

Report on	Community Access and Inclusion - Accessible Outdoor Seating Benches Support
Date of Meeting	8 th December 2021
Reporting Officer	Claire Linney, Assistant Director of Development Tony McCance, Head of Arts and Culture
Contact Officers	Philip Clarke, Community Services Manager, Margaret Quinn, Arts & Culture Assistant

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	Community Access and Inclusion - Accessible Benches Support – to agree to the delivery of accessible benches to community facilities to support the DFC Community Access and Inclusion Programme.
2.0	Background
2.1	<p>Community Access and Inclusion - Accessible Outdoor Seating Benches Support – DFC has supported Council over the last year to assist in ensuring facilities are as socially inclusive as possible; dealing with physical accessibility. Council has delivered a number of schemes across the District including arts, sports, and parks.</p> <p>DFC has updated Council that further funding may be available to continue to support access and inclusion in our facilities and wider community facilities.</p> <p>Programme Objectives</p> <p>The key objectives of the Department for Communities' Access and Inclusion Programme are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve access to arts, culture and active recreation venues across NI for people with disabilities; 2. Make arts, cultural and active recreation venues more inclusive across society; and 3. Increase participation in arts, culture and active recreation activities by people with disabilities. <p>The maximum project cost of delivery must not exceed £30,000. Council would be expected to match 10% of this total project cost.</p> <p>Council, as part of its community commemoration plan, had identified £5000 of funding to support the community with tree planting and or benches etc. To date a number of organisations (UK Green Canopies programme) have been supporting with</p>

	tree planting in communities, therefore this funding should be maximised for the provision of accessible outdoor seating commemorative benches.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>Community Access and Inclusion - Accessible Outdoor Seating Support – Council proposes to seek funding from the DFC Access and Inclusion fund to support the provision of accessible outdoor seating benches at community owned facilities. The need identified for the programme:</p> <p>At a recent meeting of Development Committee there was a proposal to maximise the number of chatty benches to support social engagement:</p> <p>There is a number of groups and communities who are keen to provide accessible benches in their own community facilities to support social distancing and greater access to activities.</p> <p>There is also a number of groups and communities who are keen to provide commemorative benches and also be accessible to communities.</p> <p>It is proposed to deliver the above support via delivery of an accessible outdoor seating bench, or funding for an accessible outdoor seating bench to a group for their own community facilities based on an open request process. Please see attached request form in Appendix 1 (this does not allow for picnic tables etc.).</p> <p>The aim of the support is to:</p> <p>Provide an accessible outdoor seating bench in a community facility to allow for social engagement, greater disability access to community activities, including arts, cultural, ethical commemoration and community activity.</p> <p>Funding can only be issued to a registered community/voluntary group, with a constitution, annual AGM, and operate as a not for profit group delivering within Mid Ulster District Council.</p> <p>The funding can complement other funding however it cannot duplicate other grant support.</p> <p>It is proposed to open the process early January to close after 2 weeks. The support project will be promoted via the community newsletter which is targeted at 1500 community groups across Mid Ulster.</p> <p>The request form is a simple format as attached. The recommendations would be brought to the February committee, with proposed agreement, to allow letters of offer to be issued for the funding and 6 weeks for project completion.</p> <p>Successful applicants must provide evidence that the outdoor seating benches have been installed at all community locations by Mid-March.</p> <p>To allow the timeframe to be met it is proposed that groups would have an option of either a or b –</p> <p>A - to take receipt of an accessible outdoor seating bench procured by Council to be delivered to your community location.</p>

	<p>B – to receive a funding contribution up to the value of £500 to purchase an accessible outdoor seating bench.</p> <p>The benches are to be installed at community owned community facilities. Any group applying should own the community facility or partner with the community owner with permission to locate the bench and ensure adequate insurance and access.</p> <p>Council will deliver the bench to each community location, but it will not be responsible for the installation of any of the benches or insurance. Upon delivery of the benches to groups they will become the responsibility of the group and Council will have no further involvement.</p> <p>The outdoor seating benches must be installed in an accessible location.</p> <p>If demand exceeds supply; Council may create a waiting list and distribute over a period of time or create an additional criteria, with reengagement of groups who have made a request, for area based provision.</p> <p>It is proposed that Council would purchase benches up to a value of £30,000 (£27,000 and matched Council good relations £3000), and complementary have a funding allocation of up to £5000 Parks under community commemoration with a match of £5,000 from good relations; to be overseen by community development.</p> <p>An application to the DfC Access and Inclusion Programme 2021/22 has been submitted for their consideration (application deadline 24 November 2021). The outcome of this process should be known by mid –December, in order to ensure delivery of approved projects by 31 March 2021.</p> <p>Members should note that at the time of the December Development Committee, it may not be known if the application to DfC has been successful. (an update on the current status of the application will be verbally relayed to members at the Development meeting of Wednesday 8th December 2021). Pending the outcome of a successful application to DfC permission is sought from Council to deliver both seating option projects as outlined above, (in the event that DfC funding is granted) seating option (b) only will be delivered.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<p><u>Financial & Human Resources Implications</u></p> <p>Community Access and Inclusion - Accessible Outdoor Seating Benches Support - £40,000 (DFC funding £27,000 and matched Council good relations £3000), and £5000 Parks under community commemoration plan, with a match of £5000 from good relations.</p> <p><u>Professional Support</u> None</p>
4.2	<u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u>

	None
4.3	<u>Risk Management Implications</u> None
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	Community Access and Inclusion - Accessible Outdoor Seating Benches Support – to agree the proposal to deliver the Accessible benches support To agree to go to quotation for the accessible benches.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	Appendix 1 Community Access and Inclusion - Accessible Outdoor Seating Benches Support – form



Comhairle Ceantair
Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster
District Council

Community Access and Inclusion – Accessible Outdoor Seating Benches

Please complete all details & return by Wednesday 19th January, 2022, close of play. Please contact Margaret.quinn@midulstercouncil.org Tel 03000 132 132 .

Please email your completed form to : artsculture@midulstercouncil.org

Programme Fund Information

Community Access and Inclusion - Accessible Outdoor Seating Benches Support –The aim of the fund is:

To provide an accessible outdoor seating bench (picnic tables not eligible) in a community facility to allow for social engagement, greater disability access to community activities, including arts, cultural, ethical commemoration and community activity.

Standard grant conditions:

1. Funding can only be issued to a registered community/voluntary group, with a constitution, annual AGM, and operate as a not for profit group delivering within Mid Ulster District Council.
2. Statutory and 'for profit' organisations, activities and recipients (incl. activities that receive statutory core provision are not eligible for grant).
3. Regional groups/organisations are not eligible to apply.
4. Applications that are not completed accurately and in full will not be considered.
5. Religious or political activity cannot be funded under any grant.
6. All applicants must present a project that will take place within the MUDC area.
7. Applicants must present a project that will be delivered by 31st March each year.
8. Evidence of good governance; including annual AGM, Group bank account, financial management practice, insurances, etc. will be required.

9. 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.
10. Group recipients should not have a membership charge for its users accessing its community provision greater than £250.
11. Group recipients should have no element of profit gain to any member or individual of its Committee.
12. The following items are not eligible for funding:

Reclaimable VAT or other costs	Retrospective funding applications	Flags or bunting, sports kits	Groups or activities that discriminate against any section of the community	Equipment or items that duplicate what already exist or that are covered by other funding
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Funding will be conditional to -

- I. Provision of an accessible outdoor seating bench in line with the stated criteria
- II. Confirmation of community location for the bench, including permission, insurance issues etc. all being addressed.
- III. Confirmation that delivery can be completed / monies expended by Mid March 2022 or as per Council delivery.

The funding can complement other funding however it cannot duplicate other grant support.

Successful applicants must provide evidence that the outdoor seating benches have been installed at all community locations by Mid-March.

To allow the timeframe to be met it is proposed that groups would have an option of either a or b –

A - to take receipt of an accessible outdoor seating bench procured by Council to be delivered to your community location.

B – to receive a funding contribution up to the value of £500 to purchase an accessible outdoor seating bench.

The benches are to be installed at community owned community facilities. Any group applying should own the community facility or partner with the community owner with permission to locate the bench and ensure adequate insurance and access.

Council will deliver the bench to each community location, but it will not be responsible for the installation of any of the benches or insurance. Upon delivery of the benches to groups they will become the responsibility of the group and Council will have no further involvement.

The outdoor seating benches must be installed in an accessible location.

If demand exceeds supply; Council may create a waiting list and distribute over a period of time or create an additional criteria, with reengagement of groups who have made a request, for area based provision.

Section 1 – You and your Group/Organisation

1.0 The Organisation's name and address:

Name of Organisation:

Contact:

Address:

Email:

Telephone number:

1.1 Please confirm your organisation is a not for profit community or voluntary group with an annual AGM and member volunteers.

Yes

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1.2 Aim of your group delivering community development activity

1.3 Project description

Please provide detail of the proposed location of the accessible bench – address of community facility and site location.

Please confirm confirmation of permission to locate and all issues such as insurance etc. are addressed.

Please confirm, if you are successful, if you wish to proceed with option 1 of your own purchase of a bench or option 2 where Council will provide it directly.

Section 2 – Checklist of attachments

The following documents are required with your form

- A copy of our constitution or set of rules
- List of Office Bearers
- Copy of minutes of Annual General Meeting
- An original Bank or Building Society statement not more than three months old that show your group's name, account number and current balance.
- Evidence of approval to site bench, if required
- Details of insurance relating to the project

If any of the above has been issued to Council already this financial year please state and you do not have to attach again.

☐ All above documents issued to Council in current financial year.

Section 3 – Verification and Authorisation

Data Protection Policy -All data gathered will be held securely by the Mid Ulster District Council in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. All such data will not be shared with any third party unless required to do so by law.

YOUR SIGNATURE

I confirm that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, all the information in this application form is true and correct. I understand that you may ask for more information at any stage of the application process.

Signed:

Date:

Chairperson, Vice Chair, Secretary or Treasurer