

Report on	Update on Department for Communities Access and Inclusion Programme 2023/24
Date of Meeting	16 th November 2023
Reporting Officer	Kieran Gordon, Assistant Director Health, Leisure & Wellbeing
Contact Officer	Leigh Gilmore, Health and Wellbeing Manager

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

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To provide Members with an update on the 2023/24 Department for Communities (DfC) Access and Inclusion Funding Programme
1.2	To provide Members with the list of projects approved for funding by DfC.
1.3	To seek approval to set up specific finance codes to incur expenditure for each project where required.
1.4	To seek approval to utilise the approved Council framework contractors, where required.
2.0	Background
2.1	The DfC Access and Inclusion Capital Programme for 2023/24 is designed to improve access to and participation in arts and cultural activity and leisure and outdoor recreational activity by people with disabilities across Northern Ireland.
2.2	DfC invited Local Councils to apply for funding available through the programme prior to submission to the Department for Communities prior to final Departmental assessment.
2.3	The maximum funding available for each project is £30,000 with a minimum of 10% of overall costs per project being met by Council.
2.4	Council-owned culture & arts, leisure, parks and outdoor recreation and tourism projects were eligible to apply.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	DfC launched the grant programme on 22 August 2023 and required applications to be submitted by the deadline of 21 Sept 2023.
3.2	In total, 5 projects were submitted by Mid Ulster District Council to the DfC Access and Inclusion Capital Programme for 2023/24, with 4 projects successfully progressing and being deemed eligible and subsequently being allocated funding (total value of funding towards projects - £55,591.05)

3.3	<p>The 4 projects approved for funding are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pool Pod installation for Dungannon Leisure Centre: funding offer £30,000.00 (total estimated value of project is £52,354.72) • Wet Gallery accessibility enhancement at Dungannon Leisure Centre: funding offer £8,919.00 (total estimated value of project is £9,910) • Accessibility enhancement at the pavilion at Cahore Playing Fields: funding offer £8,086.05 (total estimated value of project is £8,984.50) • Accessible Picnic Tables & Seating for various locations across district area: funding offer £8,586.00 (total estimated value of project is £9,540) <p>One application was rejected by the DfC moderation panel – this was for a proposal to develop further accessible access at Dungannon Leisure Centre – the DfC moderation panel has provided feedback and a possible alternate idea that could be considered for a future application.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<p>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</p> <p>Financial: Projects submitted are required to provide matched funding of a minimum of 10%. The 10% match funding requirement can be met from within the existing budgets of applicant Services within Mid Ulster District Council.</p> <p>DfC total value of funding towards projects as listed in section 3.3: £55,591.05. Mid Ulster District Council estimated contribution: £25,198.17.</p> <p>Human: Staff time and staff resource allocated to delivering projects. This can be met from within existing resources within each of the Service teams responsible for delivering each project.</p> <p>Risk Management: All projects approved for funding by DfC, will be required to be completed by 31st March 2024.</p>
4.2	<p>Screening & Impact Assessments</p> <p>Equality & Good Relations Implications:</p>

	<p>The Purpose of the DfC Access and Inclusion funding programme 2023/24 is to provide funding to ensure that access to arts, culture, leisure, recreational and outdoor activities is equitable throughout all 11 local authority areas.</p>
	<p>Rural Needs Implications: Rural needs are considered as part of the planned activity undertaken by Council Services including Culture & Arts, Leisure, Parks Tourism and Property Services.</p> <p>Rural needs are also considered as part of the delivery of the DfC Access and Inclusion Programme 2023/24.</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	<p>Members are asked to note the update on the 2023/24 Department for Communities Access and Inclusion Funding Programme and;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept the Letter of Offer from DfC for £55,591.05. • Approval to set up specific finance codes to incur expenditure for each project identified in section 3.3, where required. • Approval to utilise the approved Council framework contractors, where required, to deliver the projects identified in section 3.3 of this report • Approval to allocate the 10% Match funding for projects approved for funding by the Department for Communities through its 2023/24 Access and Inclusion Programme with funding to be met from within existing resources that will be responsible for the management and delivery of each project.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	N/A