


London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham CABINET MEMBER DECISION June 2016	 hammersmith & fulham
AWARD OF ONE-OFF GRANT TO HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM MENCAP	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion	
Open Report	
Classification - For Decision) Key Decision: NO	
Wards Affected: Fulham Reach	
Accountable Director: Kim Dero, Director, Delivery and Value	
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Authorised by:	The Cabinet Member has signed this report.
Date	30 th June 2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report seeks authority to award a one-off grant of £50,000 to Hammersmith & Fulham Mencap, the principle 3rd sector organisation supporting vulnerable residents with learning disabilities and their families. This grant is recommended in light of a lack of a local hardship fund, to support the ongoing service delivery and business development of H&F Mencap and ensure its sustainability through a period of financial difficulty.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. That a one-off grant of £50,000 be awarded to Hammersmith & Fulham Mencap to be used to meet its current financial pressures, predominantly in relation to premises costs, with the detail of how this funding to be used to be agreed between officers and H&F Mencap and incorporated into the existing monitoring requirements of H&F Mencap's funding agreements.

REASONS FOR DECISION

3. The level of funding recommended requires a Cabinet Member Decision to be made.

PROPOSAL AND ISSUES

4. Hammersmith & Fulham Mencap is a person centred local independent charity. They work with parents and carers of disabled children and adults with a learning disability in Hammersmith and Fulham to support them to have a voice, make choices and have control over their lives. H&F is the only 3rd sector organisation in the borough working exclusively with H&F residents with learning disabilities.
5. H&F Mencap activities and services include a wide range of support services for adults and children with learning disabilities, and to parents of disabled children, including transition services to support people with learning difficulties from school/college to adulthood, a range of activities which support people with learning difficulties to get involved and be heard, and specialist coordination support in play and early years services.
6. H&F Mencap currently receives the following grants through the borough's 3rd Sector Investment Fund:
 - My Life Out and About: £20,000 per financial year
 - Safety Net People First: £45,000 per financial year
 - Children's Service: £40,000 per financial year.
7. Mencap support around 300 individuals and provide advocacy and 1-2-1 support to a further 35 residents with a learning disability, and for the majority of their users are considered a critical and key source of support, information and assistance.
8. Mencap's performance for the grant funded services has been consistently good, with excellent feedback from users and evidence of how the service is delivering tangible and sustainable outcomes.
9. In addition, Mencap support adult social care users through a range of day opportunity services, which are funded through individuals' Direct Payments or Individual Budgets. There has been a range of issues which have resulted in a lower than anticipated take up of H&F Mencap Services for ASC users which has further impacted the financial planning for H&F Mencap, and colleagues in ASC are working with Mencap to address this.
10. H&F Mencap were previously based in Stamford Brook Health Centre, with accommodation provided by H&F CCG, and located alongside a range of services including the LBHF Learning Disability Team. However, with the opening of Parkview in W12 and the relocation of both LBHF and CCG services and the subsequent closure of the Stamford Brook Centre, H&F Mencap needed to find alternative premises. In 2013, Mencap were offered space in a property owned by Arthritis UK in Aspenlea Road, which they now share with Riverside Studios.
11. H&F Mencap's new premises are far larger than they require and the costs of the property have proven to be considerably higher than H&F Mencap were initially advised. Sobus are supporting H&F Mencap to find other organisations to share the space with them, which potentially will offer sufficient income towards the end of the 16-17 financial year which will make

the site more affordable and viable for H&F Mencap, but the immediate financial pressure of meeting requirements imposed by Riverside Studios (now ceased) and the refurbishment and running costs of the property are putting the organisation at risk, and by default, the vulnerable residents that they support.

12. H&F Mencap are facing a significant operational financial deficit in 16-17, the majority of which has arisen from the unforeseen cost of their premises, including the depletion of Mencap's reserves to meet the costs of improving the accessibility of the property. With the prospect of income from letting part of their space to other organisations from Autumn 2016, the longer term future of Mencap is likely to be sustainable, but a one-off cash injection will support this key organisation to establish a viable and solid foundation for H&F Mencap to build their sustainability in the future.
13. Officers therefore recommend a one-off grant of £50,000 to H&F Mencap, to be used to meet its current financial pressures, predominantly in relation to premises costs, with the detail of how this funding to be used to be agreed between officers and H&F Mencap and incorporated into the existing monitoring requirements of H&F Mencap's funding agreements.

OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

14. The council's priority is to ensure that our most at risk residents have access to the support and services they need. In the case of Mencap, these are residents with often complex learning disabilities, who without the service would be at critical risk of isolation, poor health and wellbeing including a deterioration of emotional wellbeing, lack of inclusion and increase of exclusion from main stream and specialist opportunities, increased risk of poverty, and increased risk of homelessness.
15. Mencap offer a huge range of activities and support for residents with learning disabilities and their families – and the cessation of this service would have profound and long lasting negative impacts on some of the most vulnerable residents in the borough.
16. Should the recommended financial support not be provided, the options for H&F Mencap would likely be:
 - a. Closure
 - b. Merger with another local disability organisation based in the borough.
 - c. Merger with another learning disability organisation based outside of the borough
 - d. Operate a deficit budget and further deplete their reserves – both of which would contravene Charities Commission guidance and potentially be unlawful, a position which would force H&F Mencap to pursue options a-c.
17. Should HF Mencap wish to pursue options a-c above, whilst LBHF would be able to consider grant funding an alternative organisation to deliver the services currently provided by H&F Mencap, the vulnerability of Mencap clients, coupled with the significant challenges that another organisation

would face in building up sufficiently robust relationships with clients in order to provide immediate support and assistance, would inhibit any incoming organisation offering an immediate service at the same level as H&F Mencap. The vulnerability of these clients means an unplanned transfer of service to a new provider should be avoided at all costs – therefore these options are not realistically achievable if service users' safety and wellbeing is to be prioritised.

18. In addition, should H&F Mencap opt to pursue option c, vulnerable LBHF residents with learning disabilities would likely then be required to travel outside of the borough to access the much valued support that they currently receive within Hammersmith & Fulham boundaries.

CONSULTATION

19. The provision of an additional one-off grant to H&F Mencap will ensure the continued provision of its current services without change. Therefore, consultation was not required as part of this project.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

20. As outlined in 16 and 17 above, the alternatives open to H&F Mencap should further financial support not be provided would result in Any key/relevant equalities issues must be included here, in the body of the report. A completed Equality Impact Assessment must accompany where required.
21. A comprehensive Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken as part of H&F Mencap's application for grant funding (3SIF, Cabinet Report September 2014), which indicated the services offered by Mencap would support residents with learning disabilities and their families, across all wards, genders, faiths and appropriate ages, as well as successfully targeting services to those with highest needs – e.g. clients from low income households and areas of deprivation.
22. Subsequent monitoring of H&F Mencap's grant funded services confirms that H&F Mencap has an good track record in reaching priority cohorts of residents, and achieving positive outcomes for this particularly vulnerable cohort of local residents. Mencap's 3rd Sector Investment Fund grant was approved for renewal in May 2016.
23. An additional grant to H&F Mencap will serve to support the continued provision of the services currently funded by the council and ensure the long term sustainability of a specialist local user-led organisation. Therefore a further equalities impact assessment was not considered necessary for the purposes of this report.
24. H&F Mencap will continue to be required to provide regular monitoring information on the take up of their services as part of their grant funded and commissioned services contracts.
25. Implications verified by Sue Spiller, Head of Community Investment. Tel: 020 8753 2483

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

26. The Council has power to award funding under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 which allows the Council to do anything that individuals generally may do, in particular if it is carried out for the benefit of the Council, its areas or persons, resident or present in its area. The Council should ensure that the aid falls under the De Minimus Regulations or one of the General Block Exemption Regulations.
27. Implications completed by Kar-Yee Chan, Solicitor (Contracts), Shared Legal Services, 020 8753 2772.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

28. £50,000 will be found from the current balance of the 3rd Sector Investment Fund, including carried forward underspend from 2015-16.
29. Implications completed by Andrew Lord, Head of Strategic Planning and Monitoring, 020 8753 2531.

IMPLICATIONS FOR BUSINESS

30. No implications have been identified since this is a one-off funding proposal to provide assistance with the stated financial challenges. The contractual outputs and outcomes related to Economic Development are covered under a different agreement.
31. Implications verified/completed by Rachid Aslam, Interim Work Matters Programme Manager, 020 8753 3375.

BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT

None.