**WMFN**

**Members Roundtable Exchange 23rd April 2024**

**National Lottery Heritage Fund: Jackie Lee** **Jackie.Lee@heritagefund.org.uk/**

**Natalie.Osborne@heritagefund.org.uk**

As part of the delivery of their 10-year strategy:

The Fund’s 4 Investment Principles will underpin the approach:

* **Saving heritage**: conserving and valuing heritage, for now and the future.
* **Protecting the environment**: supporting nature recovery and environmental sustainability.
* **Inclusion, access and participation**: supporting greater inclusion, diversity, access and participation in heritage.
* **Organisational sustainability**: strengthening heritage to be adaptive and financially resilient, contributing to communities and economies.

Projects will be asked to take all four investment principles into account in their applications.

For 2024-25 the summarised plans for the different programmes on website: Strategic programmes will look to transform the heritage in 20 different places, put heritage at the centre of local approaches to boost pride in place, revitalise local economies and improve people’s connection to where they live, work and visit. The programmes on Nature Cities and Towns; Integrated Landscapes and Heritage in Need. <https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/about/heritage-2033-strategy/delivery-plan-2023-2026#heading-2>

Natalie Osborne, Regional Manager, will be covering Stoke and Walsall to get in contact: Natalie.Osborne@heritagefund.org.uk

The Fund is holding guidance sessions to potential applications offering up to 50 places and running 2 a month currently. There is also the availability of an initial online enquiry form where an organisation can put forward their idea for an application and receive feedback on its eligibility to help decide whether it’s worth putting in an application.

**The National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF)** **Zyllah.MoranneBrown@tnlcommunityfund.org.uk**

Zyllah is grants officer that covers the Birmingham area.

The A4A programme now has a ceiling of £20k that organisations can apply for that can be spent either over 12 months or 2 years. An organisation can only hold 1 NLCF grant at any one time. The turnaround for decisions is 16 weeks approximately due to the volume of applications being received. The general size of grants requests are averaging between £14k - £17k.

<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/under10k>

Reaching Communities above £20k - £500k over a 5-year period– seeing a wider range of applications being received from Birmingham and this seems to be due to the Birmingham City Council budgetary cuts and organisations anticipating the impact its likely to have on

their income and service delivery. The requests for grant are also on average higher than in previous year due to the cost of living impact, salary rises and utilities’ costs.

<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/reaching-communities-england>

The implementation of the new 3-year strategy is still being discussed internally and is likely to be clearer on its implementation in June/July 2024. There is the possibility of a grants programme for request of up to £50k and that the Phoenix Way Programme as well as other potential ways to pilot such a funding programme is being considered to understand the value of having this level of grant programme funding.

**WMCA: Tony Thapar - Community Environment Fund contact:** **tony.thapar@wmca.org.uk**

Tony is currently seconded from the NLCF and leading on the Community Environment Fund at WMCA.

A fund of £1million is available to support communities in delivering initiatives that improve the environment and people's lives.

Approximately 30 small grants of up to £25,000 and 5 large grants of up to £100,000 will be awarded for projects under the following project themes:

* **Natural environment** - to protect, restore and enhance nature and wildlife.​
* **Access to green space** - to provide better access to and community use of green space for health and wellbeing – similar to the recent [Community Green Grants programme](https://www.wmca.org.uk/what-we-do/environment-and-energy/community-green-grants/).​
* **Climate adaptation** - to make communities more resilient and prepared for the impacts of climate change
* **Circular economy** - to reduce waste and keep resources and materials in use for as long as possible​.
* **Environment awareness** - to improve knowledge of environment issues and support behaviour change.

WMCA has appointed Heart of England Community Foundation (HoECF) to support with the delivery of the Community Environment Fund and the application process is being managed using [HoECF’s](https://www.heartofenglandcf.co.uk/) website.

<https://www.wmca.org.uk/what-we-do/environment-energy/community-environment-fund/>

Tony has received a good number of applications to date and could commit the majority of the funds by June 2024.

One of the key issues raised was the lack of awareness and understanding about climate adaptations in the VCSE sector and this is likely to be the case for funders as well.

In addition, from wider work at both NLCF and WMCA, there were probably three aspects that seem key in looking at environmental concerns for funders:

* Promoting a sustainability agenda in grant making
* The relationship between cost of living issues and tackling environmental and sustainability issues
* Implementing adaptations for climate change

**Tony particularly would be interested to work with members and wider funders on adaptations to climate change.**

Resources on climate change and environmental concerns:

The Groundwork Capital Grants under VCSE Energy Efficiency Scheme <https://x.com/groundworkuk/status/1749356387656769831?s=20>

<https://www.sustainabilitywestmidlands.org.uk/resources/adapt-to-survive/>

<https://www.wmca.org.uk/news/16m-fund-to-help-homeowners-pay-for-energy-efficiency-improvements/>

Carbon Literacy Training - <https://www.wmca.org.uk/what-we-do/environment/carbon-literacy-training/>

<https://www.greenfunders.org/>

**BVSC Section 114 Birmingham City Council and announced budgetary cuts for next 2 years: Elizabeth Goodchild**

**elizabethg@bvsc.org**

A presentation was provided by Elizabeth and is attached.

**BVSC organised a briefing with Council Leader, Cllr John Cotton and Acting Chief Executive, Prof Graeme Betts on the outcome of section 114 and announced budgetary cuts held in April.**

BVSC will be adding to their website a summary of the key questions and responses received at the session in April. A copy of the presentation is attached.

The savings proposals provide a mix of threats and opportunities for the VCFSE sector including:

* **Grants, Contracts & Funding –**
* These will be reviewed with recommissioning
* Inflationary uplifts may be removed
* Service providers may be asked to deliver a higher level of service for less money or provide additional services
* There may be increased competition for funding elsewhere but also collaborative funding and procurement opportunities both within the sector and with public/ private sectors
* The Council’s Community Empowerment Fund may provide some short-term relief
* **Cost of Living –**
* Increased fees and charges may impact those Birmingham residents already struggling
* VCFSE sector organisations are also impacted by the Cost of Living and so may be affected
* **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion-**
* There is potential for groups with protected characteristics, who the sector support, to be impacted.
* The Council has undertaken a Corporate Equality Impact Assessment (27 February Cabinet)
* Individual Equality Impact Assessments for each Directorate are also set out in full here: [www.birmingham.gov.uk/equalityimpactassessments](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/equalityimpactassessments)
* **Social Prescribing & Voluntary Sector Pathways –**
* Service changes could potentially have an impact where the Council currently refers service users to VCFSE sector organisations
* **Service Demand -**
* There may be potential knock-on impact with greater demand for VCFSE services as Council services are cut
* **Community Assets -**
* Assets may be disposed of/ sold/ transferred to the VCFSE sector
* **VCFSE Service Delivery -**
* There may be potential opportunities for VCFSE organisations to deliver services currently provided by the Council

In addition, **Birmingham Together has commissioned an action research project based on** re-imagining future collaborations between the public, private and voluntary sectors to respond to the long-term challenges posed by the implementation of a Section 114 notice.

If any members are interested to find out more contact:

BVSC Director of Research Sophie Wilson:SophieW@bvsc.org

**WMFN Events Update:**

Data Hack Workshop – 1st May 2024 9.30am – 12.30pm @ Auditorium, 10 Woodcock St, B7 4B: Small group work on using different data courses and information to help inform funding approaches in Birmingham.

Annual Conference – 26th June 9.30am – 4pm @ Mauth Trust, Bordesley Centre, Stratford Road, B11 1AR: Participatory Principles in Funding Approaches.

Further information contact: dipali@wmfn.org.uk

Attendees:

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| Steven Simpson – HPLC Chair |
| Dipali Chandra – WMFN |
| Tina Costello – HoECF |
| Debbie Pippard – Barrow Cadbury Trust |
| Elizabeth Goodchild- BVSC |
| Stuart Ashmore – SCVO |
| David Cox – John Anvis Trust |
| Claire Haines – SCCT (apologies) |
| Pauline Roche – Roche News (apologies) |
| Tony Thapar – WMCA |
| Natalie Osborne – HLF (apologies) |
| Jackie Lee – HLF |
| Kate Slater – Baron Davenport Trust |
| Zyllah Moranne Brown – NLCF |
| Gerald Nembhard – Phoenix Way Programme |
| Kanisha Warrican – Phoenix Way Programme |