

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Community and Children's Services	08/07/2016
<b>Subject</b> 'Stronger Communities' Eligibility Criteria, Central Grants Programme	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Deputy Town Clerk	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Scott Nixon, Project Manager	

### **Summary**

Further to the request of this Committee to revise the 'Stronger Communities' eligibility criteria, an amended version is appended to this report.

At the May 2016 Community and Children's Services Committee, Members instructed Officers to review the eligibility criteria that had been presented for the 'Stronger Communities' theme and submit a follow up report to the July Committee for Member review and approval.

Members agreed that the eligibility criteria listed in the original report appeared to be contradictory and seemed to discourage originality. Members also agreed that there should be an allowance for successful grants to be repeated without stifling creative new programmes.

### **Background**

Following the Community and Children's Services Committee in May, consultation has been undertaken with Officers and the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of this Committee to ensure that the revised eligibility criteria submitted as Appendix 1 of this report have taken into account the points raised by Members at Committee.

Members are reminded of the following points which were resolved at the May 2016 Committee meeting:

- Noted the agreed 'Stronger Communities' overarching funding themes and the level of funding available for the 2016-2018 Central Grants Programme.
- Agreed that the award of grants will be determined by Officers of Community and Children's Services in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Grand Committee.
- Noted that the Policy and Resources Committee will approve the proportionate management fee to be charged for resourcing.

### **Recommendations**

- To note that an annual report listing all organisations awarded funding through the 'Stronger Communities' funding theme and the corresponding amounts granted will be reported to this Committee.

- To note that where there is a need for an urgent decision to be made between meetings on an application, these may be approved by Officers in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.
- To review and agree the amended eligibility criteria for the 'Stronger Communities' funding theme.

### **Main Report**

1. Taking into account Member comments from the May Committee meeting and subsequent comments from the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, the eligibility criteria for the 'Stronger Communities' funding theme have been revised and are submitted to this Committee for review and approval. Points to note are as follows:
2. The general language within the criteria has been softened to ensure that it comes across as more user friendly and inclusive to prospective grant applicants. This includes the removal or rewording of anything construed as overly restrictive (especially within section 12: 'What we do not fund').
3. The eligibility criteria have been amended to clarify that funding is not just available to enhance existing services, but invites applications for new/innovative projects, as long as the eligibility criteria are satisfied.
4. Applications may now be submitted in successive years by the same organisation to deliver the same activity (if deemed sufficiently successful and impactful by those charged with assessing the applications).
5. If individuals wish to access Central Grant Programme funding, but are not part of a constituted organisation, the Central Grants Unit (CGU) is unable to get directly involved in supporting them to undertake the constitution process, as this would be seen as a conflict of interest.

The CGU would, however, be able to provide advice and guidance on the overall applications process and whether the funding proposal conforms to the established eligibility criteria. But outside of this, the CGU would seek to signpost individuals to relevant external organisations such as the Local Council for Voluntary Service for advice and support. Or if, for example, a resident on a City of London housing estate requests support to establish a new residents group, they would be signposted to the local Estate Manager who would be able to provide all the necessary advice and guidance on how to proceed.

6. The CGU will provide this Committee with an annual report listing all organisations awarded funding and the amounts granted from the 'Stronger Communities' funding theme.
7. The default position of any grant application received after the closing date would be to hold it until the next annual grant round. However, should an application be received after the closing date that is considered urgent by Officers, the Chairman and Deputy Chairman would be consulted. The application must then demonstrate sufficient merit to warrant consideration outside the standard processes and satisfy the eligibility criteria. If Officers, the Chairman and Deputy Chairman are in agreement, and if there is funding remaining in the budget, the application may be approved.

## **Appendix**

- Appendix 1: 'Stronger Communities' Eligibility Criteria

## **Background Papers**

- 13 May 2016, Community and Children's Services Committee, 'Implementation of Grants Review'

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