

Report on	Grant Aid Review
Date of Meeting	14 th November 2019
Reporting Officer	Claire Linney, Head of Community Development
Contact Officer	Philip Clarke Community Support Manager

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To agree the Community Grants Policy 2020 - 2021
2.0	Background
2.1	Community grants – Council allocates funding under a range of grant themes each year and annually reviews and develops its grants policy.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>Community Grants Policy</p> <p>Council as part of its community grants and community support delivers grant aid across a range of community grant themes, along with Culture & Arts and Leisure. There are a total of 12 grant fund areas. The funding allocation across the 14 grants is in the region of £1 million.</p> <p>The grants have developed annually over the last 4 year period, with increases in grant award amounts and some budgets across a number of areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Festive lights increase in 2017 – 2018 by £27,000 pa 2. Sports Capital increase in 2016-17 by £100,000 pa 3. Capital grant – new grant developed for £50,000 in 2017; total budget pa. £150,000. <p>A review has been completed of the grants 2019- 2020 with regard to the following: Seeking to support sustainability within the communities with regard to grant support. Seeking to align grant budgets to funding pressures and to review additional support where required.</p> <p>A session was held with members to review the grants in terms of their impact and outcomes and areas for review and consideration, in line with budget planning for 2020 – 2021. Please see attached minute of the discussion.</p>

Following a review across the grants and in particular focusing on areas of pressure re grant applications, the following is proposed:

Budget Allocations

Community Grants

To amend the community budget allocations as follows:

1. To uplift the local community festivals in line with the pressure in the current year; additional budget £20,000.
2. To uplift the small arts, culture, heritage grant by £35,000 to £130,000, currently £95,000 (reallocation £5000 strategic arts, based on 6 strategic arts partners – new budget £85,000, £5000 venues – new budget £80,000, £10,000 Strategic community development – new budget £45,000).
3. Uplift to small community arts, heritage, community by £15,000

Sports Grants

To amend the sports budget allocations as follows:

1. Sports capital amend from £165,000 to £120,000 per annum, with a reallocation as follows:
2. Small Sports Development transfer £5000 from sports capital, new budget is £30,000 with EBA match funding of £35,000.
3. Sports Representative Grant – transfer £5,000 from sports capital, new budget £15,000
4. Schools Sports Grant – transfer £10,000 from sports capital, new budget £10,000
5. Sports Strategic Grant – transfer £25,000 from sports capital, new budget £75,000 (amend maximum grant award to £15,000)

Total Budget £35,000 Uplift to Grants

Sustainability

It is proposed to allocate the strategic grants on a 3 year cycle to allow the groups to plan ahead. This is for grants that have similar provision each year and will be based on annual monitoring with an officer to allow for development. There will be clear message that this is based on an annual review and development (officer review each year and update to Committee) and budget.

Strategic Arts and Culture

Strategic Community Development

Strategic Sports

Strategic Events

Venues

These grant themes will review additional requests if required.

Communications

It is proposed to communicate via letter of offer and covering letter the need to promote Council in all communications that they undertake and what this entails. A

	<p>reference in an AGM is not suitable communications it must be leaflet, newspaper reference, social media reference, poster/corryboards etc., with a clear Council message based on our communications policy. Council will provide pop ups for the strategic events. To consider a penalty, potentially a 20% penalty, on the final claim if communications is not adhered to.</p> <p>Process</p> <p>To open the main grants in February with a closure mid March.</p> <p>To open the discretionary capital grant at £150,000 for 2020 – 2021 in December and close end January (expression of interest December) to allow officer support in the development of the application.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<p><u>Financial & Human Resources Implications</u></p> <p>Grant uplift £35,000</p> <p><u>Professional Support</u></p> <p>None.</p>
4.2	<p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None</p>
4.3	<p><u>Risk Management Implications</u></p> <p>None</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	To approve the Community Grants Policy for 2020 – 2021.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Appendix 1 Community Grants Policy 2020 - 2021

Appendix 1 Grants Policy 2020 – 2021

Category 1 One Grant in Category Community Groups	Category 2 One Grant in Category	Category 3 Sports Groups One Category with exception of *	Category 4
<p>1. Small Grant in Arts & Culture, Heritage Community Dev. Maximum £1200, Budget proposed £130,000</p> <p>2. Community Venue Grant (incl. activity) Maximum £3000, Budget £80,000 80% Community development & greater than 10 hours weekly activity – 3 year funding</p> <p>3. Strategic Arts & Culture Grant Maximum £20,000, Budget £85,000 80% arts & culture group & dedicated performance space -3 year funding</p> <p>4. Strategic Community Development Grant Maximum £8,000 Budget £45,000 3 year funding</p>	<p>5. Strategic Events Grant Maximum £8,000 Minimum 1000 people attending Budget £75,000 (£10,000 GR TBC annually) 3 year funding</p> <p>6. Good Relations Grant Maximum £1200 Rolling programme Budget £35,000 Rolling Programme</p> <p>7. Community Local Festival Grant Maximum £1200 Rolling programme New uplift £20,000 to £90,000 Rolling Programme</p>	<p>8. Sports Development Maximum £1500 Budget £65,000 (£30,000 & £35,000 EBA tbc annually)</p> <p>9. *Sports Capital Grant Maximum grant £5000 To be matched 50% One call each year – can only apply every 2 years Budget £120,000)</p> <p>10. *Strategic Sports Development Grant Maximum £15,000, Budget £75,000 (Governing Bodies only- Salary) 3 year funding</p> <p>11 Sports Representative Individual & Team Maximum £250-£500 Budget £15,000 Selected by their governing body to participate in a representative team or individual sport at provincial, national, all Ireland or international level (outside of NI)</p>	<p>12. Discretionary Grant Up to £50,000 as funder of last resort Budget £150,000 (pending budget) Open annually – can apply every 3 years</p> <p>13. Festive Lights Allocation as per settlement Budget £105,000 (3 year funding)</p> <p>14. Schools access to sports facilities Grant Maximum £5000 Schools providing sports facilities to minority sports that do not have their own provision in areas Budget £10,000.</p>

Grant allocation -

Community (community, arts, heritage, general) Groups can only apply to one programme per year to Categories 1 and 2. Sports groups can apply to Category 3 and 2, and language groups can apply to Category 5 and Category 1.

Council also seeks for annual calls for strategic partnership projects in line with PCSP Action Plan and Good Relations Action Plan and partners on Regional Minority Languages support activities. Publicity of strategic partner projects to be issued January/February 2020 in line with plans.

Grants Process

1. Application and criteria set through Committee and Council.
2. Public advertisement for all grants.
3. Applications will be online or if required a hard copy can be requested.
4. There will be points of contact for queries on each grant area.
5. Applications will be submitted on line or returned to one central office which will then oversee the allocation to relevant teams for administration.
6. Eligibility will be confirmed upon receipt of applications, with 2 days' notice for ensuring all documentation is in place, telephone and email notification recorded.
7. Grants that meet eligibility will proceed to assessment to be carried out by officer teams, all declarations of interest are monitored.
8. Grants will be presented to Committee for consideration and approval, all declarations of interest are monitored.
9. Grants will be presented to Council for ratification.
10. Letters of Offer (standard template) will be issued to all groups.
11. Claims will be received as previous and verification undertaken.
12. Report to Council on investment of grant funding and groups supported.
13. Publicity of Council must be received for grant support in line with the LOO.
14. Advance payments will be provided, 50% up to £1500 and 25% up to £10,000.

Grant Eligibility Conditions

1. Groups applying for a grant must be a not for profit constituted community or voluntary organisation with an annual AGM, individuals can apply to the sports representative grant only.

2. Funding cannot be allocated for a project or venue where an existing SLA exists with Council for a project, building or facility.
3. Groups will only be able to apply for a grant as per the categories, this is to maximise the funding allocation to as many groups as possible.
4. The same project cannot be split across different grant categories.
5. Statutory and 'for profit' organisations, activities and recipients (incl. activities that receive statutory core provision are not eligible for grant).
6. Regional groups/organisations are not eligible to apply.
7. Applications that are not completed accurately and in full will not be considered.
8. Religious or political activity cannot be funded under any grant.
9. All applicants must present a project that will take place within the MUDC area (except Sports Representative Grant as detailed within this section).
10. Applicants must present a project that will be delivered between 1st April - 31st March each year.
11. Evidence of good governance; including annual AGM, Group bank account, financial management practice, insurances, etc. will be required.
12. Successful applicants will draw down grants retrospectively based on vouched expenditure, with procurement adhered to. Advance payments will be 50% up to £1500 and 25% up to £10,000 with final verification of all expenditure.
13. Group recipients should not have a membership charge for its users accessing its community provision greater than £250.
14. Group recipients should have no element of profit gain to any member or individual of its Committee.

15. Local Community Festivals should be free for people to participate.

The following items are not eligible for funding:

Hospitality greater than 20% of the grant threshold	Bad debt, loans, bank charges, deficits or arrears in payments of any organisation	Flags or bunting Alcohol	Groups or activities that discriminate against any section of the community
Activities, equipment or events that duplicate what already exist or that are covered by other funding	Salaries are available for strategic sports grants only (up to 50% of grant award)	Retrospective funding applications	Residential courses or training greater than 20% of funding sought
Celebrity appearances	Sports kits	Gifts or donations	Reclaimable VAT or other costs

Grant Criteria: Category 1

Strategic Arts & Culture Grant

To support strategic arts and culture organisations that play a key role across the Mid Ulster District Council area in the development and delivery of arts & culture activity through the delivery of their own programmes utilising their own dedicated arts & culture performance spaces. The service must:

1. Provide the structured delivery of an annual arts and culture programme within the organisations own performance space/theatre.
2. Provide accessible arts and culture development opportunities of a strategic nature that is providing for a large number of people across Mid Ulster.
3. Provide 100% dedicated arts & culture activity & be delivered by a dedicated arts & culture group.
4. Provide at least bi weekly arts and culture activities.

Strategic Community Development Grant

To support strategic community development organisations that provide for the Mid Ulster area. Groups delivering to the same area should submit a partner application to avoid duplication.

1. Level of Community Support Activity
2. Level of benefit – number of beneficiaries
3. Targeting of deprivation and social need
4. Quality and level of provision
5. Level of geographic coverage
6. Value for Money

Arts, Culture, Heritage & Community Small Grant

To support local communities deliver a range of local arts, culture, heritage, community projects for their local area.

1. Arts, Cultural, Heritage, Community activity and participation
2. Contribution to arts, culture, heritage, community development in the area
3. Increase and widen participation, addressing social inclusion and diversity
4. Contribution to volunteering and volunteer development

Community Venue Grant

To support local communities to make available their premises and community centres for the use of the wider community. Venues applying to the grant must be used for a minimum 80% community development activities.

1. Beneficiaries (number of beneficiaries and groups)
2. Level of community usage per week
3. Level of community provision – number of rooms and size etc.
4. Shared space usage
5. Value for Money – contribution of grant to overall costs

The venue must be open greater than 10 hours per week and the grant can be used for community development projects at 20% of the funding allocation.

Grant Criteria: Category 2

Strategic Events Grant

To support a number of strategic events that are providing for the whole of Mid Ulster District and are of a significant nature to bring people to the area and to promote the area at a regional level.

1. Social, Regeneration and Economic Return
2. Event Development
3. Promotion of Mid Ulster
4. Event Management Experience
5. Level of promotion of good relations and Inclusion
6. Value for Money

Note events with a target audience under 1000 people or events that are not receiving regional tourism attendance and coverage would be a local community festival event.

Community Local Festival Grant

To support local communities deliver a local festival in their area bringing people from across the area together.

1. Level of Community Benefit and Participation (number of days, activities)
2. Number of beneficiaries (local and neighbouring areas)
3. Promotion of Good Relations and Social Inclusion
4. Festival Development

Participation in the local festival must be free of charge at point of delivery.

Good Relations Grant

To support local communities deliver on good relations in line with the Government Together Building United Communities Strategy.

1. Contribution to the Good Relations TBUC themes : Our Shared Community, Safe Community, Cultural Expression through increased use of shared spaces and services
2. Contribution to Core Good Relations, addressing sectarianism, racism and prejudice through provision of increased shared space
3. Level of Community Benefit and Participation in existing shared space through increased activity
4. Targeting of Social Inclusion and deprivation through access to shared space and improved access to activities/events.

Grant Criteria: Category 3

Sports Representative Individual and Team Competitive Grant

To support Individuals who have been selected by their governing body to participate in a representative team or individual sport at provincial, national, all Ireland or international level, with eligible costs (accommodation, travel, food), to a maximum of a £250 grant may be available. Applicants must be resident within the Mid Ulster District Council area for a period of 6 months prior to the period of the grant application.

To assist recognised Sports NI sports clubs (affiliated to their governing body of sport) who are travelling to compete in a recognised (by Governing body) representative (of District/County) sporting competition. A grant for eligible costs (travel, accommodation, food) to a maximum of £500 may be available. The team must have qualified in a recognised competition by the governing body of this sport, and must be representing the District / County. The event/competition must take place outside of NI.

Sports Small Grant (Every Body Active)

To support recognised Sports NI sports clubs (affiliated to their governing body of sport) to develop and promote their sports and recreation provision within their club and to seek to increase participation through a range of activity including the Every

Body Active Programme target groups; Women & Girls, People with Disabilities and Areas of Social Need complementing general Sports Development.

1. Level of sports activity and beneficiaries
2. Level of benefit targeting of Women & Girls, People with Disabilities & Areas of Social Need
3. Contributes to promoting fitness and wellbeing and sports development
4. Other general activity provided to the community to engage and increase participation

Sports Capital Grant

To support local sports clubs/groups develop their sporting facilities and provision through capital and equipment funding support. Eligibility:

1. The fund is for not for profit constituted sports groups with the primary objective of providing sports for the Mid Ulster District.
2. All statutory consents and public procurement is in place.
3. Actual project cost quotations are provided with the application.
4. A maximum contribution of £5,000 is available per project, with a minimum match contribution of 50% (e.g. if seeking £5000 it must be a minimum £10,000 project).
5. For sports capital items or a one off piece of equipment of a value greater than £1000.
6. Groups can only apply to this grant once every 2 years.

The Sports Capital Grant is to provide a significant benefit to the local community:

Sports Development– supporting the development and enhancement of sports and sports groups across Mid Ulster.

Sports Wellbeing /Provision– increasing the number of beneficiaries of sport, and contributing to the physical fitness and wellbeing of people across the District.

Social Need/Social Inclusion – targeting those most vulnerable.

Sustainability – supporting the long term sustainability of sporting facilities & groups.

Council Corporate Plan – contributing to the Council's Corporate Objectives.

Strategic Sports Development Grant

To support Governing Bodies that play a key strategic role across the MUDC area in developing their affiliated Clubs. It aims to provide Grant Aid to those Governing Bodies that provide direct support to Clubs across the area in increasing participation

rates and improving playing standards through the employment of a Sports Coach.

The service must:

1. Provide the structured delivery of an annual sports development programme of a main sport.
2. Be delivered through a recognised NI Sports organisation; through or in partnership with a sporting governing body; with no duplication of coverage within the same area or targeting of the same groups.
3. Provide accessible sports development opportunities of a strategic nature that is providing for a large number of people across Mid Ulster.
4. Provide the programme through a partnership approach with local clubs and groups.
5. Provide a minimum of 50% dedicated sports officer to the area of coverage in Mid Ulster. Funding for salary development only.
6. Provide match funding of a minimum 50% to the sports development programme targeted within the Mid Ulster District.
7. Provide for an active sport within Mid Ulster.
8. Liaise with Mid Ulster District Council Leisure Development Unit.

Grant Criteria: Category 4

Capital Discretionary Grant

To recognise that there are times when a modest amount of capital investment in our community can create the potential for a much larger project to happen. In such circumstances Council could potentially be a discretionary funder of last resort to allow projects to happen and maximise investment to our areas and communities. Any contribution would be a small percentage towards a much larger project.

Criteria:

Capital funding – Council will consider providing financial support for capital projects, which are defined as projects which will provide benefit to the community for a period in excess of five years, examples of which may include a new building or refurbishment/renovation of an existing building. It will not provide support for acquisition of land, buildings or other assets such as equipment other than fixed plant for example permanently installed elevators/lifts.

The project funded must be in community ownership (satisfactory evidence of legal title or an appropriate long term lease will be required).

Not for Profit - Funding will only be considered for not for profit constituted community and voluntary groups which are involved in progressing a major community capital project which will provide significant benefit to the community within the Mid Ulster District Council area -Groups/organisations must be able to demonstrate that the majority of project beneficiaries (>80%) live within the Mid Ulster District Council area.

Community Benefit – A Project Plan must be in place to show community need and benefit and to avoid any potential issues of duplication.

Funder of Last Resort - The majority of funding at least 70% should be in place and that all funding avenues have been exhausted. Evidence of this will be required.

Statutory Requirements - The project must be at a state of readiness 6 months after letter of offer; with planning permission, land acquisition or lease agreement (if required), and other statutory permissions in place along with accurate costings.

Mid Ulster District Council Corporate Aims – The project must clearly demonstrate how it is achieving on Council corporate aims and objectives.

The project is a minimum value of £300,000, with Council funding to a maximum contribution of £50,000.

The Project must complete within 18 months of letter of offer; phased delivery and invoicing of expenditure can be accommodated.

A Group can only submit one call per project for this Capital Discretionary funding Support and a submission will only be considered by a Group once every 3 years. Groups/Organisations would be required to formally present to a Special Development Committee of Council.

Festive Lights Fund (award as per village settlement population – reference Area Plan Settlement report)

Direct provision of festive lighting will be provided in the main towns of Dungannon, Cookstown, Magherafelt, Coalisland and Maghera.

A grant programme (revenue and capital funding) will be delivered across the remaining settlements under the following criteria -

- I. The grant will be revenue (small items of capital applicable) and will support the supply, installations, maintenance, running cost of providing festive lights and any associated switch-on/launch event. The lights will be in a predominant village location visible to the wider community.
- II. The village settlements and populations will be as per the Mid Ulster Development Plan 2020 - 2030. The grant allocation will be based on village settlement size and range from £1,250 - £3,000:
 - Up to £3,000 settlements greater than 1000
 - Up to £2,000 settlements greater than 500
 - Up to £1,500 all other listed village settlements
 - Up to £1,250 all other listed smaller settlements
- III. Technical support will be available to groups and communities from Council Technical Unit.
- IV. The grant can only be issued to one group per area and the main overall development/regeneration/Chamber group will be given priority.
- V. All grant aid will be paid retrospectively to those successful applicants who submit appropriate paid invoices to Council as vouched expenditure.
- VI. Provision, installation and insurance, liability of lighting and any activity will be the responsibility of the Group applying.
- ix. Small settlements listed in the Area Plan that are not classified as villages will be considered for inclusion within the fund; if they have previously provided festive lights in their area.
- x. Letters will be issued to the main Development Group within the designated settlement with an offer of funding.

Schools' Sports Facilities Access Grants

To bridge the gap until the district Sports Facilities Strategy is available and delivered. It is specifically targeted at clubs which use, or plan to use, schools' sports facilities or at schools which aim to offer access to their sports facilities outside curriculum times.

To Increase access to underutilised school sports synthetic pitch facilities

To contribute to the cost of opening up and maintaining schools' sports facilities, thereby encouraging ongoing usage

To Increase local people's access to training and competitive play opportunities

To enhance access to team sports activities which are under-resourced or underrepresented

The maximum amount available under each strand will be £5,000 per club or school, dependent on level of usage. Up to £4,500 maximum grant for use of school sports facilities which have not previously been available for community use, up to an additional £500 grant on a pro rata basis.

Eligibility

Be a club using, or planning to use, school owned, synthetic pitch, sports facilities; or be a school which plans to provide access to such sports facilities by external clubs (see note below)

Be a constituted and not for profit sports club (although see Note b, below) or school

Be located in the Mid Ulster District Council area

For sports clubs: be participating in a sport recognised by Sport NI. A minimum of 80% of members must be resident in the MUDC area

Not have received any capital funding from Council in the 2018/19 year

Be able to demonstrate difficulty in accessing other suitable sports facilities

Not have benefited in the 2018/19 year from Council's: Sports Strategic Development Grant or Sports Capital Grant

Be able to demonstrate difficulty in accessing other suitable sports facilities

Incur actual documented costs in utilising/providing a schools' sports facility, or, able to provide documentary evidence of voluntary work or maintenance costs involved in maintaining the facility.

Appeals Process

An appeals process will be available for unsuccessful applicants. There will be no right of appeal in relation to the level of funding granted however appeals can be made on the basis of:

- That the stated process has not been followed.
- That the application has been rejected on the basis of eligibility criteria which had been applied incorrectly.
- That the scoring against the criteria for the programme has not been undertaken correctly.

Appeals can be undertaken in two stages if required:

Stage 1—an appeal must be lodged in writing within 10 working days of the date of receipt of a rejection letter. In the first instance the appeal should be submitted to the Grants Unit who will take responsibility for allocating this to the relevant senior officer. In all cases the appeal will be reviewed by the senior officer and a determination reached within one week of receipt of the appeal. If the appeal is upheld the project will be reassessed and an appropriate letter of offer issued. If the appeal is not successful the applicant will be informed and given the right to take the appeal to Stage 2 if required.

Stage 2 – if the applicant is still not satisfied he or she can request a review by the Chief Executive who will review the process and application and present their recommendation.

Grant Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation seek to ensure that funding delivers the required outcomes, that it is used as agreed and to provide a feedback mechanism to improve decision making.

Monitoring should seek to ensure that;

Value for money is achieved.

The predicted outcomes are delivered.

Council has received adequate communication/promotion

Procurement has been met

Where instances arise where outcomes are not being met, the officer will support the Group to address any issues.

Monitoring will include completion of an evaluation and monitoring form. A visit by an officer will be undertaken to 10% of projects that receive funding over £1500 threshold. This will complement the verification visit and will include the same random selection of groups.

Grants applicable – Strategic grants: culture and arts and sports, Strategic Community Development, Strategic Events, and Venues.

10% of small grants will have a project evaluation upon random sample. This will be undertaken by an officer of the Community Development Team, led by the Community Services Manager.

Capital projects; up to £5000 will have to issue evidence (e.g. photographs) of the capital and equipment investment alongside their expenditure return. A 20% monitoring visit will be undertaken on site to view expenditure items.

Discretionary Capital Grants will all be vouched on site for delivery of the capital development.

Grant Verification

Reference DFP Guidance on Grants and Reducing Bureaucracy in funding the community and voluntary sector - The Code applies to revenue grant funding only.

Micro Grants will be paid when valid receipts are received & checked. A 50% advance will be issued to groups with final verification of all invoices before the balance of the grant is paid.

Small grants £1500 - £10,000 financial verification will take place based on valid receipts being checked against agreed project expenditure. A 25% advance will be issued to groups with final verification of all invoices before the remainder of the grant is paid.

Verification will include completion of a claim form, signed by relevant people within the organisation, along with valid receipts and invoices.