

REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD2715

Community Resilience Fund – Round 2 extension

Executive summary:

The Community Resilience Fund was launched in 2023, under cover of MD2845, through funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (now the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government). This grant programme is managed through the GLA, in collaboration with Greater London Volunteering (London Plus), to support local community resilience projects across the city.

Over 18 months, the Community Resilience Fund Rounds 1 and 2 have funded 22 organisations, in 22 London boroughs, to deliver projects that improve local collaboration between the voluntary and community sector and statutory agencies.

For Round 2 of the Community Resilience Fund (DD2631), an investment of £60,500 supported the delivery of 11 projects from March to September 2024.

Round 1 projects received an extension enabling them to focus specifically on climate-related risk in their engagement. An extension of Round 2 will similarly allow projects to continue engagement and build stronger collaboration with statutory resilience structures. Each Round 2 project will receive an additional £2,500 to take their delivery up until 31 December 2024.

This Director's Decision seeks approval for the GLA to allocate an additional £27,500 from the London Resilience Unit's existing budgets. This will allow London Plus to continue the Community Resilience Fund Round 2; and will take total expenditure to £88,000.

Decision:

That the Executive Director of Strategy and Communications approves expenditure of up to £27,500, to enable Greater London Volunteering (London Plus) to extend grants to community or voluntary-sector organisations for improving local community resilience practice. This will result in total expenditure of up to £88,000 in relation to Round 2 of the Community Resilience Fund.

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:

02/09/2024

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 the LRF and resilience partners at the local authority level.
- 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, has 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. The London Communities Emergencies Partnership (LCEP) brings together the community, faith, funders, equalities and voluntary sectors. LCEP contributes directly to the LRF exercising an emergency response whilst supporting civil society engagement in resilience. LCEP is managed by Greater London Volunteering (London Plus), which works to connect London's VCS.
- 1.5. Round 1 projects of the Community Resilience Fund started in January 2023, and were completed in September 2023. A midpoint project evaluation was conducted by Kingston University, London. End-of-project reporting has also been undertaken.
- 1.6. In March 2024, Round 2 of the Community Resilience Fund was launched. Like in the previous round, this is delivered in partnership with London Plus. Eleven VCS organisations, across 11 London boroughs, were awarded funding to improve local community resilience practice. The projects were selected by London Plus and the GLA through a competitive and public grant process open for registered charitable organisations. These projects, led by the VCS organisations, are working collaboratively with their BRFs and local authorities.
- 1.7. The 11 organisations funded include:
 - Bexley Voluntary Service Council
 - Community Links Bromley
 - Community Southwark
 - Ealing and Hounslow Community Voluntary Service
 - Richmond upon Thames Council for Voluntary Service
 - Thames Life
 - Volunteer Centre Hackney
 - Hammersmith & Fulham Volunteer Centre
 - Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea
 - CVS Brent
 - Voluntary Action Harrow CIC.

- 1.8. Round 2 projects are well under way, and partnership working with local authorities is off to a good start. Round 2 grantees have been connected to Round 1 projects to share experience and learning.
- 1.9. The GLA partnered with Building Resilience Together (an Aviva-funded partnership between Aviva, Communities Prepared and the British Red Cross) to provide training and resources to further support grantees working alongside local authorities to develop Community Emergency Plans.
- 1.10. All projects have undertaken training sessions, including developing Community Emergency Plans, and Volunteer and Incident Management.
- 1.11. Following the first six months of the Community Resilience Fund Round 2, a variation to the GLA's agreement with London Plus is proposed, to provide additional investment of up to £27,500. This would enable each grantee organisation listed above to receive an extra £2,500, as a contribution to the costs of continuing their work for three more months. To date, these VCS organisations have been delivering their projects by attending training; building on their relationships with local authorities; and engaging with organisations from the wider VCS.
- 1.12. This funding will enable an extension to the Community Resilience Fund Round 2. This extension is required for funded 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. These plans cannot be completed within this initial six-month pilot; and many of these organisations are considering how they will continue this work.

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.

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 projects will improve engagement of VCS organisations in resilience and formal emergency planning structures through local BRFs.
- 3.3. Community Resilience Fund grantees bring invaluable knowledge, insights, connections and trust with London's diverse communities; and are best placed to support in communicating and responding to emergencies.
- 3.4. Partnership working between local authorities and community-led diverse groups will continue to improve representation and bring in voices excluded in policy and emergency planning places.
- 3.5. 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.
- 3.6. The inclusion of community partnerships at a local level will improve mechanisms for the LRF to engage with these partners.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1. The following key risks have been identified:

Risk	Mitigation measures	Current probability (1-4)	Current impact (1-4)	RAG
The grant extensions are not widely taken up, and more than one of the projects does not continue.	Each Community Resilience Fund Round 2 project 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 to allocate an additional financial contribution of £27,500 from the London Resilience Unit's existing budgets in 2024-25, to extend delivery of community grants taking total expenditure to £88,000.
- 5.2. London Plus is required, in its provision of grant-management services, to monitor funded projects against outcomes (as outlined in section 2, above); and to include specific deliverables in funding agreements with VCS organisations.
- 5.3. London Plus's award and management of the funding will be overseen by the City Resilience team in the London Resilience Unit, within the Strategy and Communications directorate.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1. The foregoing sections of this report indicate that the decisions requested of the Director of Resilience concern the exercise of the GLA's general powers, falling within the GLA's statutory powers to do such things considered to further – or that are facilitative of, or conducive or incidental to – the promotion of skills development, job creation and economic development in Greater London.
- 6.2. In implementing the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought, officers should comply with the GLA'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.
- 6.3. In taking the decisions requested, the Director of Resilience must have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, namely the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010; to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (race, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment) and persons who do not share it; and to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. To this end, the Director of Resilience should have particular regard to section 3 (above) of this report.
- 6.4. Paragraph 1.11, above, indicates that the further contribution of up to £27,500 to London Plus amounts to the provision of grant funding and not payment for services. Officers must ensure that the funding is distributed fairly; transparently; and in accordance with the GLA's equalities requirements, and the requirements of section 12 of the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code.
- 6.5. Furthermore, officers must ensure that an appropriate funding agreement is in place (or varied if applicable) between, and executed by, the GLA and the recipient before: any commitment to fund is made; and any funding is paid to the recipient.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

- 7.1. The Community Resilience Fund will be delivered through grant funding to VCS organisations. These organisations will work with and through their local authorities and BRFs.

Activity	Timeline
Offer of extension	September 2024
Delivery start date	October 2024
Final evaluation	January 2025
Project closure	January 2025

Appendices and supporting papers:

- MD2845
- DD263

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:

Millie Williamson has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service:

Katherine Richardson 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.

✓

Mayoral Delivery Board

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Mayoral Delivery Board on 2 September 2024.

✓

INTERIM CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER:

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

Signature:



Date:

02/09/2024