt Katherine.pitt@southwark.gov.uk
Common Purpose grants - Southwark Council		
Common Purpose Common Cause Voluntary Sector Strategy	Environment and Leisure / Communities	Katherine Pitt Katherine.pitt@southwark.gov.uk
Common Purpose grants - Southwark Council		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	List of proposed Common Purpose funded groups 2023-24

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Stephen Douglass, Director of Communities	
Report Author	Katherine Pitt, Commissioning Officer	
Version	Final	
Dated	15 December 2022	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Governance	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	Yes	Yes

List other officers here: Research and policy officer, Climate Change Team	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team / Scrutiny Team		15 December 2022