

Report on	Department for Communities Access and Inclusion Programme 2020/21
Date of Meeting	Thursday 10 th September 2020
Reporting Officer	Tony McCance, Head of Culture & Arts
Contact Officer(s)	Tony McCance, Head of Culture & Arts

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 inform members of the 2020/21 Department for Communities Access and Inclusion funding Programme
1.2	To seek Council approval to participate in the 2020/21 Department for Communities Access and Inclusion Scheme and to request project submissions from internal Arts & Culture, Leisure, Parks, Tourism Services and to assess submissions received in advance of submitting all project applications to the Department for Communities for further project funding assessment.
2.0	Background
2.1	In 2017/18 the Department for Communities (DfC) worked in collaboration with Derry City and Strabane District Council and the Public Health Agency on the delivery of a pilot programme aimed at improving access to, and participation in, Arts and Cultural activities by people with disabilities across the Derry City and Strabane District Council area.
2.2	Following the success of the pilot programme, DfC secured budget in 2018/19, 2019/20 and now 2020/21 to develop an Access and Inclusion Programme for roll out across the 11 Council areas in Northern Ireland.
2.3	The most recent 2019/20 programme resulted in letters of offer totalling almost £158,619.00 being allocated to 7 projects (including 3 Council projects) within the Mid Ulster District Council area.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	The aim of the Department for Communities (DfC) Access and Inclusion Capital Programme for 2020/21 is to improve access to and participation in arts and cultural activity, leisure and outdoor recreational activity by people with disabilities across Northern Ireland.

3.2	This Capital programme is designed to support small scale capital investments to improve access to arts and leisure venues and recreational activities for people with disabilities.
3.3	The Department for Communities has invited Local Councils to apply for the funding and to prioritise project submissions prior to submission to DfC.
3.4	Subject to Council approval it is proposed that potential projects will be submitted from internal Council services (Arts & Culture, Parks and Leisure and Tourism Services).
3.5	The maximum funding available for each project applied for is £30,000.
3.6	Council-owned arts & cultural, leisure and recreational venues and facilities would be eligible to apply.
3.7	The Department for Communities' Access and Inclusion funding is only eligible for capital expenditure incurred from date of letter of offer until 31 st March 2020
3.8	Subject to Council approval it is envisaged that internal project submissions will be required to submit a Business Case and an application to Mid Ulster District Council for assessment
3.9	The current 2020/21 Access and Inclusion Programme opened on 3 rd August 2020.
3.10	The Closing date for receipt of applications is 5.00pm on Friday 11 September.
3.11	All eligible projects must be complete by 31 st March 2021
3.12	Applicants are eligible to apply for any amount up to the maximum of £30,000 per project.
3.13	The fund will cover capital costs only and cannot be used for the repayments of debts, retrospective grants or revenue costs.
3.14	The funding cannot be used for funding of salaries or wages nor for payment for programming, project or hospitality costs.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: DfC may not be able to fund all successful applicants, or support the maximum available grant award requested.

	<p>Human: Staff time and staff resource processing applications and assessment and scoring of applications prior to submission to DfC. Can be met from within staffing existing resources.</p>
	<p>Risk Management: It is envisaged that there will be significant interest in the programme across Northern Ireland. As such the funds available, may not cover all the costs of submissions received by DfC. Projects may be rejected on basis of the limitations of funding available.</p> <p>All projects submitted for consideration, will be required to be completed by 31st March 2021.</p>
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	<p>Equality & Good Relations Implications: The Purpose of DfC funding programme is to provide capital funding to ensure that access to arts, culture, leisure and recreational activities is equitable.</p>
	<p>Rural Needs Implications:</p> <p>Rural needs are considered as part of the planned activity undertaken by Council Services including Arts & Culture, Leisure and Parks and Tourism.</p> <p>Rural needs are also considered as part of the delivery of the DfC 2020/21 Access and Inclusion Programme</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	It is recommended that Council approve participation in the 2020/21 DfC Access and Inclusion Programme
5.2	It is recommended that Council request project submissions from internal culture, arts, Leisure, Parks, Recreational and Tourism services to form applications for funding to the 2020/21 DfC Access and Inclusion Programme.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	N/A