

Report on	1. Mid Ulster Business Marketing Grant Scheme Update 2. TRPSI Rural Business Development Grant Scheme 2021/22 3. Department for Communities Funding Immediately after Public Realm Schemes
Date of Meeting	16 September 2021
Reporting Officer	Head of Economic Development

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 provide Members with an update on key activities as detailed below.
2.0	Background
2.1	<p>Mid Ulster Business Marketing Grant Scheme Update Mid Ulster Economic Development Plan 2021/2022 was approved at Development Committee May 2021. An integral element of the plan was the delivery of Mid Ulster Business Marketing Grant Scheme, to support the immediate needs of Mid Ulster companies to help promote their business during the recovery phase of the Covid19 pandemic.</p>
2.2	<p>TRPSI Rural Micro Business Development Grant Scheme 2021/22 The Rural Micro Business Development Grant Scheme is funded through DAERA's Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation programme (TRPSI). This year's Scheme opened for applications on 1st July 2021 and closed at 12noon on 30th July 2021.</p>
2.3	<p>Department for Communities Revitalisation Funding Post Public Realm At a previous Council Meeting, Members requested details of funding allocated by Department for Communities (formerly Department for Social Development) immediately following the completion of Public Realm Schemes. DfC provides such funding to town centres in acknowledgement that businesses have endured a lot of disruption throughout the duration of the public realm works.</p>
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>Mid Ulster Business Marketing Grant Scheme Update The Mid Ulster Business Marketing Grant Scheme provides a 100% discretionary grant, up to £300 per company, to businesses trading within the Mid Ulster Council area. The focus of the grant is to support businesses undertake marketing/promotional activities during the recovery phase of the pandemic. Following receipt and review of online applications, funding is allocated to businesses on a first come, first served basis and this will continue until Council's</p>

total budget of £250,000 is committed.

The scheme opened to applications at 9am on 2nd August 2021. An update on the scheme as of 23 August 2021 is provided below;

Number of applications received	442
Number of successful applications & letters of offer issued	416
Total Value of Grant Aid awarded up to 23 August 2021	£124,936

Delegated authority has already been approved for the Chief Executive to sign and issue letters of offer for the Scheme. A list of successful businesses granted funded up to 23 August 2021 is contained on **Appendix 1**.

3.2 **TRPSI Rural Business Development Grant Scheme 2021/22**

This Scheme is targeted at the rural micro business sector and provides capital grant aid of up to £4,999 funded at 50% of eligible costs. Mid Ulster Council has an allocation of £140,000 in funding for this year's scheme.

208 applications were received before the closing date and a further 12 received late. Sifting of projects received is ongoing to identify further late applications received in full or in part as well as applications submitted from other Council areas in error.

Eligibility checks will now be carried out on applications received before they are assessed and scored.

The value of applications received is in the region of £640,000 so considerably above the funding allocation available. This means that all eligible applications will be scored and ranked highest to lowest with grant awarded in ranked order until the budget is exhausted.

The target timescale for assessment of eligible applications and issue of letters of offer is mid-October 2021.

Delegated authority has already been approved for the Chief Executive to sign off letters of offer approved under the Scheme with a full list of grant recipients to be brought to Committee for information as soon as possible following letter of offer issue.

3.3 **Department for Communities Revitalisation Funding Post Public Realm**

There were 4 public realm schemes completed in Mid Ulster; Dungannon, Cookstown, Magherafelt and Coalisland. A further public realm scheme is currently being progressed for Maghera.

The undernoted funding was received from DfC, immediately following the completion of public realm schemes.

	<p><u>Dungannon</u> received £81,369 from DfC in 2016/17. The funding was spent on shop front improvements, Christmas lighting, branding and marketing. (Additionally, MUDC invested a further £292,163 in public realm improvement works at Market Square, Dungannon, after the completion of the initial scheme).</p> <p><u>Cookstown</u> received £90,700 from DfC in 2016/17. The funding was spent on shop front improvements, Christmas lighting, promotional and marketing materials, videos and marquees.</p> <p><u>Magherafelt</u> received £165,176 from DfC in 2018/19. This funding was spent on upgrading two strategic linkages from the car parks to the town centre, aligned to the Seamus Heaney Home Ground project.</p> <p><u>Coalisland's</u> public realm scheme was recently completed. DfC requested Council submit a bid to the value of £250,000 and which Members agreed this should focus the following 3 areas; Lineside Environmental Improvement Scheme, Festive Lighting and Development of a new Town Brand and purchase of Branded Merchandise. Council is awaiting the outcome of the bid.</p>
	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	<p>Financial: Mid Ulster Business Marketing Grant Scheme Update £250,000 available from Council's economic development budget 2021/2022.</p> <p>TRPSI Rural Business Development Grant Scheme 2021/22 Grant aid to be provided by DAERA. An administration budget of 10% of the funding allocation will be available to Council.</p>
	<p>Human: Mid Ulster Business Marketing Grant Scheme Update Officer Time</p> <p>TRPSI Rural Business Development Grant Scheme 2021/22 Officers time</p>
	<p>Risk Management: Mid Ulster Business Marketing Grant Scheme Update Council procedures are being adhered to in the roll out of this funding</p> <p>TRPSI Rural Business Development Grant Scheme 2021/22 Council procedures will be adhered to in the roll out of this plan</p>
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications:

	<p>TRPSI Rural Business Development Grant Scheme 2021/22 Equality and Good Relations screening will be carried out prior to commencement of the Scheme.</p>
	<p>Rural Needs Implications:</p> <p>TRPSI Rural Business Development Grant Scheme 2021/22 Screening was carried out prior to commencement of the Scheme.</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
	It is recommended that Members;
5.1	<p>Mid Ulster Business Marketing Grant Scheme Update Note update on the Mid Ulster Business Marketing Grant Scheme; 416 letters of offer issued to businesses totalling £124,936, up to 23 August 2021.</p>
5.2	<p>TRPSI Rural Business Development Grant Scheme 2021/22 Note progress on the Rural Business Development Grant Scheme.</p>
5.3	<p>Department for Communities Revitalisation Funding Post Public Realm Note funding received from Department for Communities immediately after completion of the public realm schemes in Dungannon, Cookstown and Magherafelt, with a further funding award pending for Coalisland.</p>
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	Appendix 1 - Business Marketing Grants Scheme - Letters of offer issued up to 23.8.21