



10 April 2024

Committee Chair: Councillor T McGrann

Committee Vice-Chair: Councillor R Lynch

Committee Members: Aldermen – L Boyle, J McGrath, P Michael and S Ross

Councillors – M Brady, P Dunlop, N Kelly, B Mallon,
V McWilliam, M Ní Chonghaile, A O'Lone, S Ward and
S Wilson

Dear Member

COMMUNITY PLANNING COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Community Planning Committee will be held in the **Council Chamber, Mossley Mill on Monday 15 April 2024 at 6.30 pm.**

You are requested to attend.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Baker'.

Richard Baker, GM MSc

Chief Executive, Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council

PLEASE NOTE: Refreshments will be available in the Café from 5.20pm

For any queries please contact Member Services:

Tel: 028 9448 1301

memberservices@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

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**REPORT ON BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE
COMMUNITY PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING ON
MONDAY 15 APRIL 2024**

3 PRESENTATIONS

3.1 CP/CP/453 NI VETERANS COMMISSIONER – DANNY KINAHAN DL

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the attendance at Committee of Mr Danny Kinahan Deputy Lieutenant Northern Ireland Veterans Commissioner who will be making a presentation to Members.

2. Background

Members are reminded that in response to a proposal from a Member at the November 2023 Committee it was agreed to invite the NI Veterans Commissioner to a future meeting of the Committee to make a presentation.

Danny Kinahan, Deputy Lieutenant will provide a presentation to the Committee, a copy of which is **enclosed** for Members' information.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended that the presentation be noted.

Prepared by: Joanne Hamilton-Whyte, PA Director of Community Planning

Agreed and Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Planning

3.2 CP/CP/214 ARMED FORCES DAY 2024

Members are advised that a presentation on Armed Forces Day 2024 will be given at the meeting by Ursula Fay, Director of Community Planning and Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events.

Prepared by: Joanne Hamilton-Whyte, PA Director of Community Planning

Agreed and Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Planning

4 ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1 CP/CP/214 ARMED FORCES DAY 2024 MINUTES

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the minutes of the Armed Forces Day Working Group meeting of 20 March 2024.

2. Background

Armed Forces Day 2024 will take place at Jordanstown Loughshore Park and Hazelbank Park on Saturday 22 June. This will be the first time that the event has been held in the Borough since 2016, when it took place in Antrim Castle Gardens.

The theme of Armed Forces Day will be Veterans and the 80th anniversary of D-Day, and the event will be filled with entertainment, military displays, stalls, live demonstrations and family fun.

A Military Working Group meets monthly to co-ordinate the specific military aspects of the event, and a Council Working Group also meets monthly to oversee the delivery of Armed Forces Day in its entirety.

3. Previous Decision of Council

The delivery of Armed Forces Day 2024 on Saturday 22 June was approved at the June 2023 Council meeting when it was agreed to establish a Working Group.

4. Working Group Meeting

Members are advised that the Armed Forces Day 2024 Working Group met on 20 March 2024 in Mossley Mill. The minutes of the meeting are **enclosed**.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the minutes of the Armed Forces Day Working Group meeting of 20 March 2024 be approved as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

Prepared and Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Planning

4.2 CP/CD/445 KINGS AWARD FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval in relation to a request to assist Community Group representatives to attend a Royal Garden Party in Buckingham Palace on either 8 or 21 May 2024.

2. Background

Members are reminded of the two local groups; Muckamore Parish Development Association and Mayfield Village Community Association who were awarded the Kings Award for Voluntary Service in November 2023.

In March Presentation and Celebration Events for both groups, were hosted by the Council, in the Old Courthouse Antrim and Mossley Mill respectively.

There is an established precedent that recipients of this award are then invited to attend a garden party at Buckingham Palace.

3. Previous Council decision

Members are reminded that the provision of financial assistance for two representatives from each of the three groups awarded the Queens Award for Voluntary Service in 2022 up to £225 per person to attend a Royal Garden Party was approved at the April 2023 Community Planning Committee.

4. Request for Funding

Both Muckamore Parish Development Association and Mayfield Village Community Association have informed officers that they have been invited to send two representatives to a Royal Garden Party in Buckingham Palace in May 2024.

5. Financial Implication

The total approximate cost per person for flights, transfers and accommodation for one night is £300 per person and it is proposed that Council contributes up to a maximum of £225 per person, similar to last year to support groups to attend. Provision for the total cost of £900 has been identified by Officers within the 2024/25 Community Planning budget.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that financial assistance up to a maximum of £225.00 per person to attend a Royal Garden Party in Buckingham Palace in May 2024 be approved.

Prepared by: Jonathan Henderson, Community Services Co-ordinator

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Planning

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Planning

4.3 CP/CP/178 DEA MEMBER ENGAGEMENT GROUP MINUTES

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval on the draft minutes of DEA Member Engagement Group meetings.

2. Introduction/Background

The DEA Member Engagement Groups are an established part of the Community Planning engagement framework with meetings held three times per annum.

3. Previous Council Decision

The updated Terms of Reference for the DEA Engagement Meetings were approved at the March 2023 Community Planning Committee and provide the framework for the meetings.

4. Key Update

DEA Member Engagement Group meetings have recently taken place and draft minutes for the seven meetings are **enclosed** for Members' information, these will be formally adopted at the next meetings of the DEA groups.

The meeting schedule is set out below:

Date of Meeting	DEA
21 February 2024	Airport DEA Member Engagement Group
22 February 2024	Antrim DEA Member Engagement Group
28 February 2024	Ballyclare DEA Member Engagement Group
29 February 2024	Dunsilly DEA Member Engagement Group
5 March 2024	Glengormley DEA Member Engagement Group
28 February 2024	Macedon DEA Member Engagement Group
20 February 2024	Threemilewater DEA Member Engagement Group

5. Governance

The next round of DEA Member Engagement Meetings are scheduled to take place in June 2024.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the draft minutes of DEA Member Engagement Group meetings be approved as an accurate reflection of the meetings.

Prepared by: Conor Cuning DEA Engagement Manager

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna Head of Service Community Planning

Approved by: Ursula Fay Director Community Planning

4.4 CP/CP/113 BARNARDO'S - THE THRIVE PROJECT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval for the provision of £25,000 financial assistance for the 2024/25 Service Level Agreement between the Council and the Education Authority (EA) on behalf of the THRIVE Project and to seek approval for the THRIVE Project be invited to present at a future Community Planning Committee.

2. Introduction

The THRIVE Project is a collaboration of local parents, schools, community and voluntary organisations and statutory agencies working together to help children and young people in Macedon and Threemilewater DEA's to achieve their full potential and have the best start in life.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded it was agreed at the April 2023 Community Planning Committee, to provide £25,000 in financial assistance to Thrive for 2023/24. It was previously agreed at the July 2022 Council Meeting that a quarterly performance report on The Thrive Project be provided to the Community Planning Committee from September 2022.

4. Financial Position/Implication

Members are advised provision of £25,000 has been made in the 2024/25 Community Planning budgets in order to continue to provide support for the THRIVE project.

Other Community Planning partners have also confirmed their financial commitment to continue to support this group as outlined below;

FUNDER	AMOUNT
DE/DOJ	£118k
EA	£34k
ANBC (Proposed)	£25k
NHSCT	£25k
PHA	£50k
TEO	£25k
Barnardo's	£49k
TOTAL	£326k

A draft Service Level Agreement between Council and Education Authority (THRIVE Project) for 2024/25 has been developed and is **enclosed** for Members approval.

5. Governance

Elected Members from both the Macedon DEA and the Threemilewater DEA were nominated to serve on the Thrive Board at the Annual Council Meeting on

30 May 2023 with Cllr Brady and Cllr Gilmour nominated for their respective DEA's to serve on the Board for 2023/24.

Officers continue to work with the THRiVE Project and Community Planning partners to manage the performance of the Project. Quarterly performance reports will continue to be reported to the Community Planning Committee

6. Summary

Members are advised that a revised Service Level Agreement for 2024/25 has been developed for Members approval. The THRiVE Project have also requested that they be invited to present at a future Community Planning Committee.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that:

(a) provision of £25,000 financial assistance for the 2024/25 Service Level Agreement between the Council and the Education Authority on behalf of the THRiVE Project be approved with a quarterly performance report brought to future meetings of the Committee.

(b) The THRiVE Project be invited to present at a future Community Planning Committee.

Prepared by: Will McDowell, DEA Engagement Coordinator

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Planning

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Planning

4.5 CP/GEN/050 MJ AWARDS 2024

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for attendance at the MJ Awards Finals in London on 21 June 2024.

2. Background

The MJ Awards acknowledge the tremendous effort of those in local government dedicating themselves to supporting local communities in challenging times.

The MJ Awards bring people together to witness each other's achievements and gain the recognition that the hard work that has made a difference in the communities they serve.

Earlier this year, the Community Planning Team entered the MJ Awards, nominating Jonathan Henderson, Community Services Co-ordinator in the Community Engagement category. Jonathan, was nominated in recognition of for his long standing service and commitment to empower and support community development in the Borough whilst leading events and programmes including Community Development Grant Aid, Christmas Switch Ons and any special programmes such as the Coronation and Platinum Jubilee Programmes.

3. MJ Awards Shortlist

Members are advised correspondence, **enclosed**, has been received from the MJ Awards following Phase 1 of 2024 judging process. Jonathan has been shortlisted as one of 8 UK finalists in the Community Engagement category.

Members are advised finalists were officially announced on the 28 March in the finalist brochure, on The MJ Awards website and The MJ website. The second stage of the judging process, a virtual presentation, took place on Thursday 11 April.

4. MJ Awards Ceremony

Members are advised the awards ceremony will take place at lunchtime on Friday 21 June, at the Park Plaza Westminster Bridge Hotel, London.

It is proposed that the Mayor accompanied by an officer attend the Awards ceremony along with the Award nominee, Jonathan Henderson.

5. Financial Implications

Members are advised that the cost of Public Sector single seat at the awards is £360. Return flights to attend the Awards, have been priced at an approximate cost of £70 per person. Therefore, the proposed total cost would be £1290, which would be covered under the 2024/25 Community Planning budget.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that Mayor accompanied by an officer attend the MJ Awards ceremony along with the Award nominee, Jonathan Henderson, in London on 21 June 2024.

Prepared by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Planning

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director Community Planning

4.6 AC/GEN/083 CRE8 THEATRE'S DEAF ARTS PROGRAMME

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval to support Cre8 Theatre's Deaf Arts Programme through a contribution of £2,200 towards production costs and through the free use of the Courtyard Theatre for one week for production rehearsals.

2. Introduction/Background

Cre8 Theatre is a theatre company based in Newtownabbey which aims to develop people's confidence in communication through dance, acting and singing. Cre8 also aims to integrate the d/Deaf community into the arts sector in Northern Ireland, and to this end launched the Deaf Arts Festival in the MAC Theatre, Belfast, in 2023. Cre8 Theatre is committed to promoting:

- social cohesion
- social inclusion
- equality of opportunity and good community relations, through community engagement and critically-acclaimed arts practice
- links with marginalised communities to make the arts sector more accessible, with particular focus on the d/Deaf community in Northern Ireland

In 2024 Cre8 plans to tour a production of Sleeping Beauty with a cast including d/Deaf actors across the country, including performances in the Theatre at the Mill. In parallel with this, Cre8 will deliver workshops for primary schools at key stage 1 and 2 introducing schoolchildren to British Sign Language through storytelling.

Following a positive meeting with the Mayor in January 2024, Cre8 have asked for Council support for this programme through a financial contribution to the production of £2,200 to help cover the fees of two deaf artists. Cre8 have also asked for the free use of the Courtyard Theatre for one week to rehearse the production.

The production is scheduled to tour Northern Ireland in September and October 2024.

Cre8 have already secured offers of support from the Grand Opera House, Ards Puppet Festival, Enterprise Causeway, Halifax Foundation and Edinburgh Deaf Festival. Grant applications have also been submitted to Belfast City Council and Ards and North Down Borough Council.

3. Financial Position/Implication

The financial contribution of £2,200 requested from Cre8 Theatre would be funded through existing Arts Development budgets. In addition, five free rehearsal days in the Courtyard Theatre would equate to £1,500 in kind support.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that a proposal to support Cre8 Theatre's Deaf Arts Programme through a contribution of £2,200 towards production costs and through the free use of the Courtyard Theatre for one week for production rehearsals be approved.

Prepared and Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Planning

4.7 CP/GEN/005/VOL3 COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the draft minutes of the Community Planning Partnership meeting held on 21 March 2024.

2. Introduction/Background

The Community Planning Partnership is responsible for leading the Community Planning process in the Borough. The Community Planning Partnership was established in 2015 and is made up of Elected Members and representatives of each of the Community Planning statutory partners. The Community Planning Partnership meets twice annually.

3. Previous Council decision

At the Council's Annual Meeting in May 2023 it was agreed that Members be appointed to the Community Planning Partnership for the term of the Council to be allocated using d'Hondt and the Chair of the Community Planning Committee also be the Chair of the Community Planning Partnership.

The minutes of the Community Planning Partnership meeting of 5 April 2023 and the draft minutes of the meeting of 25 October 2023 were approved at the November 2023 Committee Meeting.

4. Partnership Minutes

The second Community Planning Partnership meeting of the Council term was held in the Yarn Suite, Mossley Mill on Thursday 21 March. At the meeting the minutes of the Partnership meeting of 25 October 2023 were approved and are **enclosed** for Members information. The draft minutes of the 21 March meeting are also **enclosed** for Members' approval.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the draft minutes of the Community Planning Partnership meeting held on 21 March 2024 be approved as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

Prepared by: Conor Cuning, DEA Engagement Manager

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Service Community Planning

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director Community Planning

4.8 AC/EV/025 BALLYCLARE MAY FAIR

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the minutes of the Ballyclare May Fair Working Group meeting of 13 March 2024.

2. Background

Members are reminded that the role of the Ballyclare May Fair Working Group is to promote, develop and organise the annual Ballyclare May Fair. The specific role of the May Fair Working Group is set out as follows:

- To advise the Council on the programme for the May Fair
- To organise delivery of the May Fair
- To promote participation in the May Fair by the Ballyclare Community and wider Borough Community
- To explore opportunities for sponsorship and additional funding for the May Fair
- To provide advocacy for the May Fair and achieve collaboration of a range of stakeholders into the design and delivery of the May Fair
- To contribute expertise, skills and knowledge from a range of sectors to the benefit and continuous improvement of this annual event so that Ballyclare DEA achieves maximum benefit from its delivery

The Working Group meets monthly from September to June each year and reports to the Community Planning Committee. Membership consists of all Ballyclare DEA Elected Members, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, and up to five non-elected voluntary members who are actively involved in the local community.

3. Finance

The approved budget for the event is £25,000.

4. Working Group Meeting

Members are advised that the Ballyclare May Fair Working Group met on 13 March 2024 in Ballyclare Town Hall. The minutes of the meeting are **enclosed**.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the minutes of the Ballyclare May Fair Working Group meeting of 13 March 2024 be approved as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

Prepared and Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Planning

4.9 AC/GEN/050 TEMPORARY EXHIBITION POLICY

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the revised Arts and Culture Temporary Exhibition Policy.

2. Introduction/Background

Members are reminded that the Council stages temporary exhibitions throughout the year in the Oriel Gallery, the Conservatory Gallery and the Garden Heritage Space (Antrim Castle Gardens), the Flax Gallery (Theatre at the Mill), and more recently the former museum space on the lower ground floor North of the Mill.

The management of these exhibitions is governed by the Temporary Exhibition Policy, which provides guidance for the organisation of temporary exhibitions both for those planned and funded internally and for those organised by external individuals and groups. The Policy sets out its statement of purpose, objectives, guidance for the programming and selection of temporary exhibitions as well as the responsibilities of both the arts and culture service and exhibitors, and sales commission guidance.

Members are advised that this policy has recently been reviewed by officers and by the Borough Arts and Culture Advisory Panel, and an updated draft of the revised policy is **enclosed** for Members' information. Two changes to the Policy have been proposed: first, that sales commission should be reduced from 25% to 15% to better support artists, and second that if the content of an exhibition is considered to be inappropriate once installed, the Council reserves the right to withdraw support.

3. Previous Decision of Council

The Temporary Exhibition Policy was first approved by the Operations Committee in March 2017, and approval for the last revision of the Policy was given by the then Community Planning and Regeneration Committee in March 2019.

4. Governance

The programme of temporary exhibitions governed by this Policy is regularly reviewed by the Borough Arts and Culture Advisory Panel, and the Panel also provides guidance on any potential conflicts with the Policy. Any further proposed updates to the Policy will be brought to a future Committee meeting for approval.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the revised Arts and Culture Temporary Exhibition Policy be approved.

Prepared and Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Planning

4.10 CP/CD/474 IPB PRIDE OF PLACE AWARDS 2024

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval in relation to the nomination of two community/voluntary groups to the IPB Pride of Place Awards in 2024.

2. Background

Members are reminded of The Annual IPB Pride of Place Awards in association with Co-operation Ireland the aim of which is to recognise the efforts and endeavours of communities throughout Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to make their place the best place in which to live.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded in May 2023 the Council nominated three groups to take part in the Annual IPB Pride of Place Awards competition namely:

- All About Us – ASD Teens (Community Wellbeing Initiative)
- Ballyduff Community Redevelopment Group (Housing Estates/Residents Associations)
- Newtownabbey Men's Shed (Creative Place Initiative)

Judging of the three entries took place in August 2023 and the awards ceremony was hosted on Friday 10 November 2023 at the Armagh City Hotel.

It was agreed at the October Community Planning Committee Meeting that Members and Officers attend the Awards Ceremony along with representatives of the nominated groups.

At the Awards Ceremony Ballyduff Community Redevelopment Group were announced as winners and All About Us - ASD Teens were awarded runners up of their respective categories. Newtownabbey Men's Shed received a Certificate of Recognition, for their nomination.

4. Proposal

Nominations are now open for the 2024 competition and this year there are 14 categories in total; 5 Population categories, 7 Single Issue categories with designated themes, and 2 Non Population categories. The Council can nominate groups in up to a maximum of five categories in all and one entry only in any individual category. The categories are listed below for Members' consideration:

Population

1. 0 - 300
2. 300 - 1,000
3. 1,000 - 2,000
4. 2,000 - 5,000

5. Over 5,000

Theme

6. Creative Communities
7. Climate Action and Biodiversity
8. Community Youth Initiative
9. Inclusive Communities
10. Community Wellbeing Initiative
11. Community Tourism Initiative
12. Age Friendly Communities

Non Population

13. Housing Estates/Residents Associations
14. Urban Neighbourhoods

Entry to the competition is by way of Council nomination. To nominate a group, a short application form has to be completed by the Council and submitted along with a short resume of the groups work and how it meets the entry criteria. The deadline for receipt of nominations for the 2024 competition is Friday 10 May 2024.

Following submission, an assessment visit will take place during the months of August/September 2024 where nominees will demonstrate pride in their place by oral presentation, exhibition of community activities and culture as well as a tour of the area highlighting the aspects of which they are particularly proud. During this visit it is also important that the community demonstrates real partnership with their local Council and shows that all sectors of the community are included.

Successful nominees will be announced at a Gala Dinner and Awards Ceremony to be held on Saturday 2 November 2024 in the Highgrove Hotel Monaghan. At this event Category Winners will receive a large trophy and a cash prize of €1,000 or sterling equivalent. Runners-up will also receive a trophy and a cash prize of €500 or sterling equivalent.

Officers would propose that the following two groups be nominated for the 2024 competition:

- Listening Ear (Community Wellbeing Initiative)
- Sensory Kids (Inclusive Communities)

A short summary of the work of each of the two groups is included below for Members information.

Listening Ear

Established in 2018 and operating from the Dunanney Centre in Rathcoole Listening Ear provides advice and support to those living within Rathcoole estate and surrounding areas on issues relating to employability, mental health, suicide prevention, drug and alcohol awareness and the cost of living crisis. In addition, the group has also created a valuable social network to get people talking,

listening and sharing on a daily basis.

Sensory Kids

Established in January 2014 and operating from Unit 58 The Junction, Antrim, the group provides children and young people with a safe and secure environment that will reduce their anxieties and promote their development as well as helping parents to understand and support their children's needs. In addition, the group offer opportunities in volunteering, training, skills development and potential routes to employment in part time admin, professional therapies and technical support.

Members may wish to nominate alternative and/or additional groups. It is proposed Members should inform Officers of any additional requests for nominations no later than Friday 19 April 2024.

5. Financial Implication

The entry fee this year is £500 per group, provision for which has been made within the 2024/25 Community Planning budget.

6. Summary

Members are advised that Officers have reviewed the eligibility and exclusion criteria and identified the two groups proposed for nomination as those which best meet the aims and objectives of the 2024 Awards criteria, however Members may wish to nominate alternative and/or additional groups and they are requested to advise Officers of any request for such nominations by Friday 19 April 2024.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the two groups proposed for nomination to the 2024 IPB Pride of Place Awards be approved and that Members inform Officers of any additional requests for nominations no later than Friday 19 April 2024.

Prepared by: Jonathan Henderson, Community Services Co-ordinator

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Planning

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Planning

4.11 AC/ACG/012 IMPLEMENTATION OF HIRE CHARGES FOR COUNCIL-OWNED GAZEBOS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval to discontinue the loan of Council's event gazebos at no cost to external organisations.

1. Introduction/Background

In 2019 the Council's Rural Development Team (Grow South Antrim) availed of external funding to invest in portable gazebos for use in relation to the delivery of a wide range of Council events. There are currently 25 such gazebos, 3m by 3m in size, held by the Council's events team and used as required for Council events.

Requests to borrow the gazebos by various external organisations who are delivering activities and events across the Borough have been increasing in recent years. Occasional requests, easily facilitated by Council officers, have now escalated to 146 requests for 800 gazebos in 2023/24. Given the levels of demand now being experienced this service can no longer be resourced internally going forward as requests include an ask from the Council to deliver, erect and collect gazebos. On occasions gazebos which have been loaned are returned with damage and/or require cleaning before they can be used again.

To date no charge has been applied for loan of the gazebos or for the delivery and collection service as it has been in the main carried out by Councils parks and property services teams with initial low levels of use being within the capacity of these teams.

If this loan service is to continue external contractors will be required to deliver and collect the gazebos which would incur a cost of approximately £40,000 in 2024/25 based upon the 2023/24 levels of demand.

There are many commercial suppliers of this type of equipment who can meet this need at the market rates, which are currently in the region of £120 per gazebo for hire including transport.

In addition, the significant increased levels of use of the Council gazebos is significantly reducing the life of these assets. In 2023/24 £3,000 was spent on the replacement of six gazebos.

2. Way Forward

Given the current levels of demand for loan of the Councils gazebos and the requirement to engage the services of contractors at cost to meet this demand it is proposed that the Councils event gazebos are no longer loaned to external organisations. These organisations can be directed to hire companies who provide this service.

Alternatively, Members may wish to consider continued loan of gazebos, however this would require the introduction of a hire charge of £50 per gazebo with a minimum of 5 gazebos to be loaned for any request. This procedure should also include the requirement for all lenders to pay a deposit of at least £100 for this service which will be fully refundable providing the gazebos are returned in the same condition as borrowed.

3. Summary

The ongoing free loan of event gazebos to external organisations, including delivery and collection, is no longer sustainable and it is proposed that it be discontinued with immediate effect.

If Members wish officers to consider the introduction of an event gazebo hire procedure including appropriate charges, then a report can be brought back to the next Committee meeting. Any such procedure would still result in time resource implications and shorten the life of the equipment. Given that there are suppliers to meet this need officers would not recommend the introduction of a hire procedure.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the ongoing loan of Councils event gazebos to external organisations be discontinued with immediate effect.

Prepared by: Samuel Hyndman, Culture and Events Manager

Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Planning

4.12 CP/CD/444 ANTRIM AND NEWTOWNABBEY SENIORS FORUM

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the provision of £15,000 financial assistance for the 2024/25 Service Level Agreement between the Council and the Antrim and Newtownabbey Seniors Forum.

2. Introduction/Background

Antrim and Newtownabbey Seniors Forum aims to relieve poverty, advance education and promote the preservation and protection of health among seniors (50+) in Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough and its environs. They provide facilities and programmes in the interests of social welfare for the education, recreation and leisure time for senior citizens.

Officers have continued to work with the Forum and Community Planning partners (NIHE, PHA, NHSCT) to manage the service level agreement.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded that at the April 2023 Community Planning Committee it was agreed to provide funding of £15,000 through a service level agreement for the 2023/24 financial year to Antrim and Newtownabbey Seniors Forum. Officers have continued to work with the Forum and Community Planning partners (NIHE, PHA, NHSCT) to manage the service level agreement and performance of this Group.

Members are also reminded it was agreed at the July 2022 Council Meeting that a quarterly performance report be provided to the Community Planning Committee, from September 2022.

The 2023/24 Quarter 3 Performance Report was approved at the February Community Planning Committee and is based upon performance measures in the Service Level Agreement

4. Financial Position/Implication

Members are advised provision of £15,000 financial support for the Antrim and Newtownabbey Seniors Forum has been provided for in the 2024/25 Community Planning budget. Other Community Planning partners have also confirmed their financial commitment to continue to support this group as outlined below;

Community Planning Partner	Financial contribution to Antrim and Newtownabbey Seniors Forum 2024/25
Northern Health & Social Care Trust	£15,000
Public Health Agency	£15,000
Northern Ireland Housing Executive	£15,000

A draft Service Level Agreement between Council and Antrim and Newtownabbey Seniors Forum for 2024/25 has been developed and is enclosed for Members approval.

5. Governance

Officers continue to work with the Forum and Community Planning partners to manage the Service Level Agreement and performance of this Group. A quarterly performance report is provided to the Community Planning Committee.

6. Summary

Members are advised a revised Service Level Agreement for 2024/25 has been developed for Members' approval.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the provision of £15,000 financial assistance for the 2024/25 Service Level Agreement between the Council and the Antrim and Newtownabbey Seniors Forum be approved with a quarterly performance report brought to future meetings of the Committee.

Prepared by: Conor Cuning, DEA Engagement Manager

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Service Community Planning

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director Community Planning

4.13 AC/ACG/012 DEVELOPMENT OF WALKING TOURS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the ongoing development of walking tours across the Borough, including delegated authority for officers to set ticket charges for tours based upon cost recovery as a minimum.

2. Introduction/Background

Walking tours led by guides have had a significant growth in popularity and are established as hugely popular visitor activities. Walking tours offer a unique opportunity to explore a local area whilst being educated, informed and entertained about the history and culture of a place. Guided tours are often packaged with local hospitality experiences and have the potential to realise social and economic benefits.

The Borough has a unique landscape and history creating multiple opportunities for the development of guided walking tours for residents and visitors.

A range of walking tours have been delivered previously, limited to specific programmes such as Halloween and the Battle of Antrim, with ticket charges approved on an individual basis per walking tour.

3. Previous Decisions

Members are reminded that it was agreed at the Community Planning Committee in April 2023 that the Council become a member of Tour Guides NI and it was also agreed at this meeting that the Council become a Group Travel Partner with Bus and Coach Northern Ireland.

Members are also reminded that proposals to commemorate the 225th anniversary of the Battle of Antrim in 2023 were approved by the Committee in February 2023 and included walking tours with a ticket charge of £15.00 per person.

4. Further Development of Walking Tours

Officers have been engaging with both organisations above in relation to the ongoing promotion of the Council's visitor attractions such as Antrim Castle Gardens, the Gateway Visitor Centre, Museum at the Mill and the Coronation Garden.

For the incoming tourism season of Spring/Summer 2024 it is proposed to offer a range of walking tours from Antrim Castle Gardens with the following ticket charges applied:

£7.50 per adult

£5.00 per concession

with a 10% discount to be available to bus and coach tour operators for group bookings.

In addition, it is proposed to deliver a range of walking tours in Antrim Town Centre in June 2024 relating to the history of the Battle of Antrim with the following ticket charges applied:

£10.00 per adult
£8.00 per concession

It is proposed that officers continue to work with Tour Guides NI, Bus and Coach NI and other partners to develop new guided walking tours on an ongoing basis and as opportunities are presented.

5. Governance

Similar to artistic performances each walking tour presents a unique offering and has a unique financial model based upon such things as

- Tour guide fees
- Duration of tour
- Maximum number of participants
- Tour content
- Any added content such as food, drink or merchandise

Given this, it is proposed that officers are given delegated authority to set ticket charges for guided walking tours developed in the future at a level which offers value for money and ensures full cost recovery.

6. Summary

It is proposed that ticket charges for Antrim Castle Gardens and Battle of Antrim Guided Walking Tours are approved as outlined. In addition, it is proposed that officers continue to develop a programme of guided walking tours with the delegated authority to set ticket charges at appropriate levels to ensure full cost recovery.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that:

- a) ticket charges for the proposed Antrim Castle Gardens and Battle of Antrim Guided Walking Tours as outlined be approved;**
- b) officers be given delegated authority to set ticket charges for any new guided walking tours developed.**

Prepared by: Samuel Hyndman, Culture and Events Manager

Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Planning

4.14 AC/EV/024 NORTHERN IRELAND CHILDREN'S HOSPICE FUNDRAISING EVENT V36 AT THE VALLEY

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for Council support to deliver a fundraising event for the Northern Ireland Children's Hospice at V36 at The Valley on Sunday 2 June 2024.

2. Background

The Northern Ireland Children's Hospice is located in the Borough on O'Neill Road and is one of the current Mayor's nominated charities.

The Hospice provides palliative care for more than 350 babies, children and their families annually. In February it was announced that the Hospice was facing significant financial challenges which could result in a reduction in the services offered. The Hospice is a charity and relies heavily on fundraising in order to generate finances.

The Council has been contacted by Urban Events NI who are proposing to deliver a Fundraising Concert and Family Fun Day on Sunday 2 June 2024 in V36 at The Valley in order to raise funding for the Children's Hospice. They have asked for the Council's support to deliver this event.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded that in 2022 the Council supported the Northern Ireland Children's Hospice 'Elmers Trail' fundraising initiative and at the February 2022 Community Planning Committee it was agreed that

- the Council become an official supporter of Elmers Big Trail at a cost of £35,000;
- the Council host Elmers Big Trail in the Borough between 2 and 4 of September 2022 with provision of in kind support to cover all costs with income from ticket sales retained by the Hospice;
- the Council acquired the Elmer Elephant at the end of the project through auction, with the Council securing Elmer for £6,700;
- the Council provide a venue free of charge to host a Garden Party on behalf of the Northern Ireland Children's Hospice and provide in kind staff support.

At the Community Planning Committee in October 2022 it was agreed that the 'Elmer' purchased by the Council be located at Mossley Mill on a permanent basis.

4. Request for Support

Urban Events NI are proposing to hold a fundraising event on Sunday 2 June 2024 from 11am to 4pm in the V36 event space. The proposed format of their event is:

- Music concert featuring a range of tribute acts such as The Dolly Parton Experience, Bjorn Identity; The Spirit of Elvis as well as local artists such as Tyler Michael, Tiernan Heffron and Ryan Mac;
- Family entertainment including amusements and inflatables, sensory play and superhero walkabout characters;
- Market featuring a variety of food and craft stalls
- An admission charge of £5 per person to apply with a capacity of 8000.

Urban Events NI have requested Council support as follows:

- Permission to use the venue and waiver of all hire charges for use of V36; This will include closure of the entire park to the public;
- Provision of a ticketing service for the event including online booking facility;
- Promotion and advertising of the event using the Council's social media channels;
- Provision of waste management bins for the event including provision of bins, post event clean up and litter removal.

5. Governance

This is an external event supported by the Council. Urban Events NI will therefore assume full operational responsibility of the event including all liability and have confirmed that they will have both Employer and Public Liability insurance of £10million for the event. They have applied to the Council for an Entertainments Licence which will be brought to the April Council meeting.

They will be responsible for all aspects of operational planning which includes but is not limited to:

- Provision of an event management and health and safety plan;
- Provision of a traffic management plan including car parking;
- Provision of site and event specific risk assessments;
- Liaison with all relevant Council and external bodies including Environmental Health, Parks as well as PSNI, NIFRS and NIAS;
- Provision of all event content including required third party insurance cover;
- Provision of all event staffing including marshalling, stewarding and ticketing on the day;
- Provision of all event infrastructure including portable toilets, crowd control barriers, staging, sound and lighting and signage.

6. Finance

Urban Events NI hope to secure support for the event through sponsorship and in kind support. They have secured the services of a number of suppliers at no cost. They have full responsibility for covering of all costs associated with the event.

They have requested that they retain all income generated by ticket sales and that the usual 10% sales commission applied for the delivery of a ticket service for any third party event promoter is waived for this event.

The usual fee for hire of the V36 event space would be £2,000.

In addition, a number of usual bookings of V36 sports facilities need to be cancelled to facilitate the event with a loss of income of £488.00. The Park area will need to be closed to the public throughout the event.

A bond of £1,000 is normally required from anyone booking the V36 event space as a safeguard against any damage being done to the site which results in repairs being required. The bond is paid in advance and returned in full if the site is without damage after any event. It is proposed to also waive the requirement for such a payment in advance from Urban Events NI for this event with their agreement that if there is any damage to the event space or parkland as a result of their event that they will reimburse the Council in full for any cost of repairs. Pre and post event site inspections will be carried out by parks staff in relation to this.

7. Summary

Given that the Northern Ireland Children's Hospice is located in the Borough and is one of the Mayor's nominated charities it is proposed that the Council provides support to Urban Events NI to deliver their NI Children's Hospice fundraising event on Sunday 2 June 2024 in V36 at The Valley. The Council will support the event in the following ways:

- Provision of permission to use the venue free of charge and closure of the Park to the public;
- Provision of a ticketing service for the event, including online booking and waiver of the usual 10% sales commission fee with all income to be retained by Urban Events NI;
- Provision of promotion and advertising of the event through the Council's social media channels;
- Provision of bins for the event as well as post event cleaning of the site including litter collection

Urban Events NI will take full responsibility for the delivery of the event as outlined and the event will be promoted as their event supported by the Council.

8. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Council give Urban Events NI permission to hold their NI Children's Hospice Fundraising Event in V36 at The Valley on Sunday 2 June 2024 from 11am to 4pm and provide support for the event as outlined.

Prepared and Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Planning

4.15 AC/GEN/085 COMMUNITY FESTIVAL FUND GRANT AID

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval Community Festival grant funding proposals for 2024/25.

2. Background

As part of the Council's Community Development Grant Aid Programme, community and voluntary organisations can apply for Community Festival grant funding to support the delivery of community events.

A community festival is defined as a series of events with a common theme and delivered within a defined time period. It is developed from within a community and should celebrate and positively promote what the community represents. Community festivals are about participation, involvement, inclusion and the creation of a sense of identity and are important in contributing to the social well-being of a community. The fund is available to properly constituted community, voluntary and charitable groups based in the Borough.

A budget of £80,000 is included in the 2024/25 Arts and Culture budgets for community festival grant funding. In addition, a contribution of £27,700 is anticipated from the Department for Communities (DfC) Community Festival Programme but is yet to be confirmed. If this contribution is realised the total budget available for the Community Festival Fund category of the Community Development Grant Aid programme in 2024/25 will be £107,700.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded that a presentation on the Community Development Grant Aid Programme was made by Officers to the Community Planning Committee in September 2022 and the proposed changes to the Community Development Grant Aid programme approved. A key change to Community Festivals Funding was that Groups can now seek funding for up to three years for established festivals. The benefits of this are that groups can plan ahead with the security of three years funding (subject to satisfactory post event evaluation), need to complete an application only once and officers are released from administration of funding to support groups develop their capacity to deliver events.

Members are reminded that a pass threshold of 50% applies to applications to the Community Festivals Fund. Members should also note that proposed awards are subject to the receipt of all relevant supporting documentation, or the offer of funding will be withdrawn.

Following a Council decision in October 2021 the award threshold for Community Festivals Grants was increased from £5,000 to £10,000, effective from 1 April 2022, for festivals attracting in excess of 5,000 attendees.

In 2023/24 22 applications totalling £139,255 were approved for funding to deliver community events in 2023/24. There were 13 applications for £95,625 approved at the Community Planning Committee in February 2023 and a further

9 applications for £43,650 approved at the Committee in June 2023.

4. Year 2 2024/25 Community Festival Fund Proposals

Of the 22 applications approved for funding in 2023/24 there are 17 organisations who have indicated that they require year 2 funding in 2024/25 at a total cost of £97,000, with the release of this funding subject to satisfactory completion of post event evaluations.

A call for new applications to the fund opened on Monday 23 October 2023 at 12noon and closed on Monday 4 December 2023 at 4pm. Two applications have achieved the required 50% pass threshold with details of the applications **enclosed** for Members information. It is proposed to fund the two applications at a cost of £8,570, which brings the total cost of community festival funding in 2024/25 to £105,570.

5. Financial Position

The total cost of funding all community festival grants in 2024/25 is £105,570 with an available budget of £107,700 assuming that the anticipated contribution from DfC of £27,700 is received.

6. Summary

The 17 applications eligible for year 2 funding in 2024/25 were approved for funding in 2023 and it is proposed to fund the two additional successful applications year 1 funding of £8,750. The total cost of providing community festival funding in 2024/25 will be £105,570 with a budget of £107,700. Given that there is limited budget remaining it is proposed that there are no further calls to this funding stream in 2024/25 and the underspend is profiled to another Community Development Grant Fund Programme.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that

- (a) the successful community festival applications for funding of £8,750, be approved;**
- (b) there are no further calls to this grant programme in 2024/25**

Prepared and Agreed by: Simon Goldrick, Head of Arts, Culture, Tourism and Events

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Planning

4.16 AC/GEN/111 IRISH LANGUAGE BURSARY GRANT PROGRAMME

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval for an Irish Language Bursary Grant Programme to support young people from the Borough to attend Gaeltacht colleges during the summer of 2024. Funding is available from the office of the Deputy Mayor.

2. Introduction / Background

For post primary school children learning the Irish Language Gaeltacht colleges in the Gaeltacht region of Donegal are popular and established summer activities, which focus on the development of their Irish language skills, in particular conversation and vocabulary. Attendance at a Gaeltacht college is on a residential basis and course fees range from £300 to £500.

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are advised that an Arts and Culture Grant Aid Programme was approved by the Council in May 2015 and revised in March 2017 and April 2022. This programme provides arts grants to individuals of up to £500 to participate in specialist training or study with language an identified art form within the policy guidelines. Applications from post primary pupils to this programme for attendance at the Gaeltacht have previously been approved. This programme is a rolling programme with provision of £14,000 in the 2024/25 budgets.

4. Bursary Support for the Gaeltacht 2024

The office of the Deputy Mayor comes with a budget allocation of £5,250 to meet expenses of the office. The Deputy Mayor has requested that £2,500 of this allocated budget be used to issue 10 bursaries of £250 to young people resident in the Borough who plan to attend the Gaeltacht in 2024.

It is proposed that such young people resident in the Borough and planning to attend the Gaeltacht can apply for a bursary of £250 toward the cost of their attendance.

In order to be eligible for such a bursary, applicants must:

- Be residents of the Borough.
- Have parental / guardian permission to attend if under 18.
- Be in post primary education.
- Be registered to attend a Gaeltacht course in Summer 2024.
- Not already in receipt a public fund scholarship such as Liofa.
- Complete the course by attending for the full duration.
- Provide proof of payment of fees and attendance in order to receive the bursary.

Application forms can be made available on the Council's website for online application. In addition to demonstrating how they meet, the criteria above

applicants will be asked to submit a paragraph on why they wish to attend the Gaeltacht and what the Irish language means to them.

Applications will be assessed by a panel of officers and funding recommendations brought to the June Committee for Members approval.

5. Finance

A transfer of £2,500 from the Deputy Mayor's budget is available to be used to fund 10 bursaries of £250, with one bursary per applicant.

6. Governance

A draft application form including eligibility criteria for applicants is **enclosed** for Members information.

It is proposed that successful applicants and bursary recipients write a short paragraph about their time in the Gaeltacht when they return with submissions reported to a future meeting of the Committee.

If the scheme is approved applications to the Arts and Culture Grant Aid Programme for attendance at the Gaeltacht in 2024 will not be considered.

7. Summary

It is proposed to deliver a 2024 Gaeltacht Bursary Scheme for young people resident in the Borough, which will award 10 bursaries of £250 to support young people attend Gaeltacht colleges operating over Summer 2024 using a budget provided from the office of the Deputy Mayor.

It is proposed to open the bursary scheme on Friday 3 May and close on Monday 13 May 2024 with funding recommendations to be brought to the June Community Planning Committee.

This initial scheme will be evaluated upon completion in order to ascertain if there is a requirement for such a standalone bursary scheme in future years.

8. Recommendation

Members are requested to consider the recommendation that a Gaeltacht Bursary Grant Programme for 2024 be approved with a maximum budget of £2,500. This will provide 10 bursaries of £250 per applicant. Funding is available from the office of the Deputy Mayor.

Prepared and Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Development

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 CP/TD/026 and CP/CD/443 IMPACT OF COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS ON THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on an additional cost of living crisis payment from the Department for Communities (DfC) to specified community and voluntary sector organisations in the Borough.

2. Introduction

The DfC recognises that the ongoing cost-of-living crisis is adversely impacting many funded organisations. To help mitigate the impact of increased costs, the Department has recently identified funding to assist voluntary and community sector organisations mitigate some of those impacts.

Members are reminded that the Council manages a range of DfC funded contracts that financially support a number of voluntary and community sector organisations including the:

- Areas at Risk Programme
- Community Support Programme
- Neighbourhood Renewal Programme

The Areas at Risk(AAR) programme is delivered across six Super Output Areas in Antrim and Newtownabbey. The Newtownabbey AAR programme is part funded by the DfC, whilst the Antrim AAR programme is fully funded by the Council.

The Councils Community Support Programme supports staff salaries, the Community Development Grant Aid Programme and Community Capacity Building Initiatives. and Advice Services.

Members are reminded that the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme has been operating in Rathcoole since 2006. The Rathcoole Neighbourhood Renewal Programme financially supports JVC Hub and Newtownabbey Women's Group.

3. Key Issues

Members are advised that the Department for Communities has issued correspondence (**enclosed**) to reflect an additional non-recurrent cost of living payment of £1,500 for voluntary and community organisations. This has been accepted by the Council and returned to enable payments to be made prior to 31st March 2024.

DfC has identified the organisations who are eligible for this cost of living payment of £1,500 under the three Department funded areas as follows:

Areas at Risk Programme

- Monkstown Community Association
- Monkstown Community Forum
- Monkstown Boxing Club
- Church of the Good Shepherd
- Carnmoney Presbyterian Church
- Mossley DAM Project

Community Support Programme

- Community Advice Antrim and Newtownabbey

Neighbourhood Renewal Programme

- JVC Hub
- Newtownabbey Women's Group

4. Financial implications

Members are advised DfC have issued revised funding contracts to reflect the cost of living payment for voluntary and community sector organisations. They have been accepted by the Council and returned to enable payments to be made prior to 31st March 2024.

5. Summary

Members are advised that all eligible voluntary and community organisations have availed of the £1,500 funding offer from the Department.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the additional cost of living crisis payment of £1500 from the Department for Communities to specified voluntary and community organisations be noted.

Prepared by: Stefanie Buchanan, Community Development Manager

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Planning

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Planning

5.2 CP/GR/169 DISTRICT COUNCIL GOOD RELATIONS LETTER OF VARIANCE 2023/24

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members regarding a letter of variance up to a maximum of £121,783.35 received from The Executive Office for the District Council Good Relations Programme 2023/24.

1. Background

Members are reminded that the Councils Good Relations Action Plan is aligned to the aims and objectives of the central government strategy Together Building a United Community (T-BUC). The plan is underpinned by the following key priorities:

- 1) Our Children and Young People
- 2) Our Shared Community
- 3) Our Safe Community; and
- 4) Our Cultural Expression

2. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded that funding from The Executive Office (TEO) up to a maximum of £76,783.35 for the delivery of the 2023-24 Council's Good Relations Programme was approved at the September 2023 Community Planning Committee.

The TEO 2023-24 funding offer was a reduction of 47% (£68,087) from the 2022/23 funding allocation.

3. Key issues

Members are advised that correspondence **enclosed** has been received from (TEO) offering a variance of financial assistance up to a maximum of £121,783.35 for the Councils Good Relations Programme for the period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024.

4. Financial Position/Implication

Members are reminded the Good Relations Action Plan 2023/24 is joint funded by TEO and the Council with a required match funding minimum of 25% from the Council.

Members are advised that TEO offer of financial assistance up to a maximum of £121,783.35 to the Councils Good Relations Programme for the period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024 is a variance of £45,000 on the original Letter of Offer.

Members are advised the letter of variance has been accepted by the Council and returned to enable payments to be made prior to 31st March 2024.

5. Summary

Members are advised the letter of variance for the District Council Good Relations Programme has been accepted by the Council and returned to enable delivery and payments to be made prior to 31st March 2024.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that acceptance of the letter of variance up to a maximum of £121,783.35 from The Executive Office for the District Council Good Relations Programme 2023/24 be noted.

Prepared by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Planning

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Planning

5.3 CP/TD/095 and CP/TD/098 DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES INTERIM FUNDING POSITION 2024-25

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members regarding the Department for Communities (DfC) 2024/25 interim funding position and to seek approval for an update on the current budget position to be communicated to those groups and organisations anticipating funding from the Department in 2024/25.

2. Introduction

DfC recognises the important role that the voluntary and community Sector has in delivering support and services to people and local communities. Members are reminded that the Council manages a range of DfC funded contracts that financially support a number of voluntary and community sector organisations. These include the;

- Areas at Risk Programme
- Community Support Programme
- Neighbourhood Renewal Programme
- Social Supermarket

3. Previous Decision of Council

Members are reminded it was agreed at the April 2023 Community Planning Committee that in the absence of the 2023-24 budget settlement The Permanent Secretary for the DfC had indicated that temporary 3-month funding support would be put in place up to 30th June 2023 based on 2022/2023 funding levels.

Members are further reminded it was agreed that an update on the DfC current budget position be communicated to those groups and organisations anticipating funding from the Department in 2023/24.

4. Key Issues

Members are advised that the DfC has issued correspondence (**enclosed**) outlining that the budget position for 2024/25 for all Government Departments remains unclear.

The Minister for the DfC has indicated that temporary 3-month funding support will be put in place up to 30th June 2024 based on 2023/2024 funding levels.

The Department hope to be in a position to confirm the annual funding budget for 2024/2025 in the coming weeks.

Members are advised this funding covers all DfC programmes operating in the Borough such as Areas at Risk, the Community Support Programme and Neighbourhood Renewal.

It is proposed to make those who are anticipating funding aware of this communication from the Department.

5. Financial implications

Members are advised that the DfC have issued temporary 3-month funding support to be put in place up to 30th June 2024 based on 2023/2024 funding levels.

6. Summary

Interim funding awards for DfC programmes to end June 2024 will be retained at 2023/24 levels. Funding will be issued for the first quarter of 24/25 up to the end of June with confirmation of the 24/25 budget position anticipated in the near future.

Officers will make all those groups and organisations impacted aware of the communication from the DfC.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the report be noted.

Prepared by: Stefanie Buchanan, Community Development Manager

Agreed by: Ronan McKenna, Head of Community Planning

Approved by: Ursula Fay, Director of Community Planning