

## REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD2649

### Title: Community Resilience Fund – Round 1 extension

#### Executive summary:

The Greater London Authority (GLA) has provided £55,000 of funding to Greater London Volunteering (London Plus) for the delivery of 11 projects across 11 boroughs. This was promoted as the Community Resilience Fund (approved under DD2603) in 2023-24. Projects began in January 2023 and will end in September 2023.

Community Resilience Fund projects focus on supporting strategic collaboration between the voluntary and community sector, Borough Resilience Forums, and local authorities. This is part of work agreed through the London Resilience Forum to support community resilience.

The Community Resilience Fund Round 1 extension will extend the contact with London Plus and the 11 projects through to the end of March 2024. Each project will receive an additional £5,000. This will allow projects to continue the vitally important work of building stronger collaboration. The extension will allow for additional capacity to focus further on climate resilience.

This Director's Decision seeks approval for the GLA to provide an additional financial contribution of £55,000, to enable London Plus's continuation of the Community Resilience Fund Round 1.

#### Decision:

That the Executive Director of Strategy and Communications approves expenditure of up to £55,000 to enable London Plus to extend grants to community or voluntary-sector organisations for improving local community-resilience practice.

#### AUTHORISING DIRECTOR

I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

**Name:** Niran Mothada

**Position:** Executive Director of Strategy and Communications

**Signature:**



**Date:**

21/08/2023

## **PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE**

### **Decision required – supporting report**

#### **1. Introduction and background**

- 1.1. Borough Resilience Forums (BRFs) are responsible for multi-agency emergency planning at the local level, as determined by borough risks and needs. They contribute to emergency planning for London, as directed by the London Resilience Forum (LRF). They facilitate cooperation and information-sharing between resilience partners at the local-authority level and the LRF.
- 1.2. Local authorities across London operate emergency planning or resilience teams that coordinate the local authority's preparedness and response to emergencies. These teams also act as secretariats to their local BRFs.
- 1.3. The UK government's National Resilience Framework, published in December 2022, had a focus on, and ambition for, a whole-of-society approach to resilience. This includes the involvement of the voluntary and community sector (VCS).
- 1.4. A new London Communities Emergencies Partnership (LCEP) is operational at a pan-London level. This brings together the community, faith, funders, equalities and voluntary sectors. The LCEP contributes directly to the LRF exercising and emergency response whilst supporting civil-society engagement in resilience. The LCEP is managed by Greater London Volunteering (London Plus), which works to connect London's VCS.
- 1.5. In January 2023, the Community Resilience Fund was launched in partnership with London Plus. London Plus provided grant management services, supporting the application and claims process. The fund received 22 eligible applications. Of these, 11 VCS organisations, across 11 London boroughs, were awarded funding to improve local community resilience. The projects were selected by London Plus and the GLA through a competitive and public grant process open for registered charitable organisations. These VCS projects are working collaboratively with their BRFs and local authorities.
- 1.6. The 11 VCS organisations funded are:
  - Bridge Renewal Trust
  - CommUNITY Barnet
  - Croydon Voluntary Action
  - Enfield Voluntary Action
  - Havering Volunteer Centre
  - Kingston Voluntary Action
  - Lewisham Local
  - Voluntary Action Camden
  - Voluntary Action Islington
  - Volunteer Centre Greenwich
  - Volunteer Centre Sutton.
- 1.7. Partnership working with these 11 VCS organisations and their BRFs has got off to a successful start. Following this, a variation to the GLA's agreement with London Plus is proposed, to provide up to an

additional £55,000. This would enable each VCS organisation listed above to receive an extra £5,000, as a contribution to the costs of continuing their work. To date, these VCS organisations have been delivering their projects by attending training; building on their relationships with local authorities; and starting to engage with organisations from the wider VCS.

- 1.8. This funding will enable an extension to the Community Resilience Fund Round 1. This extension is required for funded VCS organisations to develop their project activity, which includes enhancing local community resilience emergency plans with their local authority partners, and embedding community-led approaches to emergency management. The initial six-month pilot period has not been sufficient to complete these plans, and many of these organisations are considering how they will continue this work.
- 1.9. As a condition of the provision of the additional funding, the VCS organisations will also be required to focus on climate resilience work, to tackle risks such as surface water flooding and extreme heat, as identified in the London Risk Register. This will follow on from workshops held in summer 2023.

## **2. Objectives and expected outcomes**

- 2.1. This funding's objectives are to:
  - create or improve local community-resilience partnerships between the VCS, BRFs and statutory partners (primarily local authorities)
  - increase local community-preparedness through new or improved joint planning
  - strengthen local community-resilience practice through creating or improving communications channels; using data and insight; and/or using exercising scenarios.
- 2.2. The expected outcomes of this grant funding were agreed as:
  - increased community preparedness for emergencies
  - improved relationships between the VCS and statutory agencies
  - improved communications channels for responding to emergencies
  - improved data and insight into community preparedness.
- 2.3. Initial feedback on the projects' delivery against outcomes is positive, including from local authority partners and through engagement with training support. Projects have made particularly good progress on improving relationships between the VCS and statutory partners. Final reports on project outcomes will be submitted in September/October 2023.

## **3. Equality comments**

- 3.1. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, as a public authority, the GLA must have 'due regard' of the Public Sector Equality Duty – that is, the need to:
  - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
  - advance equality of opportunity
  - foster relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- 3.2. The Community Resilience Fund will improve engagement with and understanding of communities, among BRFs and local authorities, in response to emergencies. Already we have heard local authorities' feedback that this work is improving their links to communities.
- 3.3. The inclusion of community partnerships at a local level will improve mechanisms for the LRF to engage with these partners.
- 3.4. The extension of the Community Resilience Fund projects will keep developing local community relationships; and supporting the engagement and partnership working between local authorities and community-led diverse groups.

#### **4. Other considerations**

- 4.1. The following key risks have been identified:

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation measures</b>	<b>Current probability (1-4)</b>	<b>Current impact (1-4)</b>	<b>RAG</b>
Lack of take-up of the grant extensions, with more than one of the projects not continuing.	Each of the Community Resilience Fund projects will be approached on the extension. The projects are currently developing and already many have asked for more time. Individual conversations will support take-up.	1	2	2
Delay in transfer of grant funding.	We will continue to use London Plus as a grant-management service provider to enable the distribution of grant funding.	1	2	2

- 4.2. This proposal will support the People and Places strands of the Mayor's City Resilience Strategy.
- 4.3. There are no conflicts of interest to note for any of the officers involved in the drafting or clearance of this decision form.

#### **5. Financial comments**

- 5.1. Approval is sought for expenditure of up to £55,000 in 2023-24 to extend delivery of community grants. This will be funded from pilot funding received by the GLA from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (the receipt and expenditure of which were approved under MD2845). The funding has been received and is currently held within Resilience in the Strategy and Communications Directorate.

#### **6. Legal comments**

- 6.1. The foregoing sections of this report indicate that the decisions requested of the Director fall within the statutory powers of the Authority to promote and/or to do anything that is facilitative of, or conducive or incidental to, economic development and wealth creation and the development of the improvement of the environment within Greater London. In formulating the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought, officers have complied with the Authority's related statutory duties to:
  - pay due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people

- consider how the proposals will promote the improvement of health of persons, health inequalities between persons and to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom
  - consult with appropriate bodies.
- 6.2. In taking the decisions requested of her, the Director must have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty – namely the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010; and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (race, disability, sex, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment) and persons who do not share it (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). To this end, the Director should have particular regard to section 3 (above) of this report.
- 6.3. Officers have indicated that the expenditure proposed concerns the payment of sums to London Plus, under its contract with the GLA for grant management services, to enable the award of additional funding of VCS organisations currently funded under the Community Resilience Fund. If, therefore, the Director makes the decision sought, officers must ensure that:
- the contract with London Plus is varied to make provision for the additional funding and term
  - London Plus ensures that its award of additional funding to VCS organisations is conditional upon any specific requirements including (without limitation) those set out at 1.9, above.

## **7. Planned delivery approach and next steps**

- 7.1. The Community Resilience Fund will be delivered through grant funding to VCS organisations. These groups will work with and through their local authorities and BRFs.
- 7.2. Key dates are detailed below:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Award extension grants	October 2023
Delivery of extension period	October 2023 – March 2023
Submission of reports	April 2024

## **Appendices and supporting papers:**

None

### Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will be published either within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

### Part 1 – Deferral

**Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO**

### Part 2 – Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under the FoIA should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

**Is there a part 2 form – NO**

### ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to confirm the following (✓)

#### Drafting officer:

Clifford Fleming has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

#### Assistant Director/Head of Service:

Jon-Paul Graham has reviewed the documentation and is satisfied for it to be referred to the Sponsoring Director for approval.

✓

#### Financial and Legal advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal, and this decision reflects their comments.

✓

#### Corporate Investment Board

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Corporate Investment Board on 21 August 2023.

✓

### INTERIM CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

#### Signature:

*Anna Gustafson*

#### Date:

21/08/2023

PP on behalf of Enver Enver