

For general release

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| REPORT TO: | Scrutiny & Overview Committee 11 February 2019 |
| SUBJECT: | DEVELOPMENT OF A VOLUNTARY & COMMUNITY SECTOR STRATEGY FOR CROYDON COUNCIL |
| LEAD OFFICER: | Gavin Handford, Head of Policy & Partnership |
| CABINET MEMBER: | Councillor Hamida Ali, Safer Croydon & Communities |
| PERSON LEADING AT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING: | Councillor Hamida Ali |

CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT/AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON:

The Corporate Plan recognises the importance of working in partnership to deliver the priorities and outcomes we have promised in new and creative ways. This includes working with the voluntary and community sector.

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| ORIGIN OF ITEM: | Request by Councillor Hamida Ali for Scrutiny Committee to input into the development of a Voluntary & Community Sector Strategy for Croydon Council. |
| BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE: | To provide comment and inform the development of a Voluntary & Community Sector Strategy for Croydon Council. |

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the Council's aim to develop a Voluntary & Community Sector Strategy which provides a framework for how the Council works with the sector. It summarises the Council's corporate priorities and engagement work with the sector, seeking comments from the Scrutiny & Overview Committee to inform the strategy which will be considered by Cabinet in March.

DEVELOPMENT OF A VOLUNTARY & COMMUNITY SECTOR STRATEGY FOR CROYDON COUNCIL

2. VOLUNTARY & COMMUNITY SECTOR: CROYDON CONTEXT

- 2.1 Croydon benefits from a strong Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) which makes a vital contribution to the borough.

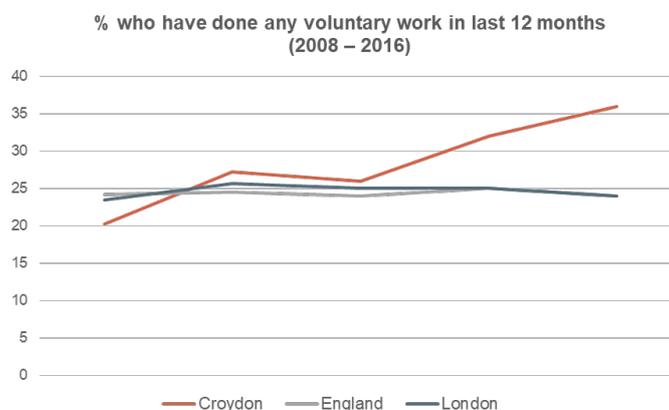
- 2.2 The VCS delivers significant services, support and advice to residents across a wide range of council services. The sector also supports community cohesion, empowerment and resilience.
- 2.3 According to the Charity Commission there are 819 registered charities in Croydon. This only captures those charities with their registered office within the borough. There are many more charities, such as national VCS organisations, that are not included within this figure but still provide a vital role in Croydon.
- 2.4 Croydon CVA have over 2,000 individuals registered within local VCS organisations, demonstrating the broader scope of the sector beyond registered charities.
- 2.5 When referring to the Voluntary & Community Sector, we are in fact referring to over a dozen different forms of organisations, including:
- Community associations
 - Community groups
 - Co-operatives and social enterprises
 - Faith organisations
 - 'Friends of' Groups
 - Grant making trusts
 - Housing Associations
 - Non-constituted groups of residents working together to make a difference in their local
 - Registered charities
 - School/parent groups
 - Social enterprises
 - Sports, environmental, arts and heritage organisations
 - Tenants and residents' groups
- 2.6 These organisations operate in all areas of the borough. Some will provide services across all of Croydon (and in some cases beyond), whilst others will focus on a particular area or neighbourhood.
- 2.7 Whilst some organisations will employ staff, most are reliant on volunteers, at least in part. In recent years Croydon has benefited from an increase in volunteering levels. In the 3 years to 2015/16 (the most recent data available), the GLA survey confirmed that 36% of people in Croydon had volunteered in the previous 12 months (see Chart 1). This was the third highest level of volunteering in London, and an increase from 20% in 2011/12.

Outer South London Context

- 2.8 Data on registered charities operating in boroughs suggests that VCS in Croydon is the largest in outer South London. This data, from 2016/17, excludes charities based outside the borough but operating services within it (see Chart 2). However, when the total income of active local registered charities is compared across the sub-region, Croydon is overshadowed by Richmond and Bromley even though those boroughs have smaller populations (see Chart 3). The level of spend in registered charities between 2001/02 and 2016/17 has risen markedly in Richmond and Bromley, and steadily in Kingston, and Sutton. This may in part be due to outsourcing to the VCS (see Chart 4). It should be noted that this comparative analysis relates only to registered charities, which may represent

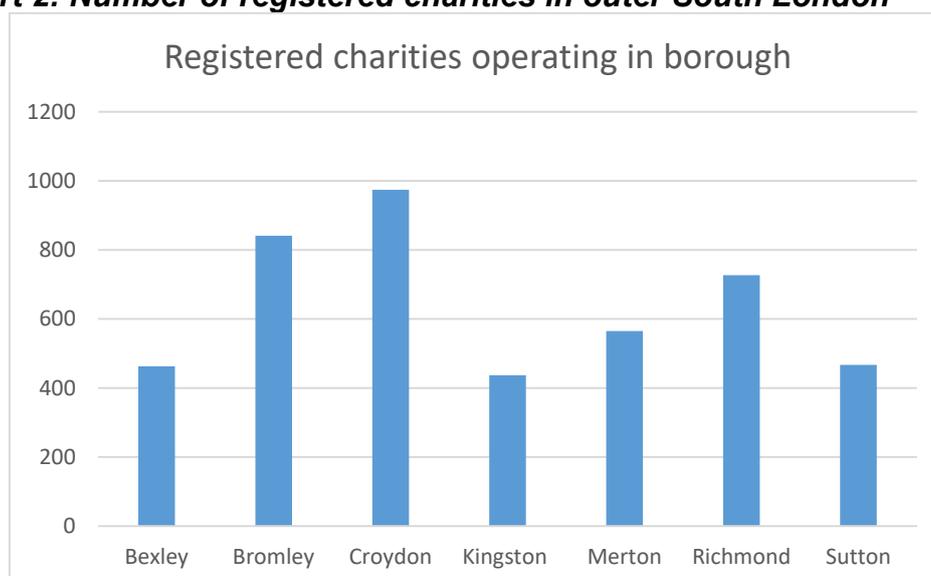
only two-thirds of the VCS in Croydon; 35% of VCS organisations responding to the Council’s survey stated that they were not are not registered charities.

Chart 1: Percentage of residents in Croydon, London and England who volunteer



Data from the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Taking Part survey showing levels of volunteering among the adult population (16+) by borough and region. It combines valid responses to the question 'During the last 12 months, have you done any voluntary work?' from three years of the survey, excluding 2009/10 when there was no volunteering question in the survey. It is a continuous face to face household survey.

Chart 2: Number of registered charities in outer South London



Data produced by National Council for Voluntary Organisations in conjunction with South London CVS Partnership and Croydon Voluntary Action based on Charity Commission data: Registered charities operating in borough (excludes national and regional charities based outside each borough but operating services within it): <https://data.ncvo.org.uk/areas/croydon/intro>

Chart 3: Income of active local registered charities in outer South London

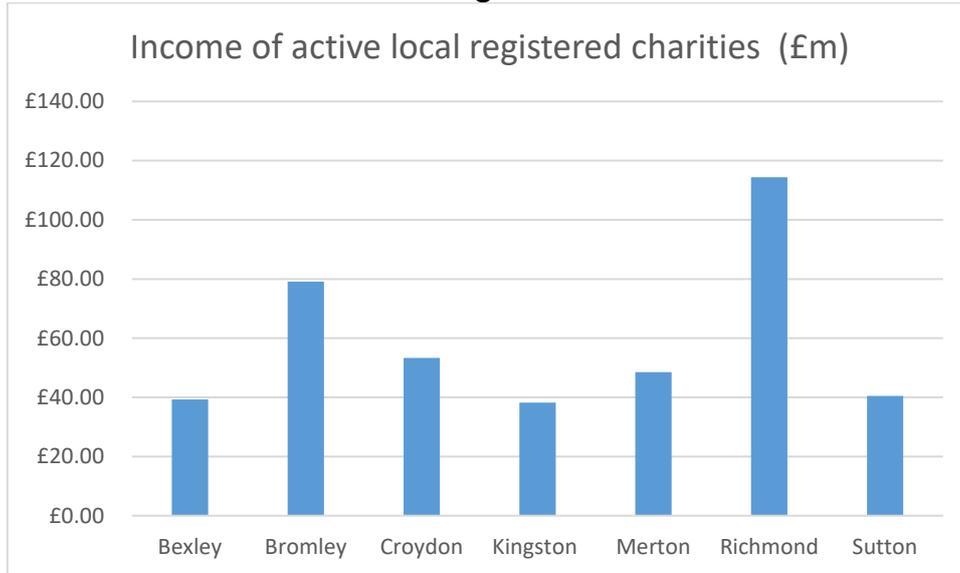
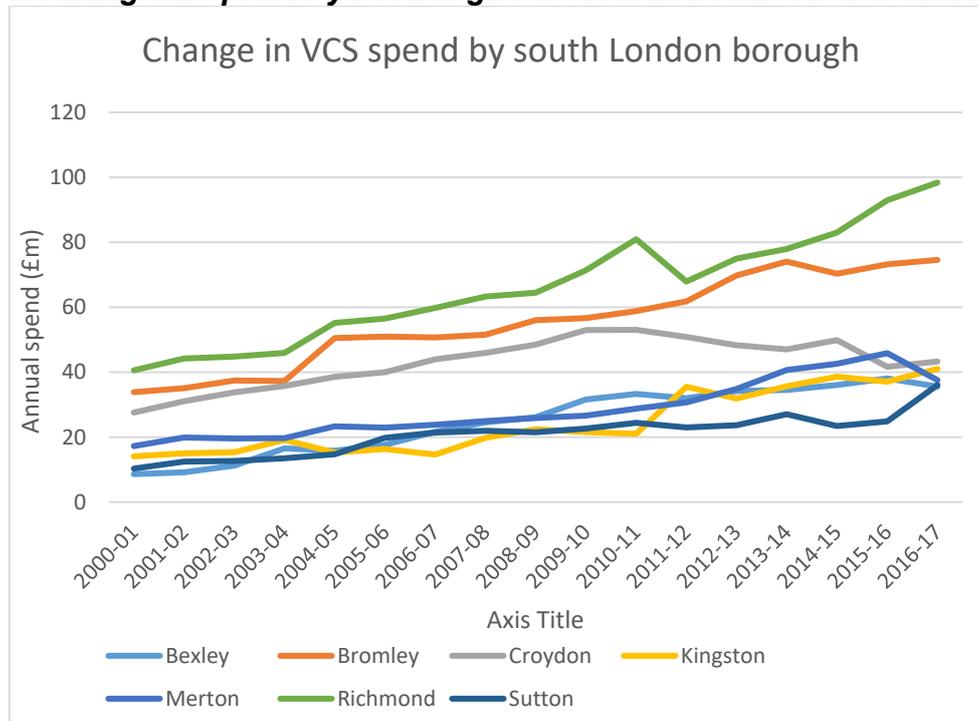


Chart 4: Change in spend by local registered charities in outer South London



3. CROYDON COUNCIL CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Council adopted a new Corporate Plan in October 2018. This plan sets out the Council’s promises to residents, business and partners across nine priority themes. These are set out in Appendix 1 for ease of reference.
- 3.2 It should, therefore, be no surprise that there are multiple references to the VCS across the Corporate Plan. The VCS delivers significant services, support and advice to residents across a wide range of council services. The sector also supports community cohesion, empowerment and resilience.
- 3.3 In order to deliver the Corporate Plan, the Council is seeking to radically change the way services are delivered, with a strong focus on prevention and locality

based working. This approach is evidence-led, recognising that services need to differentiate to respond to the differing needs across the borough. It also recognises the importance of collaboration and community-based networks in order to succeed. The VCS therefore has a significant role to play in this new approach.

3.4 The Council is a strong contributor to the VCS in Croydon, providing significant funding and staff support through council teams, its commissioning and procurement function and its One Croydon partnership. It also funds infrastructure organisations (CVA, Asian Resource Centre Croydon, Croydon BME Forum and Croydon Neighbourhood Care Association) to deliver specialist support to the VCS. The table below summarises of some of the support provided directly and indirectly.

Table 1: Support provided to the VCS in Croydon

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|--------------------------------------|--|
| Council teams | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building capacity within the sector • Identification of funding opportunities / bid-writing support • Administering ward budgets, discretionary business rate relief and rent subsidy programmes • Organising community events |
| Infrastructure bodies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity Building • Training • Identification of funding opportunities / bid-writing support • A specialist skills and employment service • Building local networks • Brokering support from other sectors • Co-ordinating engagement activities • Promoting equality and cohesion within communities |
| Commissioning and procurement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publishing the commissioning pipeline • Developing the commissioning policy, including commitments to social value including buy local • Engaging and supporting the VCS sector and local businesses to be part of the councils supply chain • Commissioning and contract management of Community Fund |
| One Croydon | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Local Voluntary Partnerships (LVPs) model supporting people with complex needs in a locality and the link to social prescribing • VCS input into development of the models of care and commercial arrangements |

3.5 However, there is no over-arching framework to inform the Council’s approach to working with and funding the VCS. Developing a VCS strategy provides an opportunity to provide a framework that informs funding priorities, our wider support for the sector and strengthens our relationship with voluntary and community sector organisations of all types and sizes.

4. COUNCIL FUNDING SUMMARY

4.1 The Council provides significant direct financial support to the VCS.

Community Fund

4.2 The Community Fund is a 3 year programme of grants that was originally awarded in September 2016. The Community Fund brought together a number of different grants programmes and VCS spend through a commissioning model. In December 2018 the Community Fund contracts were extended to 31 March 2020.

4.3 The Community Fund has a prevention focus and was commissioned against the Opportunity and Fairness Commission priorities:

- Vibrant, responsible and connected communities
- Connected borough where no one is isolated
- Supporting residents towards better times
- Leaving no child behind
- Finding homes for all

4.4 Funding was allocated for the three year period, with a declining amount each year, designed to encourage VCS organisations to seek alternative funding and improve sustainability. In 2017/18, total funding was £1.935m, which was granted to 31 VCS organisations. Grants range from £4,700 up to £270,000. 54% of funding was allocated to 5 organisations. Appendix 2 provides a visual of the funding allocation and a list of all organisations and allocations.

4.5 The procurement process involved a one stage, open tender process, which included a pre-qualification stage. Bids were managed through an electronic portal and were evaluated by two funding panels. Special dispensation is in place to pay VCS organisations (for the Community Fund only) quarterly in advance and to enable them to benefit from the premier supplier early payment programme at no cost to the organisations. Organisations were supported through the Council's P2P (Procure to Pay) processes to make payments, a time consuming exercise with organisations still needing significant support.

4.6 Performance monitoring uses KPIs that were included in the contracts. Formal monitoring is conducted on a quarterly basis. Contract management for the infrastructure organisations has been undertaken by Commissioning & Procurement Team, with the remainder being led by the respective service. Contract management has also been challenging and significant work has been required to shift a focus to outcomes rather than outputs. Monitoring is part of the Tier 1 reporting schedule, with an annual report to Cabinet.

Prevention Fund

4.7 The Prevention Fund focused on services aimed at the over-65s. Funded services include lunch clubs, befriending, outings, hospital transport and shopping services.

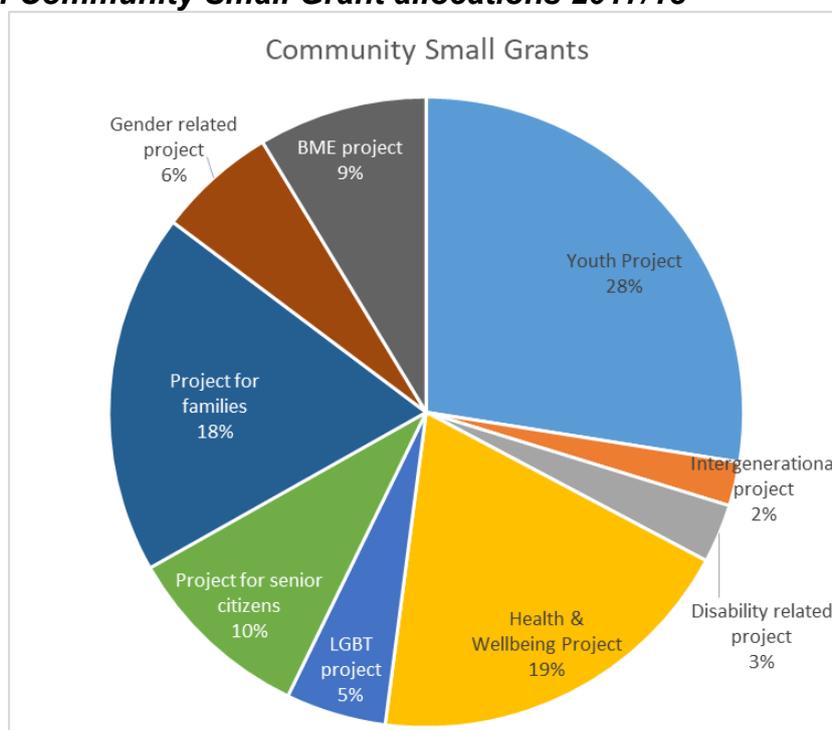
4.8 Under the Prevention Fund, £450k was allocated to 21 VCS organisations in 2017/18. Grants ranged from £1.4k up to £72k, with nearly 60% of funding allocated to 5 organisations. Appendix 3 provides a visual of the funding allocation and a list of all organisations and allocations.

- 4.9 The procurement process involved a one stage, open tender process, which included a pre-qualification stage. Bidding was managed through an electronic portal. A panel evaluated bids basing their evaluation on a 40/60 price/quality ratio. Contracts were awarded for three years and extended for a further two.
- 4.10 Performance monitoring was based on KPIs that were included in the contracts. Reporting is part of the Tier 1 reporting schedule. Croydon Neighbourhood Care Association monitors 17 contracts for the Council's Prevention Fund; small amounts are involved (c. £3,500).

Community Small Grants

- 4.11 Under the Community Fund, £100k per year is retained for small grants to VCS groups. Grants of up to £5k each are available through a simple application process. The grants are allocated up to 6 times per year to support community resilience, community development and sustainability. Chart 2 below shows how the small grants were allocated in 2017/18.

Chart 5: Community Small Grant allocations 2017/18



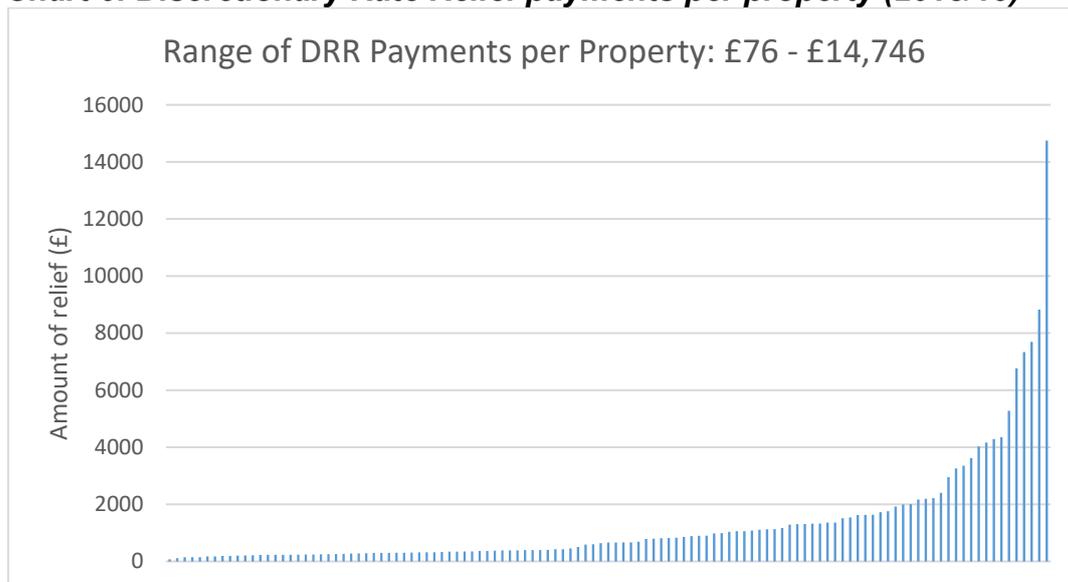
Premises and associated subsidies

- 4.12 Premises are a critical area of support for VCS organisations. They are also, however, an expensive resource that is often in short supply. The Council supports VCS organisations in a number of ways.
- 4.13 The Communities Team and Property Team work together to identify appropriate venues for VCS organisations. This includes seeking the right location and ensuring the building is fit for purpose. In order to improve the affordability for these premises, many are charged only a peppercorn rent (51 premises), or the Council provides Rental Grant Subsidy to support the premises costs.
- 4.14 The Council currently provides £247k in Rent Subsidy. This benefits a range of organisations including sports clubs, scouts associations, residents associations, youth and community centres as well as larger organisations such as the CAB,

Law Centre and CVA. Appendix 4 lists the organisations receiving Rent Subsidy and occupying properties at a peppercorn rent.

- 4.15 The Council also provides Discretionary Business Rate Relief (DRR) in addition to the 80% mandatory rate relief that may apply. In 2018/19 just under £156k was awarded. 112 organisations received the 20% top-up to their mandatory rate relief, whilst 5 payments covered 100% discretionary relief. Most of the payments were low value; however, nearly 50% of the total budget is paid to six organisations (see Chart 3). The budget is fully allocated against historic commitments, and the Council is therefore not able to consider any new applications for discretionary rate relief.
- 4.16 The Council's approach to premises related subsidy and support to the VCS has lacked an integrated approach, with no overarching quality monitoring system to ensure value for money for the Council's support. Currently there is no formal adopted policy or procedure for determining which organisations should benefit from rent subsidy and discretionary rate relief. Consequently there is no formal mechanism for ending current arrangements.
- 4.17 There are no criteria for assessing the community benefit of an organisation when deciding whether to award it DRR. Organisations that qualify for mandatory rate relief also qualify for top-up discretionary relief to provide 100% relief if they make a formal application, irrespective of whether they occupy a council owned property. The allocation is not time limited and there is no process for assessing performance. Four simple eligibility requirements are that the organisation is:
- Croydon based
 - set up as a not-for-profit organisation
 - meets basic requirements on governance, management, financial competence and equalities.
 - already funded by Croydon Council – we suggest this condition be revoked.
- 4.18 However, practice departs from these requirements in two respects:
- Despite the view that discretionary rate relief should be awarded to not-for-profit organisations only where it is part of a wider support package, currently 27 organisations receive DRR without any other form of funding.
 - Four organisations receiving DRR are not receiving 80% mandatory rate relief, suggesting that they do not meet the requirement of being set up as a not-for-profit organisation.
- 4.19 As with other financial support including from the Community Fund and rent subsidy, organisations applying for DRR must clearly show their commitment to Croydon's corporate priorities.

Chart 6: Discretionary Rate Relief payments per property (2018/19)



Community Ward Budgets

4.20 In addition to the above funding, each Councillor holds a Community Ward Budget of £8k per year. These budgets are a dedicated and flexible resource for supporting specific local issues within their Ward. The funding is intended to encourage activities that are independent and self-sustaining. The majority of these budgets is allocated to VCS organisations, including £67k to Residents' Associations, £39k to faith groups and £30k to 'friends of' groups in 2017/18.

Other sources of funding

4.21 There is also significant spend not covered by these grant schemes. The Council has a £400m annual commissioning budget and is working to increase opportunities for VCS organisations to bid to provide services in the same way as any other public or private sector organisation. In addition, since the Community Fund and Prevention Fund were allocated, additional funding has often been announced by Government (e.g. Best Start, Early Help Strategy initiatives). Delivery of many of these projects involve VCS groups.

4.22 The Council is not the only organisation that provides funding to the VCS in Croydon. The CCG has a significant VCS spend, with £4.7m in 2018/19. Through One Croydon Alliance, Local Voluntary Partnerships will be allocating £329k in small grants. The sector has also had success in bidding for funding from other organisations, such as Big Lottery, national grant schemes and the Mayor of London (e.g. MOPAC projects).

5. ENGAGEMENT

5.1 It is critical that a VCS strategy is informed by strong evidence and engagement with a range of VCS organisations across Croydon.

VCS Survey

5.2 In order to use the latest evidence and feedback, the Council has embarked on an engagement programme. In December 2018 the Council launched a survey to seek feedback from voluntary & community sector organisations. The survey was developed with input from across the Council, as well as through external

challenge from another council and meetings with the infrastructure organisations in Croydon.

- 5.3 The survey was hosted online through the ‘Get Involved’ section of the Council’s website. It was circulated through the Council’s existing VCS networks across all services. It was also shared via the VCS infrastructure organisations, which have regular newsletters, e-bulletins and network meetings.
- 5.4 The survey included questions across a range of issues:
- Challenges and opportunities
 - Support for the VCS
 - Service sector and beneficiaries
 - The size of VCS organisations
 - Financial matters
 - Geographical area of operation
- 5.5 Over 200 responses to the survey were received. It is difficult to confirm a response rate; as we encouraged organisations to forward the link to the survey, we do not know the total number of organisations it was sent to.
- 5.6 Appendix 5 provides a summary of some of the feedback received in the survey.

Engagement events

- 5.9 In addition, an engagement event was held on 22 January, attended by 89 representatives of VCS organisations and groups, both large and small. A wide range of needs groups and localities were represented. Another event is scheduled on 5 February.
- 5.10 The event included a number of questions that were considered in breakout group discussions. These questions are set out in Appendix 6. Comments from the Scrutiny & Overview Committee to these questions are sought to inform the development of the VCS Strategy.

6 FINDINGS FROM VCS ENGAGEMENT

- 6.1 A SWOT analysis has been produced based on VCS responses through the survey, engagement event and interviews (see Table 2).

Table 2: SWOT analysis of the VCS in Croydon

| STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passion and volunteers. • Resilient, given limited funding. • Able to access grants from other sources • People-oriented – listen to voice of user • Know their community and market: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ reach places and people that statutory agencies cannot ○ act as mediator/link with community ○ increase community self-reliance ○ offer opportunity to get involved • Support people who fall below statutory service threshold | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of VCS are unaware of funding available or lack bid writing and fundraising skills • Lack of skills to generate income • Staffing recruitment/retention due to low pay • Ability to expand services to meet demand • Governance: hard to attract skilled trustees • Many volunteers older/disabled; burn out. • Smaller organisations lack capacity to train volunteers • Unaware of other VCS services, limits partnership opportunities; risks duplication |

| | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible, personalised service: able to address complex needs • Focus on prevention and early intervention • Willing to collaborate, especially in a crisis, to counter hate crime • Faster: less red tape/governance rules • Lower costs (use of volunteers helps) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership development (for some organisations) |
| <p style="text-align: center;">OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration within the VCS • Involving the community/service users • Delivery of statutory services through VCS (some resent this) • Work on employment and skills • Council/CCG commissioning • Social prescribing, Local Voluntary Partnerships • High volunteering rate in Croydon: tap potential of young people • Locality meetings – to gain knowledge of local provision and good practice. • Share back office functions and premises to cut costs • Sell services, let premises, crowd funding. • Cross-borough delivery. • Corporate Social Responsibility. • Regeneration of Central Croydon | <p style="text-align: center;">THREATS (CHALLENGES)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding: trust funds tend to support new projects; core funding is a challenge. Turns collaborators into competitors • Premises – unavailable or costly • Increasing demand • Sustainability of volunteering: more people work or are carers; young people needed • Not enough support to recruit/train volunteers • Increased training requirements: GDPR, safeguarding, social media. • Disproportionate monitoring • Council staff turnover: loss of knowledge and silo working –don't think of overall impact of decisions. |

6.2 The main observations and recommendations made by VCS respondents are set out below:

Funding

6.3 Some representatives were surprised at the range of VCS funding available and felt that the Council supported the usual recipients. A lack of funding turned potential collaborators into competitors: organisations might come together in partnership bids, but this might not continue into delivery. Lead bidders might not pass funding on.

6.4 Suggestions concerning funding included:

- Updating the Council website with funding streams, amounts, guidance, deadlines, support provided, contacts and Croydon Observatory data.
- The Council should provide core funding especially for VCS organisations delivering statutory services.
- Split infrastructure funding from the Community Fund to avoid a conflict of interest between bidding for funding and supporting smaller organisations to bid.
- List not just funding priorities, but localities where services are needed.
- Provide a list of organisations already funded and services provided to avoid duplication.
- Have a process proportionate to the funding involved, offer pre-application chats, bid-writing support and publicise the work of the Invest to Save Officer

- To support collaborative bids:
 - Provide pre-application networking events focussed on each Corporate Plan outcome and invite VCS organisations thinking of bidding for contracts that support that outcome
 - Allow time for partnerships and consortium bids to form
 - Provide access to community hubs
 - Arrange training, a toolkit and mentoring on developing and maintaining partnerships.

Premises

6.5 Affordable premises and free event space are major challenges for the VCS and the disappearance of the Community Space was a huge loss. The Council is not considered to be transparent about how and why organisations are allocated premises or receive rent subsidy or rate relief (DRR), when so many others do not receive support. Too much support was allocated on a historical basis. There was a strong call for clear guidelines that are communicated via the web page, so that all organisations have an equal opportunity to apply and understand how decisions are made.

6.6 The main suggestions were:

- Develop clear criteria, provide an opportunity to apply, and make time-limited (5 year?) allocations.
- Monitor performance/intensity of use of premises and have mechanism for ending leases in cases of unsatisfactory performance or usage.
- Provide a directory of venues, allowing VCS groups to offer/seek premises.
- Review council leases to allow sharing/subletting and offer some properties as hubs
- Encourage owners of long-term empty properties to offer them to the VCS free

Infrastructure support

6.7 Information on funding/commissioning opportunities was identified by survey respondents as the most common type of support being received. Support was also widely received for training, developing consortiums and developing funding bids. Generally, a high proportion of the support received was from Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA) or Croydon Council, particularly for information on funding/commissioning opportunities and for premises (over half said support was received from Council or CVA) and training, developing consortiums and developing funding bids (just under half).

6.8 Overall only 51% of respondents stated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the support they receive from infrastructure groups and the council. However, almost three-quarters of organisations delivering services in New Addington/ Fieldway said they were satisfied or very satisfied. Those dissatisfied or very dissatisfied range between 8% and 15% across the borough, with the highest levels among organisations with Borough-wide, or North and Central coverage. Some respondents considered that infrastructure groups are not fulfilling their responsibilities. Respondents suggested that there is too little information about available funding; some specialist interest infrastructure organisations are not promoting the relevant groups; and the support provided does not warrant the membership fee, which was expensive for smaller groups.

6.9 Some VCS participants at the event said that insufficient support was available, while others said that there was not enough publicity, preventing them from taking up support that existed. Overall, 70% of VCS organisations responding to the survey stated that they had some support needs that were not currently met. However, in organisations delivering services in North Croydon and New Addington/Fieldway, the proportion of stating that they had unmet support needs was higher, at 88% and 92% respectively. Further support needs were identified as:

- Sustainable funding, paid promptly, with sufficient notice of decisions
- Affordable premises
- Capacity building / business planning
- Up to date support contacts
- Advice, information, training and help with bid writing, fundraising and income generation
- Marketing, IT, social media, finance
- Sharing best practice, skills and knowledge.
- Sponsorship – matching VCS organisations with businesses interested in supporting community projects
- Partnership development, facilitation of collaboration.
- Recruitment and training of volunteers
- A peer review process.

6.10 There was a lack of knowledge of which VCS organisations deliver what services, with a widespread call for a directory of services. This was seen as having a dual impact:

- increasing risk of duplication and lessening opportunities for partnership
- leaving the public unaware of what is available.

6.11 Recommendations concerning infrastructure support included:

- the VCS Strategy should list and set out roles for infrastructure organisations, what the offer is and how VCS organisations can access it
- the Council should ensure that support promised was actually delivered
- a directory of support/training available from the Council and other organisations, supplemented by an email newsletter
- One organisation should be responsible for asset mapping – current arrangements involved duplication and time-wasting.
- Increase the frequency and publicity of training, particularly on bid writing and ways to enable the VCS to become more sustainable
- Capacity building ensuring accessibility for groups that may have a language barrier.

The Role of the Council

6.12 The survey and feedback in engagement events suggested that the Council should play a wide role in supporting the VCS sector:

- Facilitating collaboration and partnership, identifying useful contacts / connections
- Promoting the work, services and achievements of the VCS
- Providing access to space and premises that are affordable
- Providing information and signposting
- Recognising the importance and value of the VCS

- Funding
- Capacity building, allowing VCS to draw on advice and expertise
- Proportionate monitoring – with constructive feedback
- Challenging VCS organisations where the governance or services are poorly delivered and managed, or possibly duplicated.

6.12 The Council should link Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to the VCS:

- Promote CSR to other organisations in the form of mentoring, sharing skills, access to low cost premises and reusable goods (like IT equipment and furniture) for local VCS organisations, and adopt it as Council practice. Have a webpage to advertise what is on offer.
- Make CSR support of VCS organisations a condition of funding agreements for larger organisations.

6.13 In addition to its current practice of enabling access to supply chain opportunities for local VCS organisations through its 'Value Croydon' approach, the Council should encourage local anchor organisations (such as the Police, hospitals and local colleges) to do the same.

Feedback from VCS infrastructure organisations

6.14 Interviews were conducted in November/December 2018 with the four infrastructure organisations in Croydon: Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA), Croydon BME Forum, Croydon Neighbourhood Care Association (CNCA) and the Asian Resource Centre (ARC).

Partnership

6.15 There was a strong basis for partnership, but no setting for regular coherent VCS-Council dialogue. Council staff turnover was high, so there was limited continuity of knowledge of services or organisations and it was hard for VCS organisations to keep track. A wish was expressed for an equal level of partnership to be offered to infrastructure organisations by the Council.

6.16 Recommendations included

- Establish a regular corporate Council-VCS dialogue avoiding multiple separate dialogues, possibly involving Croydon Clinical Commissioning Group and Croydon University Hospital.
- Have a council 'Who's Who Directory' for the VCS
- Provide handovers for new staff about contracts & groups
- Continued partnership work with Council
- Council officers to continue sharing their skills with VCS: media team training on social media, marketing and communication; Communities team training on fundraising.

Funding

6.17 The question was how to resource the VCS strategically to ensure maximum impact. If funding priorities were changed after three years, it would be difficult to demonstrate the impact of funding decisions as outcomes were likely to become evident over a longer term (say seven years). It was thought that some funders believe the VCS can deliver services for little funding, ignoring the cost of venue, staff and volunteers. Paying staff low salaries (due to low funding) affects the calibre, skills and length of stay of staff. Organisations worry that social prescribing will overwhelm them with demand unless funding is increased. There was a concern also that One Croydon Alliance would focus exclusively on social

isolation and mental health, when older people still need to be taken to the GP and chemist.

6.18 The funding climate was seen as fostering competition between VCS organisations, when partnerships and consortiums are more effective. Some organisations were not skilled at winning funding bids, even though their work was good. They needed support. Other funding sources that can be tapped include Government programmes, the Lottery, the Bridge Trust, and the Council's Regeneration Team. However, trusts only fund new projects, not existing work and core costs. They rely on councils to fund salaries. Big trusts and the Lottery are very prescriptive in their criteria: one organisation said 75% of grant applications fail, so they avoided this source of funding.

6.19 Recommendations concerning funding included:

- Continue infrastructure organisation's leadership and brokerage between Council and small organisations to give groups confidence and enable them to engage with commissioning and monitoring
- Devolve grants budgets to VCS infrastructure organisations that know bona fide VCS organisations
- Provide a realistic level of funding for the outcomes sought.
- Train up community builders in each funded project, so Asset Based Community Development can continue sustainably
- In recommissioning the Community Fund consider how to maximise investment in Croydon
- Provide time in the commissioning process to set up workshops to develop partnerships and consortiums
- Tap into other funding: government programmes, Big Lottery, Trusts, work with the Council's Regeneration Team
- The Council should consider funding salaries; anonymous funders and non-trust money with no conditions can also help to support ongoing work
- Fund a tiered service to achieve better outcomes for older people in tiers 2 and 3
- The Council should involve infrastructure organisations when planning bids for the community
- Infrastructure organisations would continue to help organisations with funding bids, bid for external funding and earn fees from conducting training.

Monitoring.

6.20 Monitoring was regarded as disproportionate to the sums involved and sometimes the new data requests were made after the work had been done, overwhelming smaller groups. Council staff turnover meant that some officers did not know about the schemes concerned and were less effective at challenging performance. The Community Fund did not build in the capacity for infrastructure organisations to evaluate and learn from the schemes.

6.21 Recommendations concerning monitoring included

- Designing proportionate monitoring with a VCS organisation after funding has been allocated and before the service starts.
- If monitoring changes during a project, this should be acknowledged and agreed with the group before the relevant period has started.

- Centralise analysts so that an overall picture is achieved, not one by funding programme
- Celebrating the outcomes achieved by Community Fund projects.

Gaps in services

6.22 Social care: Croydon has a lot of Tier 1 services but very few Tier 2 and even fewer Tier 3, so there is no scope for transition as a person's condition changes (Tier 1 is for people who are walking, talking and able, with no cognitive impairment; Tier 2 is for those needing some support, walking aid, have had a fall, with early stage dementia or a long term condition such as COPD; Tier 3 is for the frail elderly, at a high risk of falls, housebound, with advanced dementia or incontinence. Possibly there is only 1 FTE service in Croydon: CNCA's complex befriending service)

6.23 Mental health: there was not enough early intervention and a suggestion that hospital stays were longer and medication administered stronger for people with BME backgrounds. Croydon BME Forum is working with South London and Maudsley NHS Trust. Mental health and dementia are taboo in Asian society. The ARC is aiming at coproducing services with agencies.

6.24 Young people: services should think of all young people, not just those in gangs, and work with them holistically as part of families, friendship networks and school. There was a lack of activities in Purley and Coulsdon.

6.25 Domestic abuse and sexual violence, honour killings and forced marriage. The ARC said that women were frightened of being recognised if they used the Family Justice Centre and so they used a discrete drop-in run by ARC.

6.26 Locality differences: Partnership work can be seamless in New Addington and North Croydon, but not as strong in other areas, so various approaches are needed. North Croydon has younger, working, less settled population with fewer volunteers, so more paid staff are needed. The South has a more settled population with more retired people and volunteers. They can afford smaller funded groups. They are affiliated with churches that offer premises at a low cost.

Content of the Strategy

6.27 The VCS Strategy should be a long term plan with consistent aims, sticking to the Opportunity and Fairness Commission's recommendations. The most important work for strategy is Partnership and Communications. It should recognise the massive VCS contribution to prevention in Community safety; health and wellbeing, social regeneration and localities. The needs of older people should be differentiated. The VCS would like to feel trusted by the Council, with the strategy celebrating the good news of level of volunteering in Croydon.

7. GOOD PRACTICE

7.1 A key part of the research phase has involved considering different Council's approaches to VCS Strategy, speaking with peers and reading national materials. This research provided practical insights around some familiar challenges, as well as serving to highlight areas of good practice. A summary is set out at Appendix 6.

7.2 It was notable that the majority of councils did not have a VCS strategy. Greenwich took a similar approach to engagement, with a survey and events. Their strategy included an analysis of key issues, many of which have also been identified in Croydon, priorities, outcomes and objectives. In particular, Islington Council's VCS strategy stood out from the others due to its clarity and simplicity. They segment their VCS sector by income, structure, by activity, premises and location. This key information is used to inform how the Council can best interact with each organisation in order to best serve local needs and to further collaborative working. Both Islington and Greenwich recognise the need for wider support beyond funding, and the critical role of the VCS in working with local government.

8. NEXT STEPS

- 8.1 Feedback from stakeholders, the Scrutiny & Overview Committee and staff.
- 8.2 The timetable has been developed to provide as much time as possible for organisations and groups from across the Voluntary & Community Sector to develop proposals and prepare submissions. This is in response to feedback received through the engagement process and previous tender processes.
- 8.3 The Council will engage with the Voluntary & Community Sector in April and May to develop the framework for commissioning. It is anticipated that the tender process for the Prevention and Community Funds will open in June.
- 8.4 Throughout the tender process the Council will offer support sessions and advice for any organisation that is considering a submission, or developing a submission.
- 8.5 The tender process is expected to close in November, with proposals evaluated and reported to Cabinet in December for decision. Decommissioning support will be provided between January and March 2020, with new contracts commencing from 1 April 2020.

9. CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 This report provides an outline of the VCS context in Croydon and the issues to consider in developing a VCS Strategy for Croydon Council. Significant engagement with the sector has taken place to inform this work.
- 9.2 Comments from the Scrutiny & Overview Committee are sought to inform the strategy. This includes the approach to VCS funding, the wider support for the sector and the content / priorities to include within the Strategy.

Appendices

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| <i>Appendix 1:</i> | <i>Corporate Plan Priorities</i> |
| <i>Appendix 2:</i> | <i>Community Fund 2017/18</i> |
| <i>Appendix 3:</i> | <i>Prevention Fund 2017/18</i> |
| <i>Appendix 4:</i> | <i>Rent subsidy and properties occupied at a peppercorn rent.</i> |
| <i>Appendix 5:</i> | <i>Summary of VCS Survey Results</i> |
| <i>Appendix 6:</i> | <i>VCS Engagement Questions</i> |
| <i>Appendix 7:</i> | <i>Other boroughs' VCS strategies</i> |

CONTACT OFFICER: *Gavin Handford, Head of Policy & Partnership*
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Appendix 1: Corporate Plan Priorities

People live long, healthy, happy and independent lives

- More equal place
- Happy, healthy and independent lives
- Access to effective health services and care services

Our children and young people thrive and reach their full potential

- Safe, healthy and happy
- Aspire to be the best they can be
- High quality education and youth facilities
- More young people involved

Good, decent homes, affordable to all

- New homes, including genuinely affordable
- Decent homes, including private rented
- Avoiding homelessness

Everyone feels safer in their street, neighbourhood and home

- Reducing crime in partnership
- Tackling ASB
- Public protection

A cleaner and more sustainable environment

- Improve education and information
- Better air quality and recycling rates

Everybody has the opportunity to work and build their career

- London living wage, employ local, buy local
- Residents benefit from investment in Croydon
- Skills and training

Business moves here and invests, our existing businesses grow

- Transport, digital and social infrastructure
- SMEs thrive
- Thriving communities and high streets

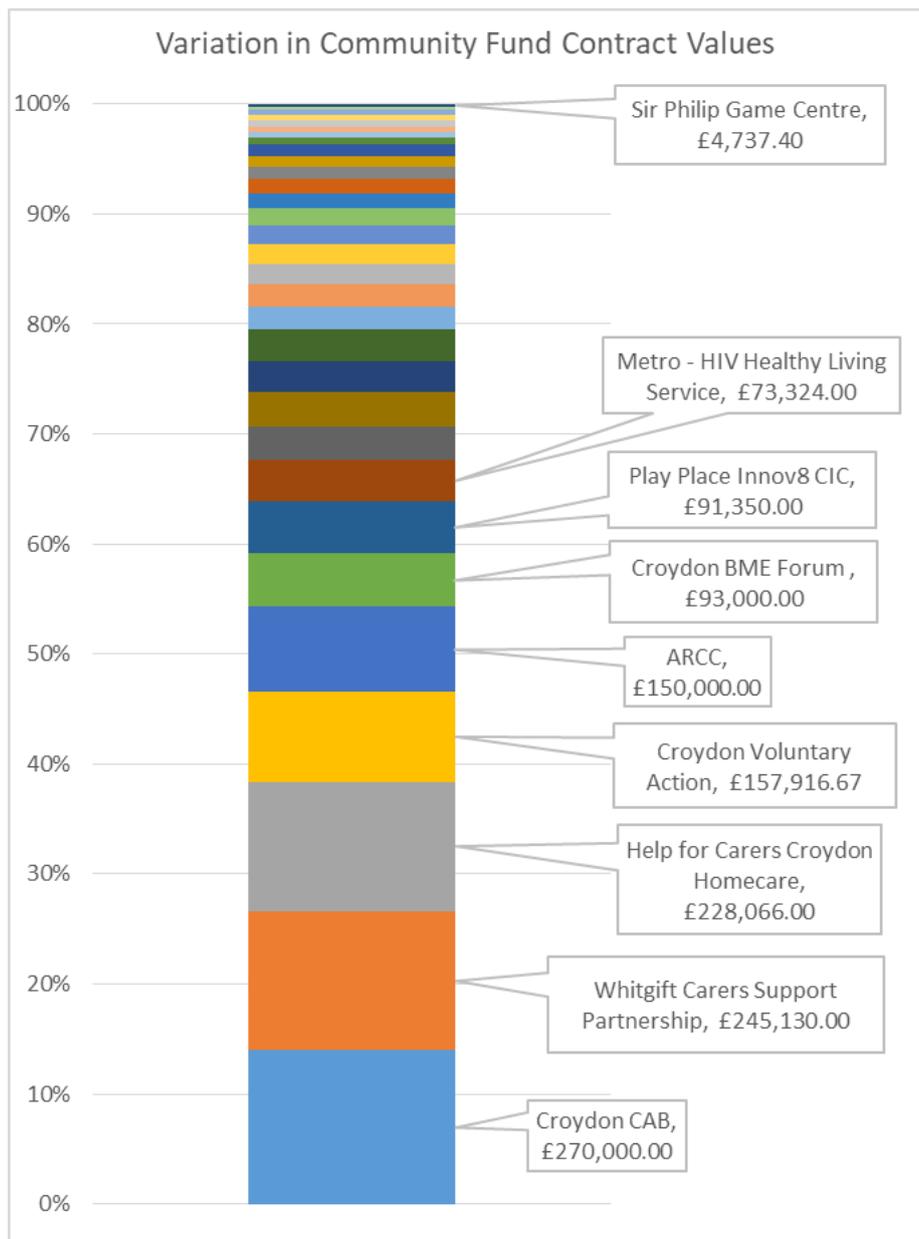
An excellent transport network that is safe, reliable and accessible to all

- Safe, reliable, accessible public transport
- Less reliance on cars

We value the arts, culture, sports and activities

- Places enhanced by cultural offer
- Good, affordable, accessible health and sports facilities
- Pleasant, thriving parks and open spaces

Appendix 2: Community Fund 2017/18



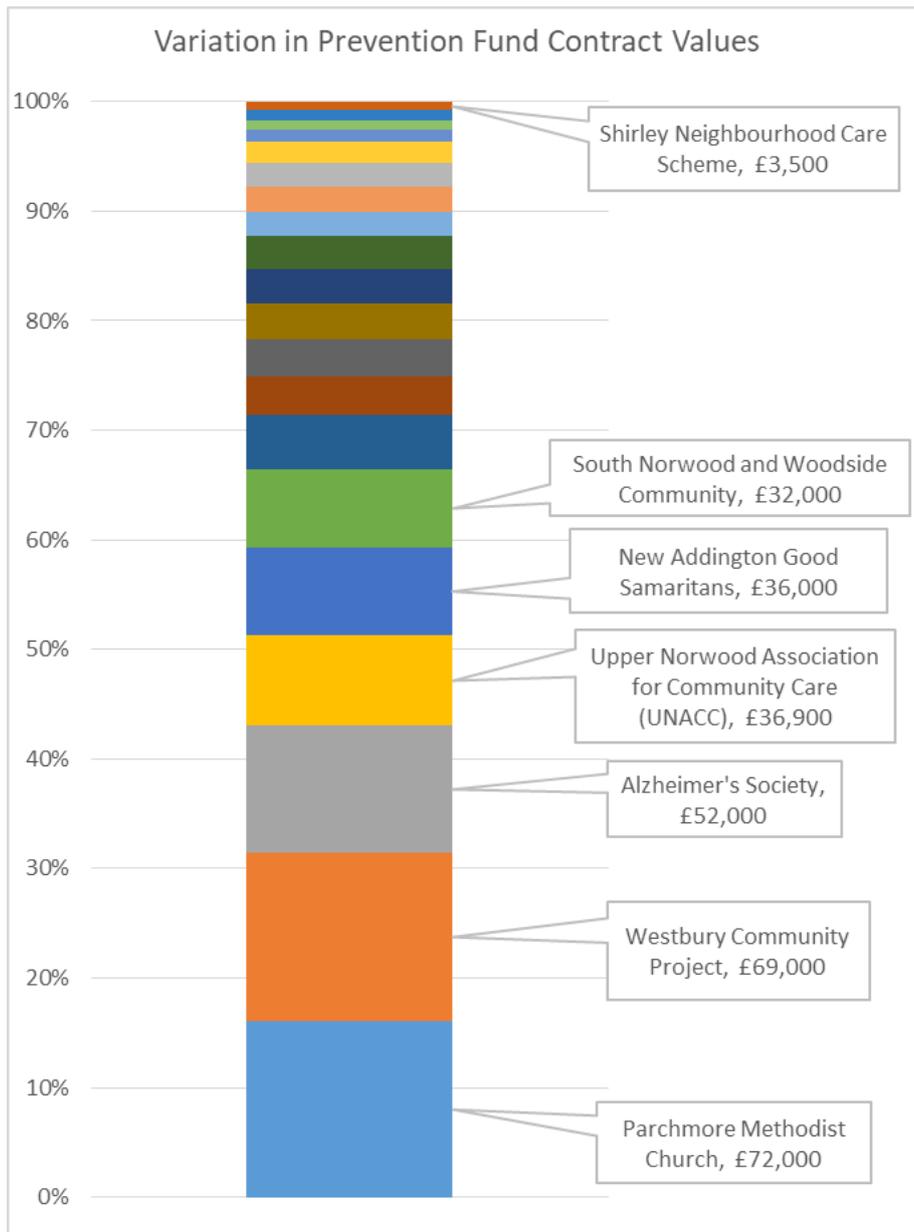
Community Fund Allocations 2016-19

| Theme 1 - Vibrant Responsible and Connected Communities | | |
|--|---|--------------------|
| Organisation / Provision | Description | Total award |
| Croydon Citizens Advice | Housing, Welfare benefits and generalist advice service | £780,000 |
| Croydon Voluntary Action | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteering & Brokerage Support service • Capacity Building & Enterprise • Partnerships with Civil Engagement services | £473,750 |
| Asian Resource Centre of Croydon - | ABCD approach to delivering services to Asian groups in partnerships with grass roots | £470,000 |
| Croydon BME - | Voice and Specialist Local Infrastructure Services | £169,500 |
| Croydon BME | Forum partnership work with Diabetes UK Croydon | £90,000 |
| Purley Cross Centre - | Community Gateway Information Service | £60,000 |
| Croydon Borough Neighbourhood Watch Association - | Caring Communities - crime prevention / safety information and training | £15,000 |
| Theme 2 – Connected Borough Where No One is Isolated | | |
| Whitgift Foundation | Carers Support Partnership | £735,390 |
| Whitgift Foundation | Carers Assessment Service | £390,000 |
| Whitgift Foundation | Croydon Homecare: free short breaks | £294,198 |
| Horizon Care and Welfare Association | Carer Support Service | £180,000 |
| Croydon Accessible Transport | Accessible community transport (CT), training and vehicle pooling services | £105,000 |
| Croydon Neighbourhood Care Association | Volunteer and Carers Community Outreach Service | £105,000 |

| Organisation / Provision | Description | Total award |
|--|--|--------------------|
| Royal Association for Deaf People | Deaf Choice in the Community - workshops, peer support and networking | £29,532 |
| Theme 3 – Supporting Residents Towards Better Times | | |
| Metro | HIV Healthy living service | £219,972 |
| Mind in Croydon | Active Minds | £165,000 |
| South West London Law Centres | specialist casework service on a broad range of social welfare | £99,000 |
| Phase 1 Enterprise Training | Empowering Mothers of Croydon | £93,000 |
| The Family Centre | inter-generational family and community hub supporting communities in Fieldway and New Addington | £75,000 |
| Good Food Matters & Revivify Community Initiative | Food Skills for Life | £60,000 |
| The Conservation Volunteers | The Croydon Natural Health Service (partnership) | £30,000 |
| Theme 4 – Leaving No Child Behind | | |
| Croydon Drop In (CDI) | - Talk bus Outreach health and information services | £180,000 |
| Palace for Life Foundation | Develop through Sport - Community Programme | £120,000 |
| Metro | Bridge: a holistic service for LGBTQ young people | £84,840 |
| The Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre | | £80,610 |
| Play Place Innov8 | The Family Community Fund Programme | £64,050 |
| Play Place Innov8 | Our Space - partnership approach to creating a strong community constructed youth offer | £210,000 |

| Organisation / Provision | Description | Total award |
|--|--|--------------------|
| St Francis Monks Hill | | £36,999 |
| Oasis Community Hub Ashburton Park | Developing Friends of Oasis Groups | £29,817 |
| Reaching Higher | Full Circle Life Skills Programme - supporting care leavers who are transitioning into independent living | £15,000 |
| Reaching Higher 2 | Summer Blitz - engaging young people aged 12-16 in free positive activities | £15,000 |
| Sir Philip Game Youth Centre | - fitness and health activities for young people | £14,212 |
| Theme 5 – Finding Homes For All | | |
| Croydon Community Mediation | Supporting Community Cohesion | £162,000 |
| Crisis UK | Croydon Skylight - First Steps Away from Homelessness | £120,000 |
| Total Allocations 2016-19 | | £5,861,870 |

Appendix 3: Prevention Fund 2017/18



Prevention Fund allocations per annum

| Project name | Description | Funding per annum |
|---|---|-------------------|
| Addiscombe Neighbourhood Care Association (ANCA) | Lunch club, activity classes, transport | £16,000 |
| Alzheimer's Society | Support & Dementia Cafés | £52,000 |
| Croham Hurst Good Neighbours | Lunch club, social outings, befriending | £4,000 |
| Croydon African Caribbean Family Organisation (CACFO) | Lunch club, activity groups, day trips | £15,150 |
| Croydon Neighbourhood Care Association | Business Support & Community Link | £80,000 |
| Croydon Vision | Lunch club, counselling, IT classes | £25,000 |
| Eastern Oasis Luncheon Club | Lunch club, befriending, exercise classes, transport | £11,600 |
| New Addington Good Samaritans | Lunch & coffee Club, activities | £36,000 |
| Old Coulsdon Centre for the Retired | Lunch club, activities and escorted transport for those with limited mobility. | £10,000 |
| Purley & Coulsdon Clubs for the Elderly (PACE) | Lunch club, transport | £22,000 |
| Sanderstead Neighbourhood Care | Lunch club, befriending, home visits, hospital transport | £4,000 |
| Selsdon Centre Trust | Lunch club, exercise classes, transport, entertainment/outings | £13,500 |
| Selsdon Contact | Lunch club, visiting/befriending, library trips, carer support, transport | £14,000 |
| Shirley Neighbourhood Care Scheme | Lunch club, hospital transport, befriending | £7,000 |
| South Croydon Centre for the Elderly | Lunch club, befriending, carers respite, exercise/outings, activity classes, home visits, transport | £5,000 |
| South Norwood and Woodside Community Association | Lunch club, entertainment/outings, activity classes, library | £32,000 |

| Project name | Description | Funding per annum |
|--|--|--------------------------|
| | service, transport | |
| St Edmunds Caring Group | Lunch club, befriending, entertainment/outings, hospital transport, shopping | £1,350 |
| The Parchmore Centre | Lunch club, activity classes, computer classes | £72,000 |
| Topcare Network | Lunch & activities club, mental health support, carers support, volunteering opportunity | £8,500 |
| Upper Norwood Association for Community Care | Lunch club, exercise classes, letter writing, carer support, shopping service, befriending | £36,900 |
| Westbury Community Project | Lunch club, befriending, home visits, entertainment/outings, meals on legs | £62,100 |
| Croydon 60 Plus | Lunch club, activity groups, exercise, art classes, IT classes | £1,600 |
| CVA | Asset based community development in Thornton Heath. | £15,000 |
| Shirley | | £3,500 |
| Croydon Vision | | £10,000 |
| Croydon 60 Plus | | £1,600 |
| Eastern Oasis | | £1,600 |

Total: £561,400

Appendix 4: Rent subsidy and properties occupied at a peppercorn rent.

18 VCS organisations receiving rent subsidy (One organisation – Croydon CAB - is occupying a non-council property)

| <i>Property Name</i> | <i>Property Address</i> | <i>Owners</i> | <i>Occupier</i> | <i>Rent subsidy Annual amount</i> |
|---|--|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Coulsdon Community Centre (aka Coulsdon Youth & Social Centre) | Chipstead Valley Rd, Coulsdon CR5 3BE | Council Building | Coulsdon Community Centre Association | £10,000 |
| Croydon African Caribbean Family Organisation | 40 Northwood Rd, Thornton Heath CR7 8HQ | Council Building | Croydon African Caribbean Family Organisation (CAFCO) | £10,000 |
| 22 & 24 Ramsey Court | 122 Church Street, Croydon CR0 1RF | Council Building | Croydon Caribbean Credit Union | £3,600 |
| Croydon Citizens Advice Bureaux Ltd | 48 - 50 Portland Road, South Norwood | Non-Council Building | Croydon Citizens Advice Bureaux Ltd | £25,000 |
| 17-20 Ramsey Court | 122 Church Street, Croydon CR0 1RF | Council Building | Croydon Community Mediation | £8,000 |
| Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society | Chipstead Valley Road, Coulsdon | Council Building | Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society | £199 |
| 2a Garnet Road | Garnet Road, Thornton Heath, CR7 8RD | Council Building | Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA) | £2,500 |
| Cornerstone House Community Centre | 14 Willis Road, Croydon CR0 2XX | Council Building | Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA) | £32,500 |
| Waterside Centre | 26 Avenue Rd, South Norwood SE25 4DX | Council Building | Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA) | £35,000 |

| <i>Property Name</i> | <i>Property Address</i> | <i>Owners</i> | <i>Occupier</i> | <i>Rent subsidy Annual amount</i> |
|---|--|-------------------------|--|--|
| Croydon Youth Theatre Organisation, Shoestring Theatre | 32 Cypress Road, London SE25 4AU | Council Building | Croydon Youth Theatre Organisation (CYTO) | £18,000 |
| Darby & Joan Club | Harlow Hall, 14-16 Standford Road, Norbury SW16 4PR | Council Building | Darby and Joan Club | £5,850 |
| Humdard Welfare Association Centre | Mayfield Road Scout Hut, Thornton Heath | Council Building | Humdard Welfare Association | £6,500 |
| Longheath Community Care and Church Centre | 49 Longheath Gardens, Croydon CR0 7TD | Council Building | Longheath Community Care and Church | £2,400 |
| 9-16 Ramsey Court | 122 Church Street, Croydon CR0 1RF | Council Building | Relate | £13,000 |
| Samadoon Somali Development Organisation | 47a Cromwell Road, Croydon | Council Building | Samadoon Somalis Development Organisation | £2,500 |
| Farmfields Scout Hall | Farmfields Scout Hall | Council Building | Scouts 18th Purley | £255 |
| Shirley Youth & Community Centre | Shrublands Avenue, Shirley CR0 8JA | Council Building | Shirley Community Centre Association | £14,250 |
| Davis House | 5th Floor Davis House, Robert St, CR0 1QQ | Council Building | South West London Law Centre | £40,000 |
| West Thornton Community Centre | 731-735 London Road, Thornton Heath, CR7 6AJ | Council Building | West Thornton Community Association | £15,000 |

6 properties directly managed, no rent charged to occupier.

| Property Name | Property Address | Owners | Occupier | Rent subsidy Annual amount |
|--|---------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Canterbury Road Astro turf | Canterbury Road, Croydon | Council Building | Directly managed | |
| Goldcrest Way Youth & Community Centre | Goldcrest Way, New Addington CR0 OPL | Directly managed | Directly managed | |
| New Addington Community Centre | Central Parade, New Addington CR0 OJB | Directly managed | Directly managed | |
| Waddon Way Youth Centre | Waddon Way, Croydon | Directly managed | Directly Managed | |
| Samuel Coleridge Taylor Youth Centre (SCTYC) | 194 Selhurst Road, South Norwood | Directly managed | Directly managed. | |
| Winterbourne Youth Centre | 28 Winterbourne Road, Thornton Heath | Directly managed | Directly managed. | 0 |

5 Community Asset Transfers

| <i>Property Name</i> | <i>Property Address</i> | <i>Owners</i> | <i>Occupier</i> | <i>Rent subsidy Annual amount</i> |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Selhurst Astro turf | Dagnall Park | Council Building | Communities First Foundation | |
| Croydon Boxing Club | Norbury Park, Norbury | Council Building | Croydon Boxing Club | |
| Selsdon Community Hall | 132 Addington Rd, South Croydon CR2 8LA | Council Building | Croydon Jubilee Church | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------|--|--|
| Stanley Halls | 12 South Norwood Hill, SE25 6AB | Council Building | Stanley People's Initiative (SPI) | |
| Canterbury Road Community Centre | Canterbury Road, Croydon CR0 3HH | Council Building | Managed by Acorns 2 Oaks | |

40 properties occupied rent free by VCS

| <i>Property Name</i> | <i>Property Address</i> | <i>Owners</i> | <i>Occupier</i> | <i>Rent subsidy Annual amount</i> |
|--|--|-------------------------|--|--|
| Community Suite, Thornton Heath Leisure Centre | High Street, Thornton Heath | Council Building | APASENTH (under hire agreement from CVA) | £0 |
| Selsdon Contact | 132 Addington Road, South Croydon CR2 8LA | Council Building | Contact | |
| Pond Cottage | Coombe Lane, Croydon | Council Building | Croydon Conservation Volunteers | |
| Heathfield Ecology Centre | Heathfield Estate, Coombe Lane, Croydon | Council Building | Croydon Ecology Centre | |
| Croydon School of Gymnastics, Strand House | Zion Road, Thornton Heath CR7 8RG | Council Building | Croydon School of Gymnastics (CroySog) | |
| Croydon Youth & Schools Sailing Association | Adj South Norwood Lake, Woodvale Avenue | Council Building | Croydon Youth & Schools Sailing Association | |
| Portland Road 44b | 44b Portland Road, South Norwood SE25 4PQ | Council Building | Domino Club | |
| Fieldway Community Centre | Fieldway New Addington | Council Building | Fieldway Residents Association | |

| <i>Property Name</i> | <i>Property Address</i> | <i>Owners</i> | <i>Occupier</i> | <i>Rent subsidy Annual amount</i> |
|--|---|-------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Shirley Windmill & Visitors Centre | Post Mill Close, Upper Shirley Road, Croydon CR9 5AS | Council Building | Friends of Shirley Windmill | |
| Croydon Playcare, Gingerbread Corner | Grenaby Avenue, Croydon CR0 2EG | Council Building | Gingerbread (Croydon Playcare) | |
| Monks Hill Community Space | Adjacent to Quest Academy Monks Hill, South Croydon, CR2 | Council Building | GLL | |
| Good Food Matters | Mickelham Way Allotments, New Addington | Council Building | Good Food Matters | |
| 1-8 Ramsey Court | 122 Church Street, Croydon CR0 1RF | Council Building | Homestart | |
| Kingfishers | Fishers Farm, North Downs Crescent | Council Building | Kingfishers Association (aka Imagine Independence) | |
| Valley Park Healthy Living Centre | Franklin Way, Croydon CR0 4YD | Council Building | NHS | |
| Old Coulsdon Centre for the Retired | Grange Park Pavilion, Coulsdon | Council Building | Old Coulsdon Centre | |
| Whitehorse Manor Youth and Community Centre | Whitehorse Road, off Boulogne Road Croydon CR0 2LG | Council Building | Onside Youth Centre | |
| Phoenix Community Centre | 66 Westow St, Upper Norwood SE19 3AF | Council Building | Phoenix Community Organisation | |

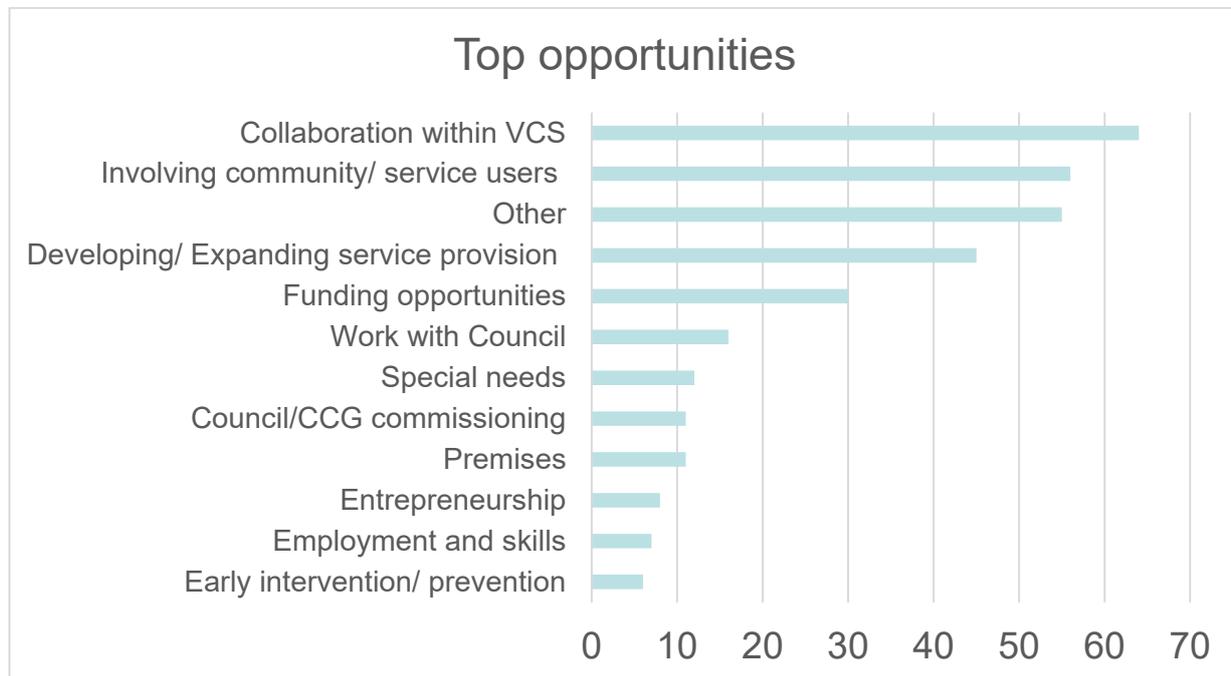
| <i>Property Name</i> | <i>Property Address</i> | <i>Owners</i> | <i>Occupier</i> | <i>Rent subsidy Annual amount</i> |
|--|--|------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Regina Road Childrens Centre | 110 Regina Road, SE25 4TW | Council Building | Portland Bill Pre School | |
| Salcot Crescent Scout Hut | Salcot Crescent, New Addington CR0 0JJ | Council Building | Salvation Army | |
| Land in Fourth Drive(Fourth Drive Scout Hall) | Land in Fourth Drive (Fourth Drive Scout Hall) | Council Building | Scout Association Trust Corporation - Baden Powell House | |
| Bears Wood Scout Camp | Bears Wood Scout Camp | Council Building | Scout Association Trust Corporation - | |
| Pinewoods Scout Camp | Pinewoods Scout Camp | Council Building | Scout Association Trust Corporation - | |
| Richmond Hall Fourth Drive Woodcote & Coulsdon (0.2 Acre) | Richmond Hall Fourth Drive Woodcote & Coulsdon (0.2 Acre) | Council Building | Scout Association Trust Corporation (1st Coulsdon Scout Group) | |
| Richmond Hall Fourth Drive Woodcote & Coulsdon (1.5 Acres) | Richmond Hall Fourth Drive Woodcote & Coulsdon (1.5 Acres) | Council Building | Scout Association Trust Corporation (1st Coulsdon Scout Group) | |
| 12th Caterham Scout Group Parsons Pightle Cou | 12th Caterham Scout Group Parsons Pightle Coulsdon | Council Building | Scouts 12th Caterham | |
| Dunley Drive Fieldway | Dunley Drive Fieldway | Council Building | Scouts 15th Selsdon & Addington Scout Group | |

| <i>Property Name</i> | <i>Property Address</i> | <i>Owners</i> | <i>Occupier</i> | <i>Rent subsidy Annual amount</i> |
|--|--|-------------------------|---|--|
| Farmfields West Side Sanderstead | Farmfields West Side Sanderstead | Council Building | Scouts 18th Purley | |
| Hillars Heath Road Scout Hut | Hillars Heath Road Scout Hut | Council Building | Scouts 24th Purley Scouts | |
| Kings Walk Scout Hall | Kings Walk Scout Hall | Council Building | Scouts 2nd Hamsey Green Scout Group | |
| Selsdon Primary & Secondary Schools Selsdon (land and right of way) | Selsdon Primary & Secondary Schools Selsdon (land and right of way) | Council Building | Scouts 2nd Selsdon Scout Group | |
| Endeavour Hall (Adjacent 271) Norbury Crescent | Endeavour Hall (Adjacent 271) Norbury Crescent | Council Building | Scouts 67th Croydon Scout Group | |
| Alverston Gardens Scout hut | Alverston Gardens Scout hut | Council Building | Scouts 9th Croydon | |
| Alverston Gardens Scout Hut-Air Raid Shelter | Alverston Gardens Scout Hut-Air Raid Shelter | Council Building | Scouts 9th Croydon | |
| Plough Lane, 1st North Wallington Scout Hall | Plough Lane, 1st North Wallington Scout Hall | Council Building | Scouts L B Sutton/1st N Wallington Group Boy Scouts | |
| Sir Philip Game Centre | 38 Morland Road, Croydon CR0 2BX | Council Building | Sir Philip Game Centre; part sublet to Croydon Judo Club | |
| Timebridge Centre | Fieldway, New Addington CR0 9AZ | Council Building | Timebridge Association | |

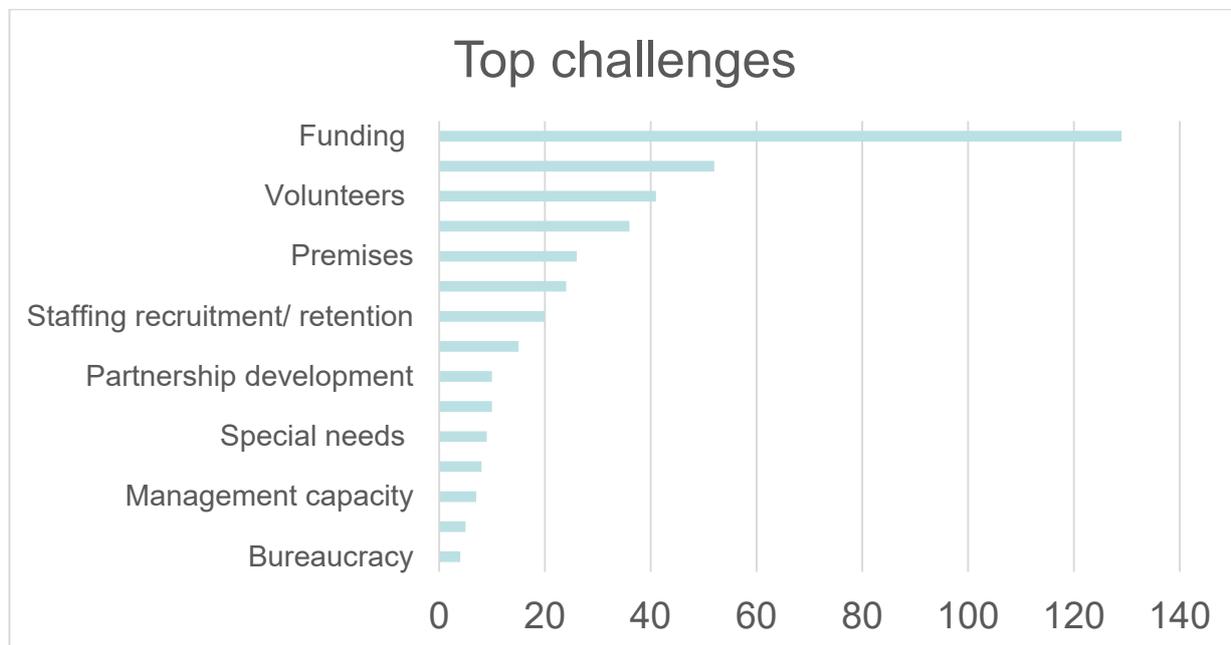
| <i>Property Name</i> | <i>Property Address</i> | <i>Owners</i> | <i>Occupier</i> | <i>Rent subsidy Annual amount</i> |
|--------------------------------------|--|------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Norwood Grove Mansion | Norwood Grove, Gibson's Hill, Upper Norwood SE19 | Council Building | Various | |
| 111 Chertsey Crescent, New Addington | 111 Chertsey Crescent | Council Building | Various including: Brenda Kirby Cancer Care, 7th Day Adventist Church, Centre of Change, New Addington Women's Centre | |
| Cherry Orchard Centre | Cherry Orchard Road, Addiscombe | Council Building | Whitehorse Manor Trust | |

Appendix 5: Summary of VCS Survey Results

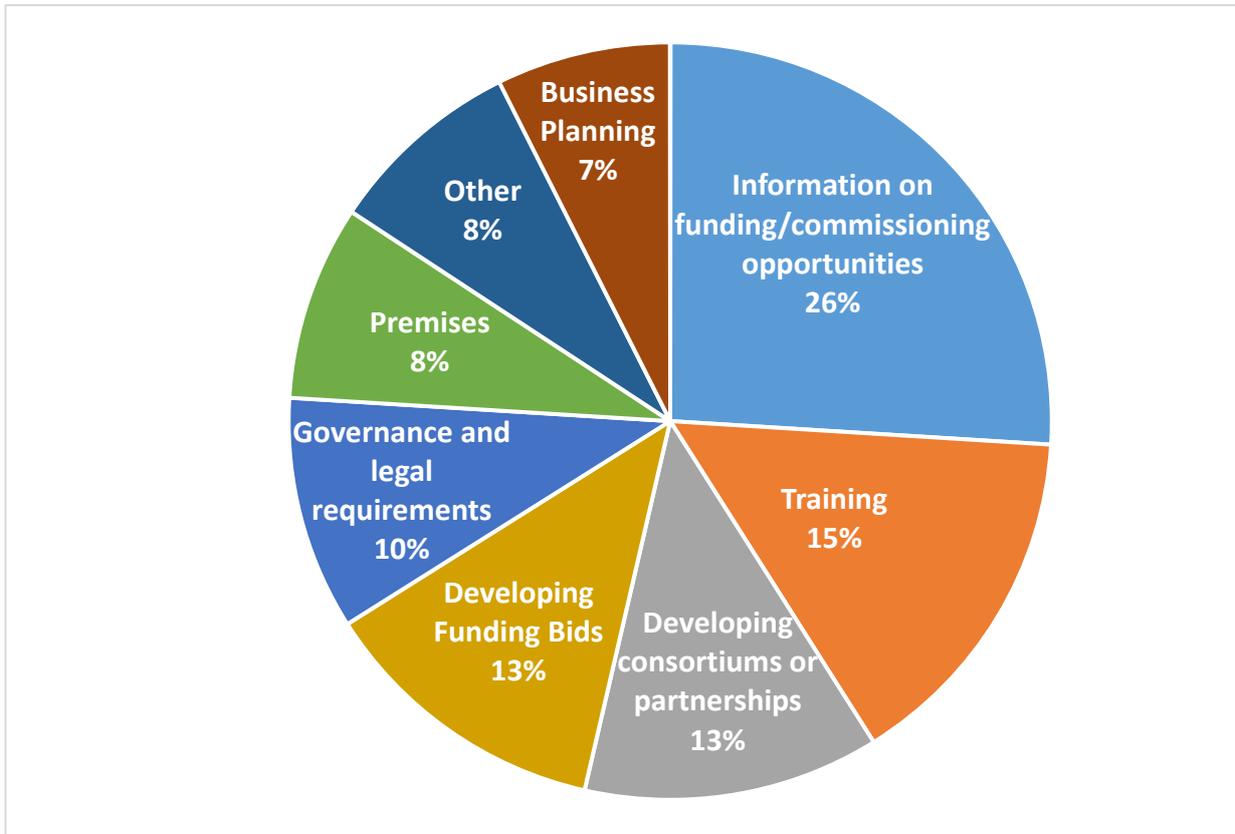
What are the top opportunities for the VCS in Croydon?



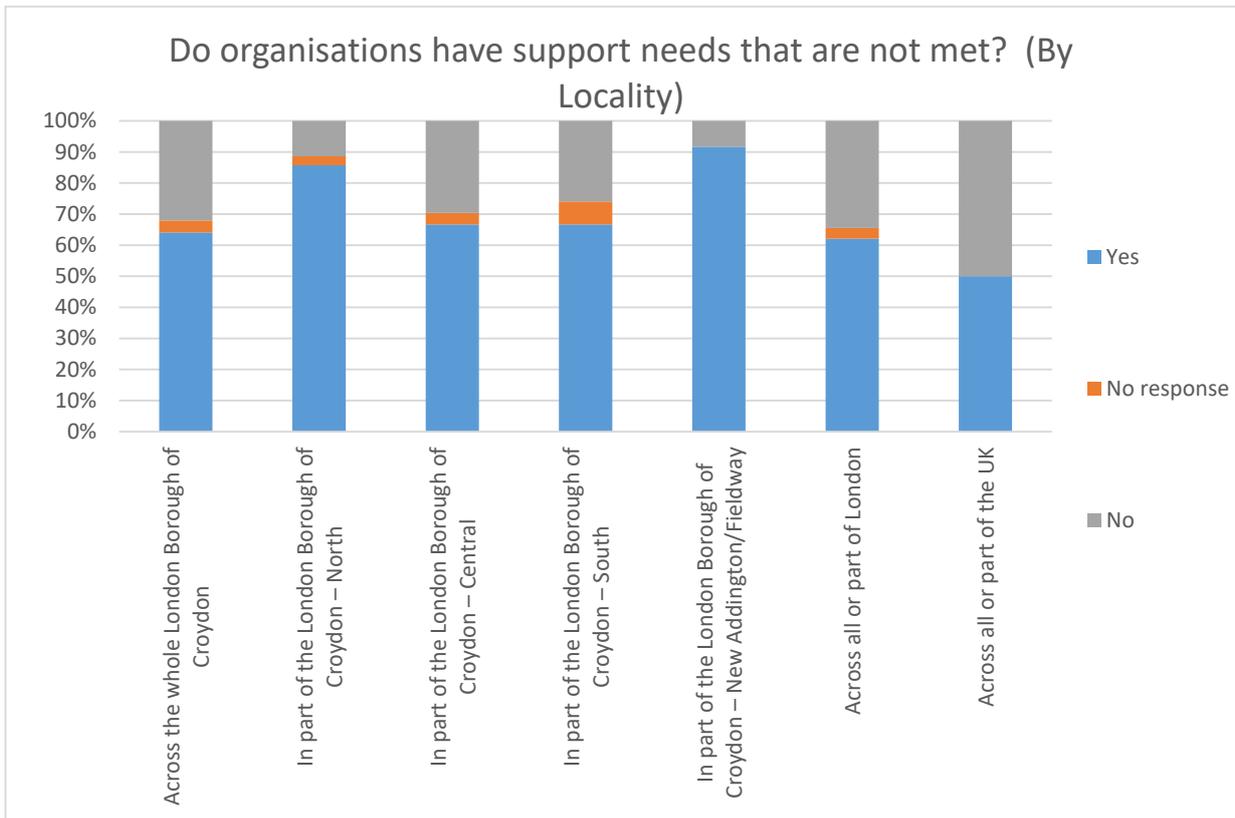
What are the main challenges for the VCS in Croydon?



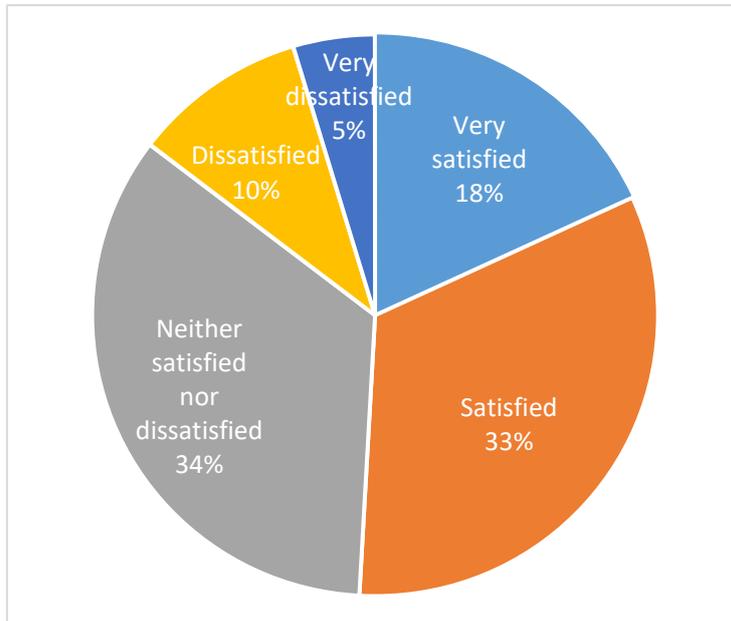
What infrastructure support have you accessed?



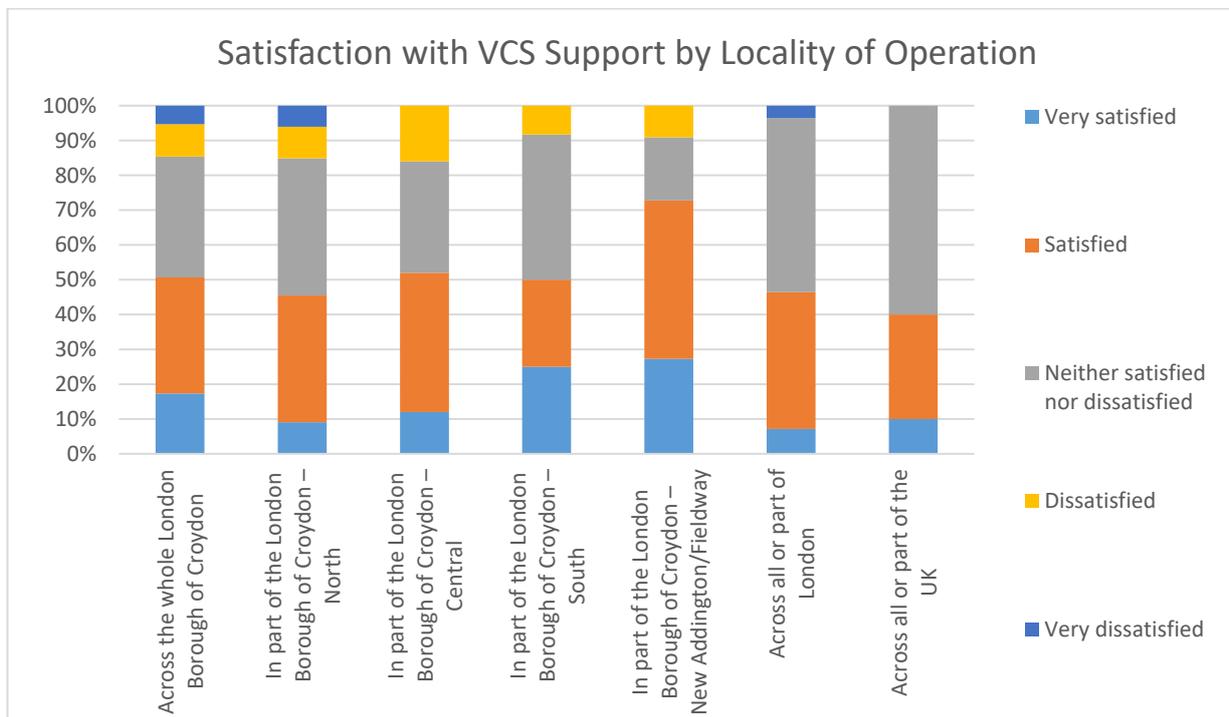
Unmet infrastructure support needs by locality of service delivery (chart corrected)



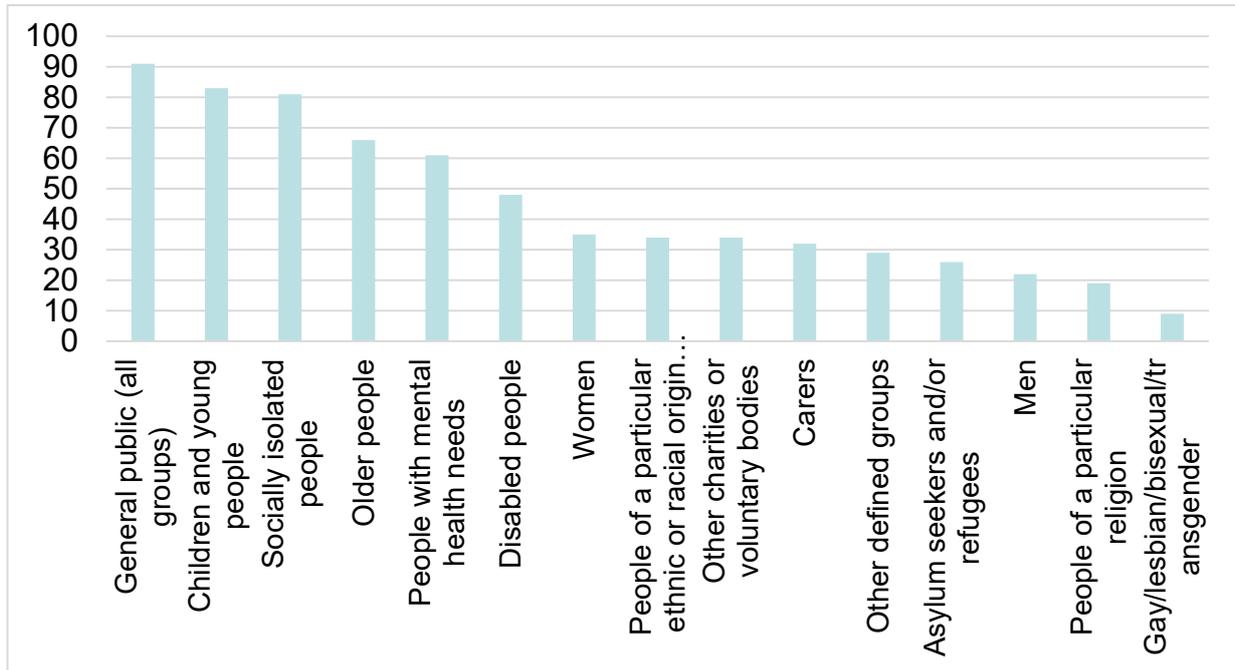
Satisfaction with Infrastructure Support



Satisfaction with Infrastructure Support by Locality



VCS Client Groups



Appendix 6: Other boroughs' VCS strategies

| Borough | VCS Strategy's aims and objectives |
|-----------|--|
| Islington | VCS strategy segments the VCS sector by size (measured by their income), structure, location and what they do. Next, this information was used to inform a tailored approach to each organisation. Consultation on Council support to local VCS took place in 2016. It mostly focussed on Community Fund programmes, 70% of groups who attended were already supported by this fund. Some 700 local organisations including small groups engaged with or received some type of support. |
| Greenwich | VCS strategy developed in 2017 to support key priorities of premises, funding, collaboration, volunteering, business engagement, maximising benefits of technology whilst ensuring digital inclusion. They are looking for ways to do more with less and ways in which VCS could work in closer partnership with one another. In 2018, a new grants package was recommissioned, council owned community centres and information and advice services are also being reappraised. |
| Ealing | Do not have a VCS Strategy. However, in November 2018, a £2.14m grants programme was awarded over 4 years with a view to start in 04/19. This is the same amount that was awarded last time. The focus has been about managing the funding gap and a future process of funding through stronger commissioning/contracting arrangements. |
| Barnet | Do not have a current VCS Strategy, but intend to develop one via their community participation strategy - Barnet Together. Use a 'Community Benefit Assessment Tool' (CBAT) to assess how much business rates relief organisations are awarded. The principle is to ascertain the 'social value' of an organisation's work/output. This is done using a long calculation to determine this against the rent cost that the group pays towards rent (not service charges) for a period of five years. After this period, the presumption is that the group should have built up its financial reserves and is able to stand on a more financially stable footing. Barnet have created their own VCS infrastructure group and also manage the Barnet Giving funding pot. Crowdfunding success and take up has been limited but they are still putting on workshops. |
| Hackney | VCS strategy is currently being developed with VCS by exploring challenges and opportunities. Feedback suggests consultation has helped sector take stock of challenges and explore ways to address them. In June 2018, the Council launched Hackney 'A Place for Everyone' VCS grants programme for 19/20. This prospectus gives information about funding streams, eligibility criteria and how to apply. Engagement has helped the Council develop a better understanding of the sector's resilience, views on intervention and support needs. The Council also ran a survey to obtain feedback on the main grant application process. This helped them to make appropriate changes to application process and improve experience for future application rounds. |

| Borough | VCS Strategy's aims and objectives |
|----------------------|---|
| Barking & Dagenham | No longer have a grants program at all, but £60k is committed for new homes in the next year. They have a local lottery and a crowdfunding programme. 'Participatory City' is spending £8M and council report it is going well with forty projects started, and two hubs opened which are providing lots of opportunities for residents to help themselves. |
| Harrow | Grants programme has ended. £25k has been distributed for crowdfunding. Looking at Community Lottery which is going to cabinet for approval. |
| Kensington & Chelsea | Their grants programme was due to end in 2019 but will now be most likely extended until 2020. How it is delivered and what is delivered may change. Community Centres may change. Their Grenfell fund and other grants funds are being considered for merging. They are listening to forums, lots of effort is being made to engage with local residents. Ward councillors' budgets are working well. |
| Hounslow | Do not have a current strategy, but one is being drafted. Council is under substantial financial challenges and some changes will be made. VCS sector priorities will be addressed when the budget is finalised and are likely to extend existing community funding for now. Community Engagement Strategy/'Hounslow Giving 'Crowd Funding has another year of funding at £30K pa. |
| Brent | <p>Policy on Discretionary Rate Relief</p> <p>Local charities are awarded 20% discretionary relief, and non-local charities are awarded 5% relief. National charities are regarded as being in a better position financially to pay the 20% balance. Non-profit making organisations are limited to 25% relief. In exceptional circumstances this can be increased.</p> <p>Brent considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation provides facilities that indirectly relieve the council of the need to do so or enhance or supplement those that it does provide • The organisation should provide training or education for its members • It should have facilities provided by self-help or grant aid • It should demonstrate a major local contribution • Policies on equal opportunity, freedom of access and membership • Clarity on which members of community benefit from the organisation's work • Governance requirements • No unauthorised indebtedness to the Council or conviction for unlawful activities. |

| Borough | VCS Strategy's aims and objectives |
|----------|--|
| Lewisham | <p><u>Policy</u> on business rates reductions and relief</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discretionary relief awarded only to community organisations eligible for mandatory rate relief: registered charities, community amateur sports clubs (CASCs) and Charitable Community Benefit Societies. Property must be wholly or mainly used for these purposes. • Exclusions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ non-profit making organisations that are not registered charities or CASCs ○ charity shops and cafés operated by trading arms of charities, ○ housing associations ○ buildings used mainly for worship or to promote religious belief, ○ bodies operating a restrictive membership policy ○ profit making organisations ○ empty properties ○ car parking spaces ○ social clubs. • Eligibility criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 85% + of beneficiaries must be borough residents ○ Link with Council priorities (Community Strategy) ○ Adherence to Equality Act 2010. ○ For discretionary rate relief of over £25,000, council will set service outcomes. • Award limit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ As budget is limited, number of eligible organisations will exceed budget available ○ Awards capped based on rateable value; priority given to organisations with lower rateable value: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eligible organisations will be ranked on their rateable value from lowest to highest. ▪ Discretionary rate relief will be allocated to organisations (starting with lowest rateable value on the list) until the budget runs out. ○ Cap level will vary each award year dependent on applications received. • Application and decision process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discretionary rate relief is awarded for one year. Organisations must reapply each year. |

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Borough | VCS Strategy's aims and objectives |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Application form and accounts submitted in October for following financial year ○ Delegated authority on awards of up to £10,000; cabinet approval needed for £10,000+ ○ Decision letter to organisations by 31 January; no appeal. |
| Tower Hamlets | <p>Policy on council buildings leased to VCS organisations</p> <p>Principal lease terms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licence offered where organisation does not need or have exclusive use of a building full time • Length of lease: 3-5 years; up to 25 years, with landlord break clauses, if this enables organisation to obtain funding. Term to match length of Council funding period if this is sole source of funding. • Rent: Open market value based on permitted use; peppercorn rent only for recognised tenants and residents associations using a building that is part of the Housing Revenue Account • Outgoings: Tenants responsible for all charges for services, statutory testing, internal redecoration and security. • Council conducts basic repairs and redecoration and insures building only, recovering costs via service charges. • Subletting: Tenants encouraged to allow bona fide groups to use accommodation – part of assessment of community benefit; Lease requires group to enter into a Council-prescribed licence with the tenant • Break clauses: Landlord option to end lease if property required for redevelopment, etc.; Tenant break clause so it can respond to changes in its financial/other circumstances <p>Dissemination of best practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good VCS organisations are encouraged to mentor other groups or take over other buildings in the area <p>Community benefit rent reduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent reduction of up to 80% of rent for eligible VCS organisations providing a demonstrable community benefit • Available to VCS organisations with lease of 3-5 years, unless they receive funding through a Council contract. • Where a VCS organisation derives part of its funding from economic activity, the Council may offer 40% or 20% rent reduction according to the proportion of the organisation's activity that has a community benefit |

| Borough | VCS Strategy's aims and objectives |
|---------|--|
| | <p><i>Eligibility criteria</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCS organisation must demonstrate that it is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community-led ○ Properly constituted, with good governance ○ Capable of sustainably, legally and safely managing an asset and delivering services ○ Delivering social, economic, environmental benefits, linked to Council's priorities ○ Embracing diversity, improving community cohesion, reducing inequalities ○ Willing to offer space and support to smaller groups <p><i>Monitoring and review</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility for community benefit reduction is reviewed annually for the duration of the lease (every 6 months for organisations paid over £20,000 in rent reduction). If an organisation is no longer providing community benefit, it will be required to pay full rent. <p><i>Organisations ineligible for rent reduction</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day Care and Playgroups – rent reduction would hide the cost of providing care. • Faith groups where buildings are solely used for religious services or services limited to the congregation • Organisations wholly engaged in economic activity • Organisations whose rent is met through their current Council funding • Organisations with leases of less than three years and longer than 5 years. • Organisations that only pay ground rent • Organisations with any agreement with Council that is not a standard lease. <p><i>Proportionate rent reduction</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rent reduction policy excludes organisations engaged in economic (commercial) activity, as it may be considered unfair for the Council to distort competition through such subsidy. However, the exception will be when part of the organisation's use of premises (defined by floor area or time used) is solely applied to activity which has a community benefit. |

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Voluntary & Community Sector Strategy

Scrutiny and Overview Committee

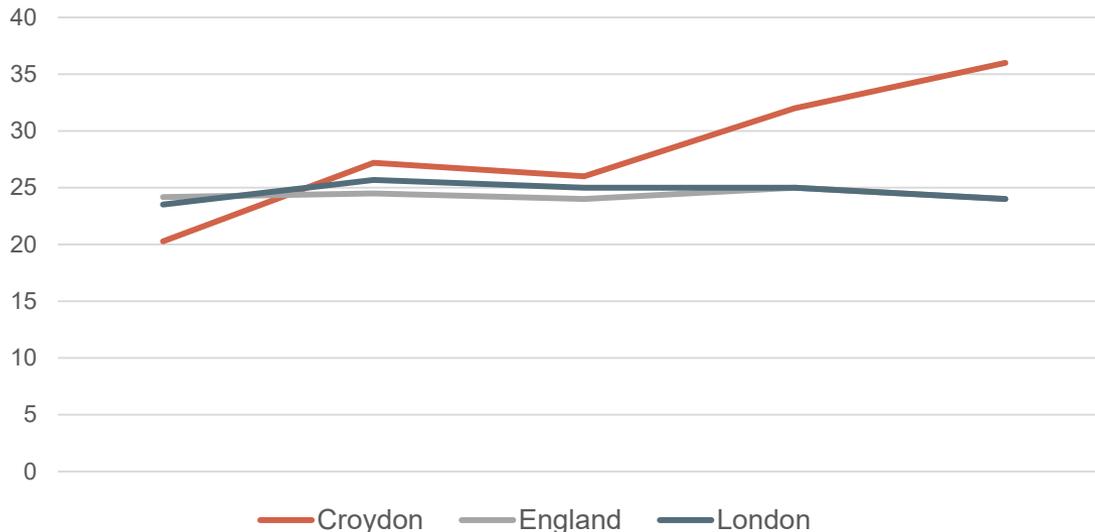
Cllr Hamida Ali

11 February 2019

VCS Context

- 819 registered charities in Croydon (Charity Commission)
- Over 2,000 local organisations registered with CVA
- Third highest level of volunteering in London (2015/16)
 - 36% have done some form of volunteering during the last 12 months

% who have done any voluntary work in last 12 months
(2008 – 2016)



How do we work with our VCS?

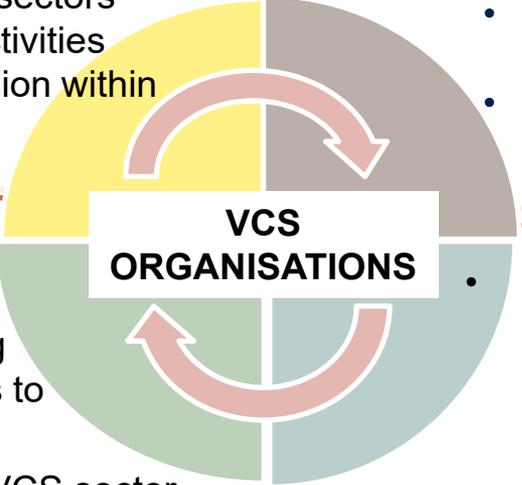
INFRASTRUCTURE BODIES

- Capacity Building
- Providing a training programme
- A specialist skills and employment service
- Building local networks
- Brokering support from other sectors
- Co-ordinating engagement activities
- Promoting equality and cohesion within communities

COUNCIL TEAMS (Communities, Assets)

- Building capacity within the sector
- Identification of funding opportunities / bid-writing support
- Administering ward budgets and rent subsidy programmes
- Organising community events

VCS ORGANISATIONS



- Publishing the commissioning pipeline
- Developing the commissioning policy, including commitments to social value inc. buy local
- Engaging and supporting the VCS sector and local businesses to be part of the councils supply chain
- Commissioning of & part resp. for contract management of Community fund

- Development of Local Voluntary Partnerships (LVPs) model supporting people with complex needs in a locality and the link to social prescribing
- AGE UK Croydon is an equal partner in the One Croydon Alliance providing services and VCS input into development of the models of care and commercial arrangements

COMMISSIONING AND PROCUREMENT

ONE CROYDON

Why a VCS Strategy?

- We can't deliver our Corporate Plan without partners, including VCS

We want to support VCS organisations to create an even stronger, fairer Croydon where residents thrive

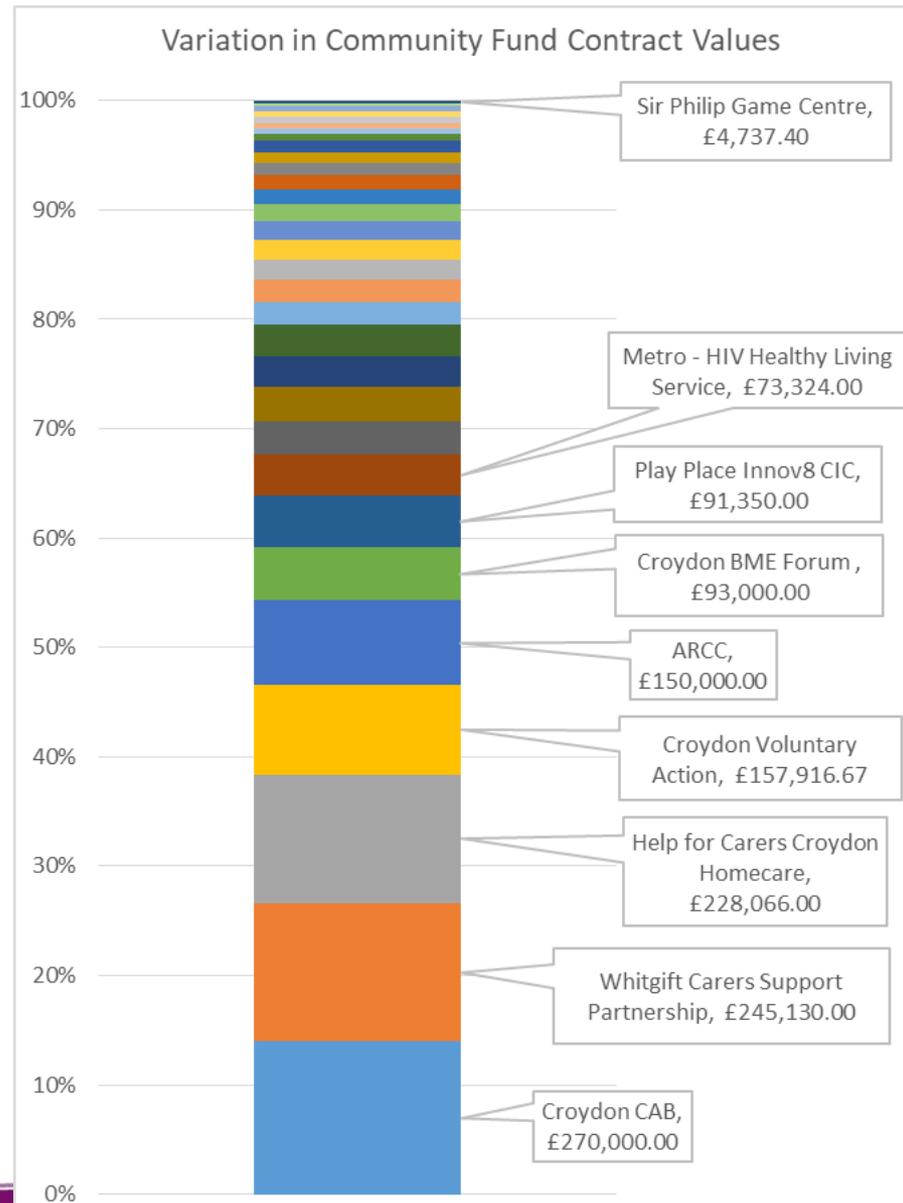
- We are committed to fund the VCS, but financial pressures will continue
- We want to consider how we best can support the VCS

Financial Support for Voluntary & Community Sector

Community Fund 2017/18

- 3-year programme of grants awarded September 2016
 - brought together different grants programmes & VCS spend, through a commissioning model
- Prevention focused and in-line with the Opportunity & Fairness Commission:
 - Vibrant, responsible and connected communities
 - Connected borough where no one is isolated
 - Supporting residents towards better times
 - Leaving no child behind
 - Finding homes for all
- **£1,935,510 to 31 VCS organisations**
 - £4.7k to £270k
 - **54% of funding to 5 organisations**

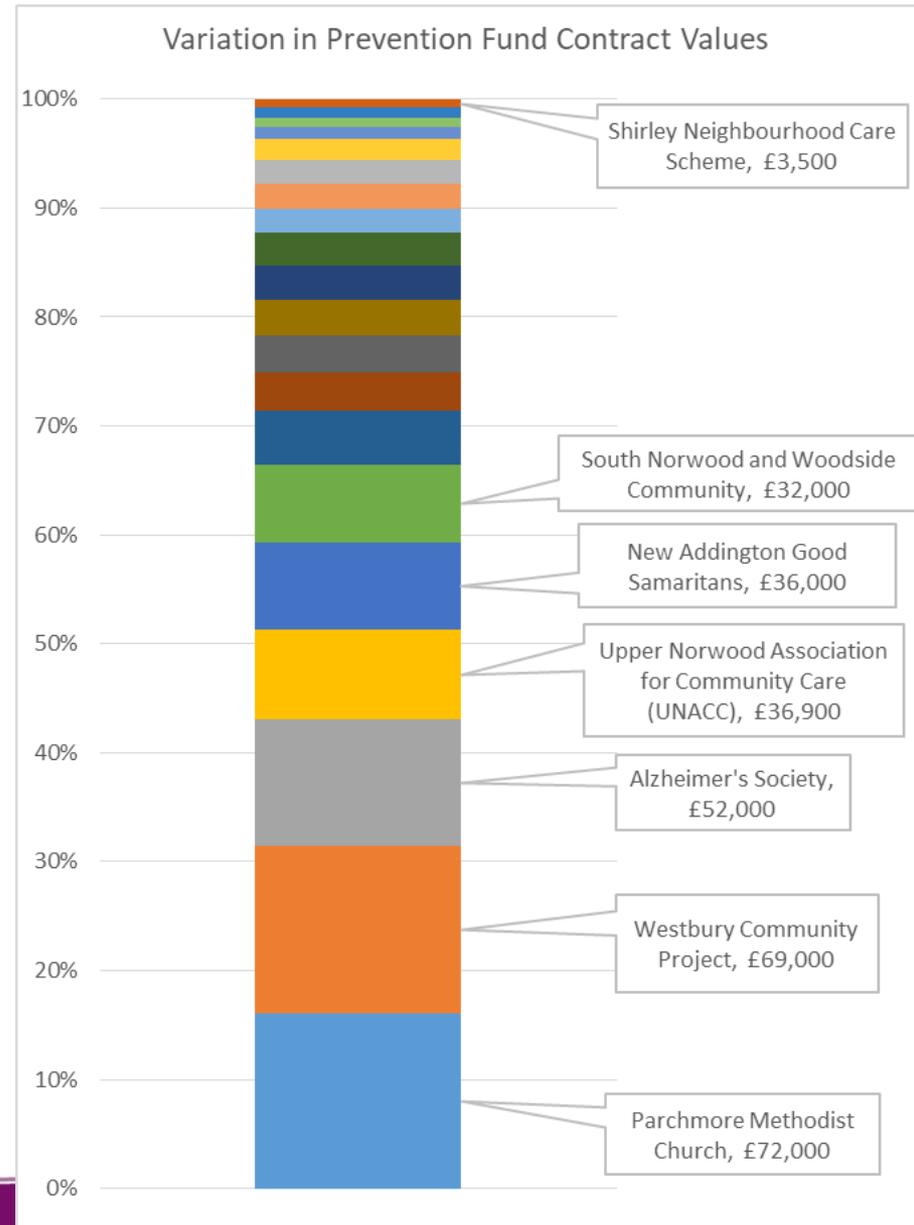
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Prevention Fund 2017/18

- Providers deliver services aimed at over 65s:
 - lunch clubs, befriending, entertainment/outings, hospital transport and shopping services for over 65's
- In scope for the One Croydon Alliance
- **£449,750 to 21 VCS organisations**
 - £1.4k to £72k
 - **Nearly 60% of funding to 5 organisations**

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Some other financial contributions

- **Community Small Grants** (up to £5k per grant, £100k total per annum)
- **Subsidy and rate relief**
 - £247k rental subsidy grant to 18 VCS organisations; 51 get premises rent free
 - £156k discretionary rate relief to 48 VCS organisations in respect of 117 properties.
 - Mostly low value, but nearly 50% is paid to 6 organisations
 - Budget does not permit new applications for relief
- **Community Ward grants** (£560k pa)
- **Partner funding** (e.g. CCG spend of £4.7m)
 - PICS= £888,669
 - Local Voluntary Partnerships = £329,000
- A significant number of contracts across the council were successfully bid for and are delivered by VCS orgs. These providers are part of the council's supply chain
- Additional investment (sometimes one-off funding) for the VCS, which follows a different commissioning process (e.g. £250k youth funding)

Survey Findings

What the VCS told us



Top Opportunities and Threats

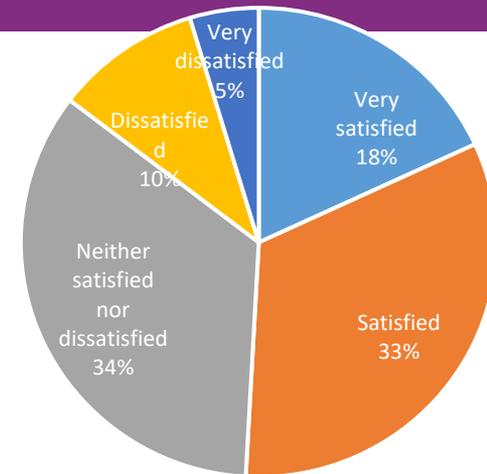
Top opportunities

- Collaboration within the VCS
- Involving community/service users
- Developing/expanding services
- Funding opportunities
- Work within the Council
- Council/CCG commissioning/LVP
- Premises
- Entrepreneurship
- Employment and skills work
- Early intervention/prevention work

Top Threats

- Funding
- Volunteers
- Meeting rising demand
- Premises
- Engagement
- Staffing recruitment/retention
- Communication
- Partnership development
- Government policy/legislation
- Income generation
- Management capacity/org's support needs

Support Accessed

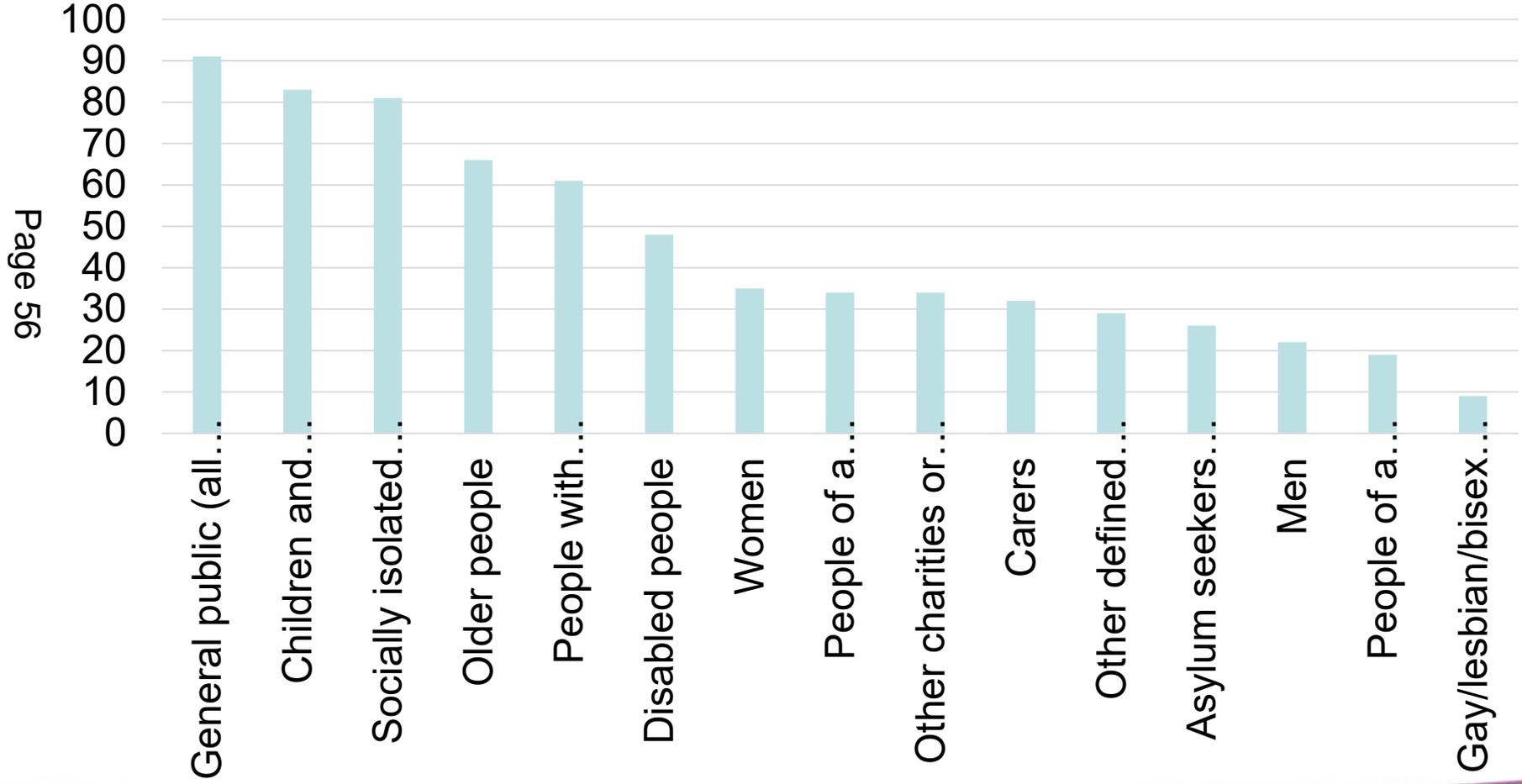


70% have support needs that are not met

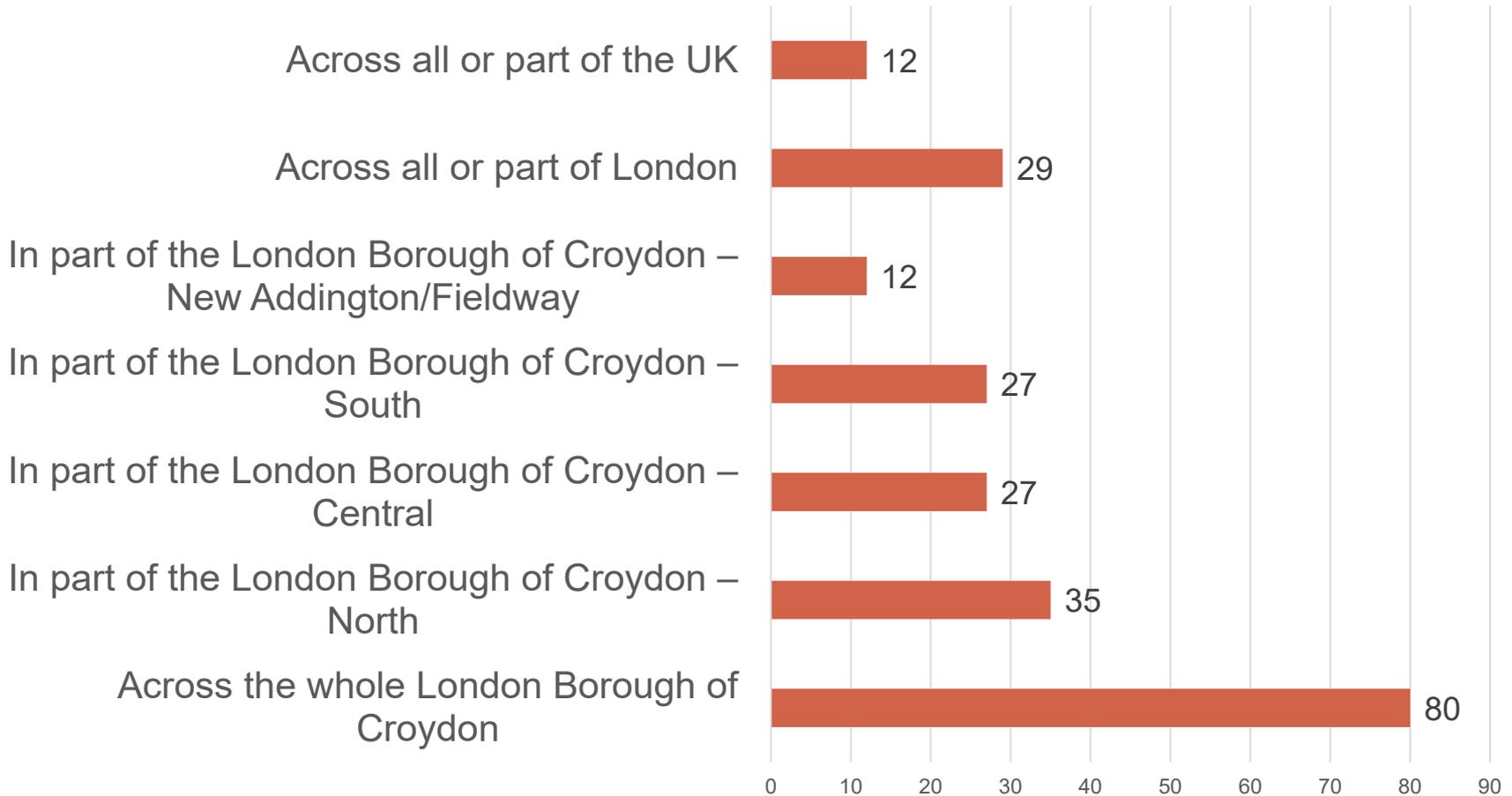
Further support needs:

- Sustainable funding, paid promptly, with sufficient notice
- Affordable premises
- Capacity building / contacts
- Advice, information, training, bid writing
- Marketing, social media, finance

Client groups



Location of VCS service delivery



What should the Council be doing?

- Facilitating collaboration and partnership, identifying useful contacts / connections
- Promoting the work, services and achievements of the VCS
- Providing access to space and premises that are affordable
- Providing information and signposting
- Recognising the importance and value of the VCS
- Funding
- Capacity building, allowing VCS to draw on advice and expertise

What should the strategy cover?

- Funding, with clear guidance and criteria, and time to apply
- Collaborative and locality working, recognising the strong role of VCS, breaking silo working, removing duplication
- Capacity building, with more support for smaller organisations, better premises used more

Reflections

- **Funding** – importance of flexibility, proportionality, and core support for smaller organisations
- **Other subsidy** – importance of strategic approach and consistency
- **Co-ordination** - role for the Council to facilitate relationships across the sector
- **Mapping** – recurring request
- **Volunteers** – more to be done, particularly to identify younger volunteers
- **How we work** – changing priorities, turnover and ward budgets

Next Steps and Timeframe

Next steps

February
March

Develop the VCS Strategy
Cabinet adoption of VCS Strategy

April/May

Engagement and communication of framework for commissioning

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June

Tender process opens for Prevention and Community Funds

June-Nov
Nov / Dec

Support sessions
Evaluation

December
Jan-Mar 2020

Cabinet decision
Decommissioning support

April 2020

New Community and Prevention Fund Contracts

Questions for discussion

Where should the balance of funding be?

1. Flexibility of funding - vs - 3 year contract security for VCS?
2. Grants for core costs - vs - outcomes based commissioning?
3. Larger organisations - vs - grass roots groups?
4. Infrastructure support - vs - service delivery (either/or or both)?

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