

<b>Report on</b>	<b>Covid Small Settlement Regeneration Programme</b>
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> March 2022
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Strategic Programmes

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To provide Members with an update on key activities relating to the Covid Small Settlement Regeneration Programme.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	<p><b>Covid Small Settlement Regeneration Programme</b></p> <p>At the January 2021 Development Committee, the Members approved the inclusion of 11 projects within the COVID Small Settlement Regeneration Plan to be delivered in 22/23 subject to funding from DfC. Council's regeneration Plan under this Scheme was submitted to DfC before the deadline of 21<sup>st</sup> December subject to any further changes agreed by the members at the January committee meeting. The submission also included a further 13 projects to be developed as potential projects for a 23/24 COVID Small Settlements Scheme. <b>(See Appendix 1)</b></p>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<p><b>COVID Small Settlements Regeneration Programme</b></p> <p>On the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022 Council received correspondence from DfC <b>(Appendix 2)</b> stating that four of the projects listed for delivery in 22/23 were considered ineligible due to geographical location being outside of settlement boundaries namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fivemiletown Rugby Club:</li> <li>• Drumcairne Forest</li> <li>• Altmore Forest</li> <li>• Kildress Community Breathing Space</li> </ul>

All other projects listed in Appendix 2 were approved by DfC.

3.2 On the back of receiving this correspondence from DfC, Councils Deputy Chief Executive and Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism & Strategic Programmes met with senior DfC officials for discussion on the decision regarding the four ineligible projects. During this meeting Council officers put forward a robust justification for the inclusion of all four projects and with the agreement of the DfC officials a revised regeneration plan was submitted on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2022 accompanied by a letter from the Council Chair reiterating the justifications for their inclusion and approval (**see Appendix 3**).

3.3 Following this submission a further meeting was called by DfC senior management and attended by the Chief Executive and senior Council officers where DfC informed there had been no change to the initial decision to rule the four projects listed above as ineligible again due to geographical location being outside of town/village centres. Despite strong counter arguments by Council officers during this meeting there has been no change to this position by DfC as confirmed by further correspondence received on 28<sup>th</sup> February (**See Appendix 4**)

3.4 DfC has stated within its correspondence of 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022 that the Department remains committed to ensuring Mid Ulster District Council receives its full allocation of £2.7m (including resource funding) under this Programme and that value of funding allocated to the four projects deemed ineligible should be reallocated to another project(s) which meet the programmes eligibility criteria.

3.5 In light of DfC's decision, two replacement projects have been brought forward from the 23/24 list previously approved by Council namely:

- Moy – 4G multi use floodlight pitch
- Bellaghy- recreational amenity within the village (in addition to walking trail to Long Wood already approved by DfC)

These projects fit with programme eligibility criteria, are identified on the basis of local need and are deliverable within the timescales of this Programme.

The revised list of projects for the 22/23 COVID Small Settlement Programme is now as follows:

- Castlecaulfield Recreation Area
- Castledawson (Riverside)
- Manor Park, Moneymore
- Coalisland Canal
- \*Clogher walking trail

3.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bellaghy - walking trail and recreational area</li> <li>• Clady recreational area</li> <li>• Moy 4G multi use floodlight pitch</li> </ul> <p>*Note – there is potential for Clogher walking trail to be funded under the COVID Active Travel Programme – awaiting confirmation. Should this be permissible costs attributed to Clogher walking trail could be allocated to other projects within this scheme.</p> <p>The Department has reiterated that there is now an urgency with approving Councils regeneration plan to secure funding with a letter of offer to be issued to Council, accepted and returned to DfC and funds transferred from DfC to Council <u>before</u> the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.</p>
4.0	<p><b>Other Considerations</b></p> <p>4.1 <b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b></p> <p>Financial:</p> <p><b>COVID Small Settlements Regeneration Programme</b> 10% match funding from Council on an overall allocation of £2.78m (capital and resource) approved by the P&amp;R Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022 subject to ratification at full Council on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2022.</p> <p>Human:</p> <p><b>COVID Small Settlements Regeneration Programme</b> Officer time to co-ordinate, implement and monitor delivery of the Regeneration Plan conjunction with the DfC.</p> <p><b>Risk Management:</b> <b>Active Travel Projects</b> Considered in line with Council Policies and Procedures.</p> <p><b>COVID Small Settlements Regeneration Programme</b> Considered in line with Council Policies and Procedures.</p>
4.2	<p><b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b></p> <p>Equality &amp; Good Relations Implications:</p>

	<p><b>COVID Small Settlements Regeneration Programme</b> NA</p>
	<p>Rural Needs Implications:</p> <p><b>COVID Small Settlements Regeneration Programme</b> This Programme is specifically targeted at rural areas of the District.</p>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	<p>It is recommended that Members:</p> <p><b>COVID Small Settlements Regeneration Programme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Approve the inclusion of projects detailed for Moy and Bellaghy for delivery in 2022/23 under the Covid Small Settlements Regeneration Programme.</li> <li>b) Grant delegated approval for the Chief Executive to submit Council's revised regeneration plan to DfC immediately following Committee approval given pressures on timescale for the issue of a letter of offer.</li> <li>c) Grant delegated approval for the Chief Executive to accept a Letter of Offer from DfC should acceptance timescales fall outside of normal Committee or full Council approval timescales.</li> </ul>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
	<p><b>COVID Small Settlements Regeneration Programme</b></p> <p>Appendix 1 – List of 2022-23 projects and 2023-24 potential projects  Appendix 2 – DfC correspondence 20th January 2022  Appendix 3 – Response to Gerard Murphy DfC 4.2.2022  Appendix 4 – Correspondence from DfC 28th February 2022</p>