

## GRANT APPLICATION 2015/16 – ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATION

<b>Priority Corporate Outcomes</b>	To empower local residents and the community at large to play a more active role in improving their lives, local communities and public services To improve local people's life opportunities and family and community wellbeing To support engaged, cohesive and safe communities and work with business and local communities to ensure that Barnet's town centres benefit from growth	
<b>Organisation</b>	<b>VALUE YOU</b>	ref 373/C/UMB
<b>Address</b>	220a Fulham Palace Road, W6	

### Corporate policy, aims and objectives

The council is seeking to develop new and effective partnerships to deliver high quality public services having regard particularly to the significant reduction in government funding. As part of the process of delivering more for less, the council is changing its relationship with residents such that they take on more personal and community responsibility for keeping Barnet a successful borough. The development of volunteering supports a range of strategic objectives, encouraging active citizenship; helping build social capital; and promoting pride in the borough through a sense of ownership and identification. It helps people to lead a fulfilling and healthy life; supports skills development; and provides routes into employment and career progression.

The Community Participation Strategy aims to increase the level of community activity across the borough; build stronger partnerships between the community and the council; co-ordinate and improve the support the council gives to communities; and help the council to take more account of community activity when it makes decisions about how it delivers services and outcomes.

### Activities / proposal

Value You (VY) is a registered charity formed in 2013 which seeks to harness the support of communities and businesses to encourage and reward volunteering through a volunteer recognition scheme, working with businesses that want to help strengthen their local communities in the belief that they benefit from operating in a strong and stable local environment. The scheme, featured by ITV (London) during Volunteers' Week this year, provides a discount card and a gift voucher donated by local businesses to people who have completed 100 hours of volunteering for a registered charity or a hospital. The discount card is valid for two years pending a review of extending eligibility.

The scheme was launched in the London Borough of Ealing in partnership with the local volunteer centre in February 2014, since when it has been extended to five more boroughs, Camden, Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, Islington and Westminster. Supported by each borough's volunteer centre, over 300 businesses are involved, rewarding the work of nearly 1,000 volunteers at charities ranging from Age UK and the Samaritans to Befriend a Family and the Canal & Rivers Trust, and including volunteers at hospitals such as Charing Cross and Moorfields. Each participating business has a promotional page on VY's website to attract new customers from the local volunteering community.

Volunteers receive up to 20% discount at local businesses such as butchers, bakers, fishmongers, dry cleaners, florists, gift shops, hairdressers, cafes and restaurants and get two gift vouchers a year, such as for meals, flowers and beauty treatment.

This application is to help launch the scheme in Barnet as part of a further expansion into another six boroughs including Barking & Dagenham, Croydon, Enfield, Hounslow and Richmond-upon-Thames. It will follow existing criteria except that volunteering for other not-for-profit organizations, schools and other public sector bodies will also now qualify for reward.

Groundwork (London), the council's new contracted voluntary and community sector partner to empower local communities and promote volunteering, and Community Barnet (which runs Barnet Volunteer Centre) support the development. They have agreed to partner VY in promoting the scheme and securing the support of at least 50 businesses in the borough and will lead on certifying qualifying volunteers. The aim is to reward 200 volunteers from at least ten organizations and agencies within six months of the scheme's launch.

The Department of Health's strategic vision for volunteering ('Social Action for Health & Wellbeing') recognizes the need for volunteering activity to be recognized, celebrated and strengthened, a view supported by organizations and agencies participating in the scheme in other boroughs, which signify its success in maintaining volunteering on a regular basis rather than just the short-term. Evidence exists of how the scheme serves to promote volunteer wellbeing and recruitment, whilst building support amongst the local community for local independent businesses.

The proposal is recommended for support in this context and the scope that it offers to encourage and develop volunteering, complementing the strategic vision of making Barnet a place where responsibility is shared fairly.

#### **Cost and financial need**

The volunteer recognition scheme was launched (in Ealing) with a one-year grant of £35,000 by an Ealing-based charitable trust. Total income of £35,375 in the year ended 30/9/2014 defrayed expenditure of £24,026, split mainly between revenue and one-off equipment costs, and resulted in net current assets of £11,349, funds which combined with a private philanthropic donation of £20,000 to support the roll out of the scheme in the next tranche of boroughs. The charity's founder has led on implementation on the basis of part-time remuneration, but additional resources are required if the scheme is to be expanded, ultimately across the whole of London, as is proposed.

A budget of £26,205 has been presented for extending the scheme into six more boroughs including Barnet, of which £20,373 (78%) is to recruit and employ a project manager on a six-month fixed-term contract to develop relationships with businesses and charities in the selected locations and recruit, train and support a small team of volunteers to assist with administration. The balance of expenditure includes other one-off set-up costs such as redevelopment of the charity's website, publicity and materials, plus overheads. A grant of £4,368 is sought on the basis of apportioning the budget equally between the six boroughs, reflecting economies of scale.

To date, funding has been secured from two of the other five boroughs. A short-list of other boroughs exists in the event that not all of the authorities in question support the roll out in their area.

VY anticipates generating sustainable income from advertising and marketing opportunities available to businesses taking part in the scheme once it has been scaled up sufficiently across London to defray estimated annual on-going costs of up to £750 per borough, expenditure that reflects a level of voluntary input in each area. The proposed development of an innovative model of commission-based funding with small business partners will complement this strategy.

**Grant recommendation, type and conditions**

**£4,368** (from Edward Harvist Charity)

Start-up grant

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One-off grant

**Special conditions:**

Payment of the award should be made subject to (a) confirmation that requisite funding has been obtained to expand the scheme into a further six boroughs; (b) approval of an implementation plan in Barnet, to include collaboration with Groundwork and Community Barnet; (c) agreement of targets and milestones for monitoring purposes; and (d) the receipt of quarterly progress reports and an undertaking to provide an evaluation of the scheme's development in Barnet after six and twelve months.

**Target grant outcomes**

To reward, encourage and develop volunteering in conjunction with the local business community and build support within the community at large for local independent businesses.

**Date:** October 2015