



Title of Report:	Social Supermarket Support Programme 2026-27
Committee Report Submitted To:	Leisure & Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	19 May 2026
For Decision or For Information	For Decision
To be discussed In Committee	No

Linkage to Council Strategy (2026-31)	
Strategic Theme	P2 Empowering and supporting our people
Outcome	Strengthened and supported community and voluntary sector to ensure citizens have access to services and support they need
Lead Officer	Head of Community & Culture; Community Development Manager

Estimated Timescale for Completion	
Date to be Completed	31 st March 2027

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	£23,230.54 (100% DfC funded)
Included in Current Year Estimates	<u>YES/NO</u>
Capital/Revenue	Revenue
Code	1057
Staffing Costs	Within business plan

Legal Considerations	
Input of Legal Services Required	<u>YES/NO</u>
Legal Opinion Obtained	<u>YES/NO</u>

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	<u>Yes/No</u>	Date: 06/11/2023
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	<u>Yes/No</u>	Date: 10/11/2023
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to seek approval for the continuation of contracts for Social Supermarket provision in The Glens DEA.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Council receives annual funding from the Department for Communities through the Social Supermarket Support Fund with the aim of providing a sustainable and long-term response to food insecurity.
- 2.2 Social supermarkets operate on a membership model, where eligible individuals, facing financial hardship pay a weekly subscription to access a reduced-cost food shop for a specified period (typically 3–6 months). In parallel, members are supported through wraparound services, including debt and budgeting advice, benefits guidance, healthy eating education, training etc.
- 2.3 On 17th September 2024 the Leisure & Development Committee agreed to recommend to Council that contracts be awarded to Limavady Community Development Initiative (covering Benbradagh and Limavady DEAs) and Vineyard Compassion (covering Bann, Causeway, Coleraine DEAs) as the only providers at that time. Financial allocations were calculated on a DEA basis with weighting given to income-based deprivation. The Committee also recommended that the approach be continued for a further 48 months dependent on funding availability. Council approved this recommendation at its meeting on 1st November 2024.
- 2.4 An open Expression of Interest process was undertaken in April 2025 to invite organisations interested in setting up a social supermarket project in other areas of the borough to come forward. New projects were subsequently supported to set up in Ballycastle and Cushendall.
- 2.5 On 20th May 2025, the Leisure & Development Committee agreed to recommend to Council that contracts be awarded for the delivery of social supermarkets in The Glens DEA to Ballycastle Community Group CIC and Glens Social Supermarket Ltd, as new providers, following the Expression of Interest process. Allocations were based on a percentage DEA basis. Council approved this recommendation at its meeting on 3rd June 2025. The contract awards were for an initial one-year period up to 31st March 2026.
- 2.6 One Expression of Interest was received for the Ballymoney DEA but the organisation later withdrew their interest and Council Officers continue to promote the opportunity for a social supermarket in Ballymoney, with a small seeding budget available.
- 2.7 The Department has now confirmed the funding allocation for 2026-27 at the same rate as 2025-26 at £169,565, subject to the availability of budget. End of year monitoring and evaluation reports have been received from all 4 providers and targets have been satisfactorily met. The contract arrangement with LCDI and Vineyard Compassion will continue for 2026-27 as already approved by Council.

3.0 Proposals

- 3.1 It is proposed that the contracts with Ballycastle Community Group CIC and Glens Social Supermarket Ltd be continued into 2026-27 with the same targets as 2025-26 and the same funding allocation as outlined in the table below:

Organisation	Contract allocation	Target number of households	DEAs covered
The Glens SSM	£11,615.27	30	The Glens (50%)
Ballycastle Community Group	£11,615.27	20	The Glens (50%)

4.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that Council to continue contracts with Ballycastle Community Group CIC and The Glens Social Supermarket Ltd to deliver social supermarkets, to the value of £11,615.27 each.