

Local Area Agreement Proposals

Voluntary / Community Sector (VCS) Proposals to Support the 'Stronger Communities' LAA Target

Introduction

Voluntary and community sector involvement in the delivery of 'stronger communities' is vital given that the sector serves some of the **hardest to reach residents**, and **people who have difficulties in accessing services** in the Borough.

In addition, Government guidance on LAAs states that *'successful LAAs will ensure the involvement of...the Voluntary and Community Sector and local people themselves in helping to identify, shape and deliver local services'*

[para 21 LAA Guidance]

'Local partners are encouraged to consider how...working with the voluntary and community sector...may contribute across all four outcomes...and other blocks of the LAA'

[Annex 1 SSCF: 'Taking the Agreements Forward']

Mandatory Outcome: "To increase the capacity of local communities so that people are empowered to participate in local decision-making and are able to influence service delivery".

To meet this outcome, the voluntary and community sector propose the following:

1. Continue development of the K&C Voluntary Organisations Forum (VOF)¹ / sub-forums

- Continue to **elect representatives from VOF and the sub forums to represent views to statutory service deliverers** on various Boards and Partnerships in the Borough, eg KCP, Area Child Protection Committee, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Steering Group, Sure Start Board, Borough Voluntary Organisations Advisory Group. Take forward the views of the hardest to reach residents / service users and the difficulties people face in accessing services
- **Develop and widen the membership base** of VOF and its subgroups. Encourage the involvement of **tenants and residents groups** representatives. Build on direct **links with REPKC**, a **resident-led body** that influences at policy and service delivery levels.
- VOF coordinator to **strengthen links with service providers** to channel views from specialist VOFs (Children & Families, Older People, Housing & Hostels) to inform statutory service provider priorities.

How does this relate to the Community Strategy Aims?

- Supporting efforts to assist those who find it hardest to be heard, get involved or get organised (**Community, equalities, inclusivity: Aim 2**)
- Providing opportunities for communities to discuss and debate service provision with service deliverers (**Community, equalities, inclusivity: Aim 2**)
- Work hard with local communities to improve our understanding of the service needs of the Borough's residents (**Health and Social Care; Aim2**)

¹ VOF is the Community Empowerment Network for Kensington & Chelsea, and the link between the voluntary / community sector and the Kensington & Chelsea Partnership for the Borough

How can this be measured?

- Percentage increase in representatives elected to Borough partnerships, with baseline information taken from number current representatives elected to Borough partnerships
- Collect baseline data from VOFs to show percentage of people surveyed who are a) involved in decision and b) feel they can influence decisions in their area
- Percentage increase in VOF and sub-VOF membership, with baseline taken from current VOF membership lists

2. Continuation of the Single Community Fund Grants

- Increase the capacity of individuals to **participate in local decision-making** through Community Learning Chest grants (see examples)
- Community Chest grants that enable voluntary sector to **consult users and develop new projects that contribute to service delivery** (meeting gaps in local service delivery / reaching users who are not usually reached)

How does this relate to the Community Strategy Aims?

- Nurturing training to support active citizenship and widening participation in community decision-making, especially among young people and others who are often under-represented on governing bodies (**Community, equalities, inclusivity: Aim 3**)
- Supporting efforts to assist those who find it hardest to be heard, get involved or get organised (**Community, equalities, inclusivity: Aim 2**)

How has Community Chest / Community Learning Chest directly empowered local people?

The following are examples of previously funded projects:

London Citizens

2005 Community Learning Chest

The funds will support 12 people from North Kensington to take place on London Citizens Community Leadership Training. The training is aimed at increasing the personal leadership skills of people who want to play a more active role in their local community and are looking for support in doing so.

Moroccan Community Welfare Group

2005 Community Chest

To run a new project called 'XPRESS'. Involved training group of young people to design a website and learn HTML skills. At end of project, group will create 'XPRESS.net' website which will be used as a forum for young people to express their views, ideas & aspirations. Website will also have an events / news page.

New Citizens Voice

2005 Community Chest

Civic Education project aimed at promoting and encouraging the participation of K & C's non-indigenous communities in social, economic and cultural life of K & C. The project is in line with K & C Ethnic Minority Needs Assessment Action Plan 2004-2005. A one-hour radio show will be produced and will be broadcasted on Spectrum Radio; with the participation of non-indigenous communities of North and South of the borough. 2 focus groups (up to 120 people) will be complemented by literature on subjects such as health, education, employment, cultural events and activities.

Resource Implications

£89,166.00 is required to cover the running costs of the main VOF and the sub-VOFs for two years. This also includes the costs of all VOF newsletters and communications, and the VOF co-ordinator post.

£182,392.00 is required to cover two years funding for VCS small grants based on current allocation.