

OPEN SPACES GRANTS REVIEW WORKING PARTY

Wednesday, 25 November 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Open Spaces Grants Review Working Party held at the Guildhall EC2 at 3.30 pm

Present

Members:

Verderer Peter Adams	Alderman Ian Luder
Deputy John Barker	Virginia Rounding
Councillor Bryan Collier MBE	Graeme Smith
Alderman Gordon Haines	

Officers:

Natasha Dogra	- Town Clerk's Department
Sue Ireland	- Director, Open Spaces
Martin Rodman	- Open Spaces Department
Andy Barnard	- Open Spaces Department
Paul Thomson	- Open Spaces Department
Gerry Kiefer	- Open Spaces Department
Alison Elam	- Chamberlain's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from George Abrahams.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT.

No declarations were made.

3. MINUTES

Resolved – that the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as an accurate record.

4. OPEN SPACES GRANTS REVIEW REPORT

The group received the report of the Director of Open Spaces regarding the Open Spaces Grants Review. Members noted that Officers had refined the list of groups that currently received a grant from the two grant giving committees. They had also identified which other groups volunteer within the City's open spaces and under what structure. Members agreed that 'benefits in kind' would be considered separately from the grants review.

Members noted that the definition of a "grant" for the purposes of the review was *"an award to an external organisation or individual to undertake an activity or produce an outcome which the City Corporation is not required to do under statutory obligation – or which furthers the charitable objects of the charity from which the payment is made - and which has been (or should be) awarded as a*

result of an openly publicised and transparent process of prioritisation against clearly pre-defined objectives.” This definition excludes internal transfers between different parts of the City Corporation, commissioned services, discretionary donations, subscriptions, sponsorship, ongoing legal commitments and unallocated Community Infrastructure Levy.

Discussions ensued regarding the information on “Support Received from Volunteer Organisations.” It was agreed that these did not constitute grants; however, the definition regarding what this support was classed as must be revised. Officers agreed to action the following:

- To provide Members with a clarification regarding the insurance options available for volunteer groups and what controls would have to be implemented if they were to be covered by COL insurance;
- To produce a briefing detailing how volunteer groups are recognised and what support the City can offer the groups in terms of facilitation costs; and
- To address the relevant areas where the Superintendents recognise there is a discrepancy between providing funding for a grant or a service to the City. The next step would be to determine the most effective and efficient way of dealing with these areas.

Members indicated that they would like to see an annual report on payments made to volunteer groups that are supporting the Col in delivery of their services. The report would also include any requests received for funding and the number of volunteer hours received.

Officers would email Members with the above information and with an outline of the next steps in due course. If Members were content with this, the reports would then be considered by the relevant service Committee. If not, another meeting of this working party would be convened.

The Chairman thanked Members for their time and commended the suggestions received from the group thus far.

The meeting closed at 4.25 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer:

Natasha Dogra

0207 332 1434

Natasha.dogra@cityoflondon.gov.uk