

For General Release

REPORT TO:	CABINET 07 FEBRUARY 2022
SUBJECT:	London Councils Grants Scheme 2022 - 2026
LEAD OFFICER:	Elaine Jackson, Assistant Chief Executive Gavin Handford, Director of Policy and Partnership
CABINET MEMBER:	Cllr Manju Shahul-Hameed, Cabinet Member for Communities, Safety and Resilience
WARDS:	All

POLICY CONTEXT

The formal approval of the 2022/23 budget for the new pan-London grants programme for 2022-26, and Croydon Council's contribution to the Scheme which is required by statutory obligation.

The Grants to Voluntary Organisations (Specified Date) Order 1992, as read with Section 48(3) of the Local Government Act 1985, provides that two-thirds of constituent councils must agree the London Councils Grants Committee's budget by 1 February each year. If it is not agreed, the overall level of expenditure is deemed to be set at the same level as was approved or deemed to be approved for the preceding financial year, in this instance the sum proposed for the 2022/3 year, is a slight increase on the sum that was approved for 2021/22.

In order to meet London Councils formal deadline (1 February 2022) for obtaining the agreement of member Councils, a holding response has been provided to London Councils subject to Croydon Council's formal cabinet agreement on 7 February 2022.

In December 2021, the [London Councils Grants Committee](#) made grant awards for the portfolio for the 2022 - 2026 grants programme which will commence as of April 2022.

This award was the culmination of extensive consultations over 2020 and 2021, on what the priorities of the new scheme should be. A strong mandate was received from both councils and local voluntary and community sector service providers in continued support of the existing programme and priorities:

- Combatting homelessness
- Tackling sexual and domestic violence

These funding priorities align with the following Croydon Council priority for 2021/24:

- We will focus on tackling ingrained inequality and poverty in the borough.

This report also provides a performance summary of the last LCGS programme, for the period April 2017 to September 2021 (quarters one to 18).

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Approval of the Council's contribution of £287,809 to the London Councils Grants Scheme for 2022/23. This amounts to an increase of £78 compared with the Council's net contribution to the Scheme in 2021/22.

FORWARD PLAN KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.: Not a key decision

The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet the power to make the decisions set out below:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 Cabinet is recommended to agree the recommendation of the London Councils Leaders Committee to:
- a. Approve the London Councils Grants Scheme budget for 2022/2023 of £6.668m.
 - b. Agree Croydon Council's 2022/23 contribution to the London Councils Grants Scheme budget amounting to £287,809.
 - c. Note the details of the 2022 - 2026 Pan-London Grants Programme and the services it will provide to Croydon residents.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report seeks approval for the London Councils Grants Scheme (LCGS) budget in 2022/23 set at £6.668m, and Croydon Council's contribution to that budget of £287,809, being the level that was recommended by the London Councils Leaders' Committee at their meeting on 7 December 2021.

3. DETAIL

3.1 Budget

- 3.1.1 The London Councils Grants Scheme (the Scheme) was established in accordance with the Local Government Act 1985, following the abolition of the Greater London Council in 1986. The Scheme is now governed by the London Councils Grants Committee and membership comprises all the London Borough Councils and the City of London.
- 3.1.2 The financial year 2022/23 will be the first year of a new programme of commissions as recommended by the Grants Committee and which was approved by the Leaders Committee on 7 December 2021.
- 3.1.3 Notification has been received from the Chief Executive of London Councils that, following the Grants Committee of the following recommendation for expenditure under the Scheme has been made to constituent Councils:

Overall level of expenditure of £6,668,000 comprising:	(£m)
Payments to Commissions	6.173
Administrative Expenditure	0.435
London Funders Membership Fees	0.060
Income would comprise:	
Borough contributions	6.668

- 3.1.4 The recommendation to constituent councils from the London Councils Leaders Committee propose an overall budget in 2022/23 of £6.7m, funded entirely by constituent council contributions. The total amount required from councils is a slight increase from last year. An outline of the approved budget is attached at **Appendix A**.
- 3.1.5 Population changes affect the levels of contribution due from each constituent council. The contribution required from each council for 2022/23 is shown at **Appendix B**.
- 3.1.7 For 2022/23, the apportionment is based on the Office of National Statistics' 2020 mid-year population data and the overall proposed programme budget as detailed in paragraph 3.1.3 above.

3.2 Grants Programme 2022-26: Prospectus for the new programme

- 3.2.1 In December 2021, the London Councils Leaders' Committee (which comprises councillors from the London Boroughs) agreed a series of new awards which will commence from April 2022. Following scoring, moderation, and discussion with Grants Executive members and other stakeholders, the awards were made to the existing priorities for commissioned services:

Priority 1: Combatting Homelessness

Priority 2: Tackling Sexual and Domestic Violence

(N.B. 'Priority 3: Tackling Poverty through Employment', has been closed as it had been European Social Fund match-funded).

- 3.2.2 The funding covers the period of 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2026. The total values of grant for recommended projects is a maximum of £21,100,000 over the lifetime of the grants, subject to partners fulfilment of terms of grant.

Priority 1: £9,800,000

Priority 2: £11,300,000

See details of the 2022-2026 Pan-London Grants Programme at **Appendix C**.

- 3.2.3 During spring 2021, London Councils had substantial response to consultations. This information was used to refine the areas where the boroughs needed the most support. The findings demonstrated strong support to continue the current programme's services. It highlighted increased multiple, complex needs that required longer-term support, and the requirement for specialist and culturally sensitive support. It also identified key target groups for support: people with mental health needs, learning disabilities, complex needs, ex-offenders, NRPF, LGBTQ+, BME or victims of trafficking or modern slavery.
- 3.2.4 The grants programme is focussed on the needs of both inner and outer London, which is critical given that Croydon as the second most populous borough, is also the second highest contributor to the LCGS. The programme approach enables boroughs to tackle high priority need where this may be more effective at a pan-London level
- 3.2.5 The scheme priorities align with the Croydon Council [priority for 2021/24](#):
- We will focus on tackling ingrained inequality and poverty in the borough.

3.3 A Performance Summary of the 2017-22 Grants scheme:

- 3.3.1 The LCGS provides monitoring data to demonstrate performance and the benefits to individual boroughs from commissioned services. LCGS data for April 2017 to September 2021 compare the indicative levels of delivery per borough based on relevant needs data with the actual proportion of new service users from each borough.
- 3.3.2 13 projects were commissioned to deliver pan-London services under Priorities 1 and 2 between April 2017 and March 2021. All 13 projects were rated Green. The scheme was subsequently extended for a further year until March 2022 to allow time to develop a new programme that reflected a changed London.
- 3.3.3 With regard to Priority 1 services for combatting homelessness, locally, the indicative level for Croydon was between 3% and 4% of service users and the proportion of actual service users who were from Croydon was 3.39% (thirteenth among the London boroughs). The overall London wide performance was 9% above profile, with particularly strong performance in relation to tackling youth homelessness. 12 commissions were currently rated Green, and one Amber.
- 3.3.4 With regard to Priority 2 services for tackling sexual and domestic violence, locally, the indicative level was between 3% and 4% of users, and the proportion of actual users from Croydon was 3.39% (this was the second highest among the London boroughs). However, the London wide performance of these services have been 9% below profile. Outcome targets have been met or achieved in three out of the six service areas.
- 3.3.5 The Covid-19 lockdowns disrupted the delivery of prevention projects in schools, alternative provision, and youth settings, though some work moved online. Taking referrals and finding safe accommodation took longer due to the perpetrator being present. The pandemic has decreased the availability of

refuge services due to reduced throughput. Following London Councils' declaration of its commitment to use money flexibly to meet emerging needs due to Covid-19, some organisations furloughed or redeployed staff within their respective organisations to meet the increased demand for frontline services for tackling violence against women and girls. Helplines, emails, and web chats were heavily used by survivors finding it difficult to access support.

- 3.3.6 The priorities and projects funded by the LCGS align well with the Council's priorities. The projects provide additional options for the Council in supporting residents in these priority areas, aligning with local projects, services, and support.
- 3.3.7 Croydon council officers and partners are aware of the projects funded by LCGS. The projects provide added value and additional specialist support for people with protected characteristics who are facing homelessness or domestic and sexual violence.
- 3.3.8 The performance data suggests that work by officers with London Councils to ensure that pan-London projects deliver locally has ensured that the programme impact is maximised in Croydon.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The Council is required by statute to contribute to the London Councils Grants Scheme as set out in paragraph 7 below.
- 4.2 In order to meet London Councils formal deadline (1 February 2022) for obtaining the agreement of member Councils, a holding response has been provided to London Councils subject to Croydon Council's formal cabinet agreement on 7 February 2022.

5 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

- 5.1 This decision did not go to a Scrutiny meeting for pre-decision debate. The Council is required by statute to contribute to the London Councils Grants Scheme as set out in paragraph 7 below.

6 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 As set out in section 7 below, the Council is required under statute to contribute to the London Councils Grants Scheme in proportion to the population of the borough. The level of expenditure for the Scheme varies from year to year as does the estimated population of Croydon as a proportion of the total estimated population of Greater London. It is therefore not possible to accurately predict the precise level of the Council's contribution from year to year.
- 6.2 The costs are updated annually and the Council's contribution for 2022/23, based on a population of 388,560 (4.32% of the population of Greater London),

results in an increase of £78 compared with the Council's net contribution to the Scheme in 2021/22. 2022/23 is the first year of a new pan-London grants programme for 2022-26.

6.3 Revenue and Capital consequences of report recommendations

	Current year	Medium Term Financial Strategy – 3-year forecast		
	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Revenue Budget available				
Expenditure	288	288*	288	288
Income	0	0	0	0
Effect of decision from report				
Expenditure	288	288	288	288
Income	0	0	0	0
Remaining budget	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Capital Budget available				
Expenditure	0	0	0	0
Effect of decision from report				
Expenditure	0	0	0	0
Remaining budget	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

* The annual cost for Croydon Council has increased slightly over 2022/23 with base increase of £78 compared with the Council's net contribution to the Scheme in 2021/22. This is not shown in the table above due to the denomination the numbers are reported in.

Note – The contributions for the new scheme which are being reported to Cabinet will be payable each year over the 2022/26 period, and once confirmed by London Councils will in future years be assumed at 2022/23 amounts.

6.4 Risks

- 6.4.1 Agreement of only two-thirds of the constituent councils is required for London Councils to set a budget for the scheme. However, The Secretary of State would only have the power to intervene if eleven councils failed to approve the recommended budget by 1 February 2022.

6.5 Options

- 6.5.1 The Council is required to contribute to the London Councils Grants Scheme under the provisions of the 1985 Local Government Act if the proposals recommended by the Leaders Committee are agreed by two-thirds of the constituent councils by 1 February 2022.

6.6 Future savings/efficiencies

- 6.6.1 The Council's contribution to the scheme is updated annually dependent upon the agreed level of expenditure, the population of the borough as a proportion of the total population of Greater London and minor variables such as the use of reserves and balances by the Scheme. The Council may influence the total level of expenditure through its membership of the scheme but is bound by the two-thirds majority decision of the London Councils Grants Committee.

Approved by Richard Ennis, Interim Corporate Director of Resources & S151 Officer

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The Head of Litigation and Corporate Law comments on behalf of the Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer that under Section 48(3) of the Local Government Act 1985 and Regulation 6(8) of the Levying Bodies (General) Regulations 1992, member authorities are required to contribute financially to the Scheme in proportion to their respective populations.
- 7.2 The Grants to Voluntary Organisations (Specified Date) Order 1992 which came into effect on 2nd November 1992 and remains in force, as read with Section 48(3) of the 1985 Act, provides that two-thirds of constituent Councils must agree the London Councils Grants Committee's budget by no later than 1st February annually. If it is not so agreed, the overall level of expenditure is deemed to be set at the same level as was approved or deemed to be approved for the preceding financial year, in this instance the sum approved for the 2021/22 year (which was £287,731 for Croydon).
- 7.3 While the Council is not directly responsible for administration of the Scheme, as a participant Council in the Scheme it must still be mindful of its general equality duty under the Equality Act 2010 and take such steps as are appropriate to consider this duty. Any such considerations need to be addressed in the equalities impact assessment section below.

Approved by: Sandra Herbert Head of Litigation and Corporate Law

8. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 8.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

Approved by: Dean Shoesmith, Interim Chief People Officer

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 9.1 London Councils is responsible for assessing the impact of individual funding decisions, but constituent councils must consider the overall impact of changes to the budget available to the London Councils Grants Committee.

- 9.2 An Equalities Analysis was carried out to ascertain the likely impact of the proposals on groups that share protected characteristics. This indicated that the Council's decision on this matter will have no significant impact on groups that share a protected characteristic.
- 9.3 Providers combatting homelessness continue to support vulnerable and disadvantaged service users who share protected characteristics. London-wide, over the 14 quarters to September 2020, 42.3% of service users were female; 46.2% were under 25 years of age; 7% were over 55 years of age; 76.6% were from black and minority ethnic backgrounds; 17.3% declared a disability; 12.4% were LGBT; and 1,886 people had no recourse to public funds (4%).
- 9.4 Providers combatting sexual and domestic violence continue to support vulnerable and disadvantaged service users who share protected characteristics. London-wide, over the 14 quarters to September 2020, 64.2% of service users were female; 8.6% were aged less than 25 years; 4.5% were aged over 55 years; 74.2% were from black and minority ethnic backgrounds; 14.7% declared a disability; 4.6% were LGBT; and 3,325 people had no recourse to public funds (3%).

Approved by Denise McCausland, Equalities Manager

10. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 10.1 There are no main environmental sustainability impacts arising from this report.

11. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

- 11.1 There are no implications for crime and disorder reduction arising from this report.

12. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

- 12.1 If the Council failed to agree the recommendations of the London Councils Leaders' Committee, there is a risk that the requisite majority of boroughs could fail to agree the proposals by the statutory deadline and the budget would be deemed to be set at the 2021/22 level.

13. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 13.1 The options available to the Council are to agree or reject the recommendations of the London Councils Leaders Committee. If rejection is considered, unless the Council was reasonably sure it could secure the support of at least two-thirds of the constituent councils, it would be futile to seek agreement for an alternative budget. As the Leaders Committee which put forward the proposals is made up of the Leaders of all the constituent councils, it is extremely unlikely enough would be minded support an alternative budget to the one already agreed.

14. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

14.1 WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?

NO

Approved by: Gavin Handford, Director of Policy and Partnership

CONTACT OFFICER: Shujah Iqbal, Senior Voluntary & Community Strategy Officer.

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

Appendix A Grants Committee Income and Expenditure Budget 2022/23

Appendix B Grants Programme Borough Subscriptions 2022/23

Appendix C 2022 - 2026 Pan-London Grants Programme awards