

Report on	Grants Review 2017/18 and Grants Policy 2018/19
Reporting Officer	Head of Community Development Head of Culture and Arts Head of Leisure Services
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Is this report restricted for confidential business?		
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	

1	Purpose of Report
1.1	To seek approval for the Grants Policy 2018/19 and grant budgets.
1.2	To seek approval for the Advance payments of micro and small grants to Voluntary and Community organisations.

2	Background
2.1	<p>Council as part of its community grants and community support delivers grant aid across a range of community grant themes as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategic Event Grant 2. Strategic Community Development Grant 3. Sports Capital Grant 4. Community Venue Grant 5. Good Relations Grant 6. Local Community Festival Grant 7. Arts & Culture Small Grant 8. Community Development Small Grant 9. Sports Development Grant 10. Sports Representative Grants (team and individual) 11. Festive Lights Grant 12. Capital Discretionary Grant 13. Strategic Arts & Culture Development Programme (Arts Performance Spaces) 14. Strategic Sports Development Grant

2.2	To date Council delivers grant funding using a process of award upon final verification of cost receipts.
3	Main Report
3.1	<p>A learning review was undertaken of the grants delivery for 2017- 2018, and the following recommendations are suggested for 2018/19:</p> <p>a) Increase the amount of grant award for all small grants to range from £1200 to £1500. This aligns all small grants to close to the same level and avoids people seeking to make projects 'fit' the larger grant award and also avoids groups having to split their activity across a number of grant areas. This would involve amalgamating the small culture and arts and small community development grants together. From review there are a significant number of the same groups who apply to both the small community development as to the culture and arts for the £600 each. This will allow them to put all activity in one grant.</p> <p>b) Grants will be available per category, with groups only being able to apply from within one category 1-2 only and/or category 3.</p> <p>c) Criteria to remain as per 2017-2018 for the grants with the small community development and culture and arts to amalgamate to 'Small arts, culture, heritage and community grant.</p> <p>d) One Public Advert for all grants and then rolling for good relations, local festivals and sports representative.</p> <p>Timeline Community grants will open in February for a period of 4 weeks. Rolling grants will remain open throughout the year.</p>
3.2	<p>The audit committee of December 12th, discussed a proposal for advance payments for micro and small grants to voluntary and community organisations. This was considered and approved for referral to the Development Committee for decision. It is proposed for advance payments of VCO's of up to 50% for micro grants (up to £1500) and 25% for small grants (between £1500 - £10,000) as an interim measure and to review the process annually. The audit committee consideration states that it is the opinion of Council's internal control environment and governance framework that it should not be significantly weakened by awarding advance payments to VCO's.</p>

4	Other Considerations
4.1	<u>Financial & Human Resources Implications</u> <u>Financial</u> As per agreed plan budgets. <u>Human</u> None.
4.2	<u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u> N/A
4.3	<u>Risk Management Implications</u> N/A
5	Recommendations
5.1	To agree the Grants policy 2018 – 2019 for implementation
5.2	To approve the Advance payments of micro and small grants to Voluntary and Community organisations.
6	Documents and Attached References
6.1	Appendix 1 Proposed Grants Policy 2018/2019

Appendix 1 Grants Policy 2018 - 2019

Category 1 Community & Arts Grants One call	Category 2 Sports Grants One call (representative rolling)	Category 3 General Grants Rolling programme ((Strategic event grant on call))
Strategic Community Development Grant Maximum £8,000 Budget £70,000 Small, Arts, Culture, Heritage & Community Grant Maximum £1200 Budget £80,000 (£45,000 community and £35,000 culture and arts) Community Venue Grant (incl. activity) Maximum £3000 80% Community development greater than 10 hours weekly activity Budget 85,000 Strategic Arts & Culture Grant Maximum £20,000 80% arts & culture group with bi weekly arts & culture programme & dedicated performance space Budget £85,000	Small Sports Grant Maximum £1,500 Budget £60,000 (EBA tbc) Sports Representative Grant (Individual & Teams) Maximum £250 & £500 Budget £10,000 Rolling Programme Sports Capital Grant Maximum grant £5000 To be matched 50% One Call April 2017 Budget £165,000 Strategic Sports Development Grant Maximum £20,000 Budget £50,000	Strategic Events Grant Maximum £8,000 Minimum 1000 people Budget £70,000 Good Relations Grant Maximum £1500 Rolling programme Budget £40,000 Community Local Festival Grant Maximum £1500 Rolling programme £65,000

Groups can only apply for funding from Category 1 or Category 2, and or Category 3.

All grants will have a requirement on the application guidance that they must speak with the identified officer before they submit their application to ensure groups are supported.

All grants will have a lead officer who will oversee the grant administration through relevant teams, however to note all grants will be processed under the same guidelines and procedure with overall coordination from the Community Development Section.

Grants (Regional Minority Languages, Discretionary Capital Grant, Festive Lights all have their own separate off line process). To roll these out as per agreed in 2017-2018.

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 2018 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 to Groups 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 letter of offer.
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 (including 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 Mid Ulster District Council area (exception 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 management practices/policies, 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.

The following items are not eligible for funding:

Hospitality greater than 20% of the total project cost.	Bad debt, loans, bank charges, deficits or arrears in payments of any organisation	Flags or bunting Alcohol.	Groups or activities that discriminate against one section of the community
Activities, equipment or events that duplicate what already exist or that are covered by other funding	Salaries	Retrospective funding applications	Residential courses or training greater than 20% of funding sought
Celebrity appearances	Late applications	Gifts or donations	Reclaimable VAT or other costs

Grant Criteria: Category 1

Small Arts, Culture, Heritage & Community 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

Strategic Arts & Culture Grant

To support strategic culture and arts 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 culture and arts programme within the organisations own performance space/theatre.
2. Provide accessible culture and arts 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 culture and arts 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

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. Community beneficiaries (number of community beneficiaries and groups)
2. Level of community usage per week
3. Level of community activity
4. Shared space usage
5. Value for Money

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

Grant Criteria: Category 2

Small Sports Grant

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 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 Strategic 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.
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.

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 and groups.

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

Grant Criteria: Category 3

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

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 : Children and Young People
Our Shared Community, Safe Community, Cultural Expression

2. Contribution to Core Good Relations, addressing sectarianism, racism and prejudice.
3. Level of Community Benefit and Participation
4. Targeting of Social Inclusion and deprivation

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 Strategic Development Committee who will review the process and application and present its recommendation to Council for ratification. The decision taken by Council will be final.

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.