

**LEISURE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY 16 MARCH 2021**

Table of Recommendations

No	Item	Summary of key Recommendations
1.	Apologies	<i>Nil</i>
2.	Declarations of Interest	<i>Councillor MA McKillop</i>
3.	Minutes of Leisure and Development Committee Meeting held Tuesday 16 th February 2021	<i>Confirmed</i>
4.	FFNI Operational Costs	<i>Fund Causeway Coast and Glen's contribution of £19,853.30 towards the FFNI Operations Team to ensure delivery of the programme and sites by the programme end date (31st December 2021).</i>
5.	Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Dallat O'Driscoll Seconded Councillor MA McKillop, referred from the 2 March 2021 Council Meeting (Abbrev. <i>Child Poverty</i>)	<i>That Council note the sentiments expressed within the Notice of Motion on Child Poverty; as this is a devolved matter from Westminster, the sponsors of the Notice of Motion should write to their local MLA's and have their concerns raised at Stormont.</i>
6.	Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Dallat O'Driscoll Seconded Councillor Beattie, referred from the 2 March 2021 Council Meeting (Abbrev. <i>EU Structural Funds</i>)	<i>That Council note the sentiments expressed within the Notice of Motion on the financial consequences of Brexit; as this is a devolved matter from Westminster, the</i>

		sponsors of the Notice of Motion should write to their local MLA's and have their concerns raised at Stormont.
7.	NI 100 Centenary Working Group	Proceed with the proposals laid out within the above report as per recommendation of the working group, in relation to both the implementation of Council's NI100 Community Grants Programme and approach to the implementation of the Stained Glass window project
8.	Community Development Grants	Approve awards for funding through Community Development Support Grant and Social Inclusion Grant for 2021-22 as detailed in Annex B & C subject to the necessary funding being available from DfC
9.	Code of Practice for Reducing Bureaucracy in Grant Making	Approve 8no. recommendations as set out
10.	Grants Governance Panel	That a Grant Governance Panel is established, based upon the principles outlined in this report; the size, 6no; and appointment process, by D'Hondt
11.	Events Recovery Fund	Approve the allocation of the Tourism Event Funding to successful applicants as detailed in Annex A with the reductions outlined
12.	Tourism Events Programme 2021	Approve the revised approach for the delivery of Council-led events in 2021 as detailed in Table 1, within the report.

13.	The Glens Visitor Information Provision	Approve: Appointment of The Glens of Antrim Historical Society as the Causeway Coast and Glens Council's preferred candidate for the provision of Visitor Information Services in the Glens, subject to clarification of all requested information and agreement on 'the terms and conditions of contract'
14.	Causeway Coast Way – Public Right of Way	Approve Assertion of the proposed Public Right of Way at Clare Park, Ballycastle, as indicated on Annex A. This is subject to a signed Public Right of Way Assertion Statement.
15.	Cloughmills Play Provision / Asset Disposal	Site is transferred to Corporate Services for consideration as a Land & Property matter i.e. asset disposal
16.	On the Ball Campaign Update	For one year, provide free sanitary products in Council's 3 major and 3 minor leisure centres, in order to assess the viability of implementing the 'On the Ball' Campaign across all Council offices and all sport and leisure facilities.
17.	DfC Covid Funding Update	Information
18.	DAERA Rural Tourism Collaborative Experience	Information
19.	Correspondence	
	(i) Protection from Stalking Bill	Information
20.	Matters Reporting to the Partnership Panel	Nil
21.	Consultations	
	(i) SONI Shaping our Electricity Future	Information

	'IN COMMITTEE' (Items 22-24 inclusive)	
22.	Coleraine Bomb Memorial	<i>That Council approve facilitation and engagement with family and victims and survivors, to be completed by June 2022.</i>
23.	Larchfield Playpark Tender Report	<i>Approve the recommendation from the Larchfield Tender report and appoint Wicksteed at a cost of £37,665.</i>
24.	Any other relevant business notified in accordance with Standing Order 12. (o)	
	(i) CCTV Provision (Councillor McCaw)	<i>Director of Leisure and Development to bring back a report</i>
	(ii) CCTV Provision (Alderman Fielding)	

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF
THE LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
IN CIVIC HEADQUARTERS AND VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE, ON
TUESDAY 16 MARCH 2021 AT 7:04 PM**

In the Chair: Councillor Nicholl (C)

Members Present: Alderman Baird (R) and Hillis (C)
Councillors Anderson (C), Bateson (R), Callan (R), Holmes (C), MA McKillop (R), Knight-McQuillan (R), McAuley (C), McCaw (R), McLean (C), McQuillan (C), C McShane (R), Schenning (R), Watton (C)

Non Committee Members in Attendance Alderman Fielding (R), Robinson (R); Councillors Beattie (R), Chivers (R), Dallat O'Driscoll (R), McLaughlin (R)

Officers Present: R Baker, Director of Leisure and Development (C)
W McCullough, Head of Sport & Wellbeing (R)
P Thompson, Head of Tourism & Recreation (R)
J Welsh, Head of Community & Culture (R)
P O'Brien, Funding Unit Manager (R)
L Scullion, Community Development Manager (R)
P Harkin, Good Relations Manager (R)
K McMullan, Assistant Events Manager (R)
N McGurk, Strategic Projects Manager (R)
P Donaghy, Democratic & Central Services Manager (R)
S Duggan, Civic Support & Committee & Member Services Officer (C)

In Attendance: Dr L Faulkner-Byrne } Item 22
Dr M Braniff }

A Lennox, Mobile Operations Officer (C)

C Thompson, ICT Operations Officer (C)

Press (4 no) (R)

Public (2 no) (R)

Key: (C) Attended in the Chamber
(R) Attended Remotely

The Chair read the remote meetings protocol at the beginning of the meeting:

Welcome to the Leisure and Development Committee Meeting.

I extend a welcome to members of the press and public in attendance. You will be required to leave the meeting when Council goes into committee. You will be readmitted by Democratic Services Officers as soon as the meeting comes out of committee. I would also remind you that the taking of photographs of proceedings or the recording of proceedings for others to see or hear is prohibited.

If you are having technical difficulties try dialling in to the meeting on the telephone numbers stated on the chat and then Insert the Conference ID code.

If you continue to have difficulties please contact the number provided on the chat at the beginning of the meeting for Democratic Services staff and ICT staff depending on your query:

The meeting will pause to try to reconnect you.

Once you are connected

- Mute your microphone when not speaking.*
- Use the chat facility to indicate to that you wish to speak. The chat should not be used to propose or second.*
- Please also use the chat to indicate when you are leaving the meeting if you are leaving before the meeting ends.*
- Unmute your microphone and turn your camera on when you are invited to speak.*
- Only speak when invited to do so.*
- Members are reminded that you must be heard and where possible be seen to all others in attendance to be considered present and voting or your vote cannot be counted.*

The Director of Leisure and Development undertook a roll call of committee members present.

SUBSTITUTION

Councillor McQuillan substituted for Alderman McCorkell; Councillor McLean substituted for Councillor Wallace.

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies recorded.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of interest were recorded for Councillor MA McKillop in Community Development Grants. Councillor MA McKillop did not participate in the Item.

3. MINUTES OF LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 16TH FEBRUARY 2021

Summary minute, previously circulated.

Proposed by Councillor McAuley
Seconded by Councillor Bateson and

AGREED – to recommend that the Minutes of the Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 16 February 2021 are confirmed as a correct record.

* **Councillor Watton joined the meeting at 7.10pm.**

4. FFNI OPERATIONAL COSTS

Report, previously circulated, presented by SIB Projects Officer, to highlight to Elected Members the additional contribution requested from Council to fund the Full Fibre NI (FFNI) Operations team.

Background

The FFNI (Full Fibre Northern Ireland) Consortium is made up of the 10 rural councils outside of Belfast and another central government public body, the Business Services Organisation. The project is hosted by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

The Consortium has made a successful collective bid for £24m to support digital infrastructure development across Northern Ireland from two funding programmes managed by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

FFNI secured £15m of funding in February 2019 under the Local Full Fibre Networks Challenge Fund and in September 2019, the project made a further successful application for £9m of funding under the Rural Gigabit Capable (RGC) programme.

The LFFN and RGC project will connect approximately 969 public sector buildings, ensuring that almost all Council, Health, Fire and Rescue sites in Northern Ireland have access to future-proofed fibre connectivity. The commercial model offers FFNI partners the opportunities for improved digital transformation, service improvements and network cost savings through its design for each partner.

Unlike Project Stratum, which is a state aid project and fixes a major rural problem using government funding directly, FFNI uses these public sector sites as hubs to further improve, accelerate and stimulate full fibre rollout by increasing the locations in scope for commercial fibre investment.

The FFNI projects (LFFN & RGC) form a key part of a larger £52m intervention that will introduce ultrafast connections to members' sites and will provide fibre connectivity to an estimated 368,594 premises across Northern Ireland.

Within Causeway Coast and Glens, the aim is to connect approximately 91 public sector buildings with ultrafast 1000Gb connections. Deadlines for project completion are March 2021 for Rural Gigabit Connectivity (RGC) sites and September 2021 for FFNI sites.

For the Council's geographical area, the funding is expected to deliver fibre connectivity to 56 of the Council's own sites, and 35 Business Services Organisation (BSO) sites. The BSO sites will use the grant funding to connect Health (Doctors' surgeries for example), Fire and Ambulance sites.

Benefits of the Programme

The FFNI programme will bring several benefits to residents and businesses and to the public sector partners:

- **Improved Economic Performance:** through better and more widespread digital infrastructure provision enabling more businesses to locate and grow, increasing sustainable employment opportunities, and attracting high value jobs for individuals who in turn make financial contributions into the local economy.

Related benefit: An estimated GVA improvement of £180m in Northern Ireland's economy over the next 15 years.

- **Improved individual wellbeing & community cohesion:** by enabling better and more digitally connected individuals, communities and society at large.

Related benefit: Reduced social exclusion as more individuals and groups typically in rural areas will have the ability to digitally connect with each other.

- **Improved Public Sector service efficiency and delivery:** by enabling Causeway Coast and Glens to work more efficiently and cost effectively, confident in the knowledge that Council has enough bandwidth to support delivery, and citizens have enough bandwidth to receive the services.

Related benefits: Reduced operating costs by moving more council services available online. Improved quality and customer satisfaction by creating more accessible services for users, as well as improving the ways in which citizens can contact the council. Improved delivery and quality of Council Services such as CCTV and telephony, and future smart technologies, which are reliant on high quality bandwidth.

- **Greater environmental benefit:** through a reduction in the need to travel for work purposes.

Related benefit: A reduction in CO2 emissions, which has not been quantified at this time.

Key Issues

The FFNI Operations Team has been faced with a series of extremely complex and technical issues associated with the procurement process and risks in relation

to the FFNI infrastructure. The impact of this has been that additional funding for the centralised operations team required is higher than the value originally anticipated.

The programme end date has also been extended due to external delays from September 2021 to December 2021. Whilst this is to be welcomed in terms of a longer delivery period, funding for the Operations Team (officers & consultancy) is not available for this extension.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council has written to all of the FFNI Consortium members requesting that a further contribution of £19,853.30 is made towards the Operations Team and future management costs.

It is recommended that Council fund Causeway Coast and Glen's contribution of £19,853.30 towards the FFNI Operations Team to ensure delivery of the programme and sites by the programme end date (31st December 2021).

Alderman Baird welcomed Council supporting the initiative, she queried why the issue had not been raised at its planning stage.

The SIB Project Manager advised there had been challenges with procurement; and confirmed no further request for funding would be brought.

Proposed by Alderman Baird

Seconded by Councillor McQuillan

Councillor MA McKillop stated she supported seconding the motion.

AGREED – to recommend that Council fund Causeway Coast and Glens contribution of £19,853.30 towards the FFNI Operations Team to ensure delivery of the programme and sites by the programme end date (31st December 2021).

AGREED – To Change the Order of Business, to receive the Notice of Motion's next on the Agenda of business for the evening.

The Chair congratulated Councillor Beattie on the birth of her baby and invited Councillor Dallat O'Driscoll and Councillor Beattie to address Committee on their Notice of Motions.

**5. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR DALLAT O'DRISCOLL
SECONDED COUNCILLOR MA MCKILLOP, REFERRED FROM THE 2
MARCH 2021 COUNCIL MEETING:**

Child Poverty This Council notes with alarm the Department of Communities Family Resources Survey 2018/2019 which show that 122,000 children in Northern Ireland live in relative poverty (24% of children) with 109,000 of those living in absolute poverty and expresses deep concern that these figures have increased significantly since the previous year and have not improved at all in the last five years. The rise of the Universal Credit claimant count and expected end of the furlough scheme could see a further increase in these numbers, with the two - child tax credit rule and benefit cap only adding to the pressure on

families with children. This Council calls on the Minister for Communities to immediately convene a child poverty task force, to set out how her department will reduce child poverty by next year and over the next decade.

Councillor Dallat O'Driscoll and Councillor MA McKillop read statements in support of their Notice of Motion.

Councillor Dallat O'Driscoll addressed committee:

"Members, the statistics are bleak. New figures from the Department for Communities show that in 2018-19 deprivation rose by 3%. The figures also indicate the number of people in absolute poverty is up for the first time in five years, and with children by far the worst affected.

It makes for stark reading. 22%, that is, one in five of our children here in the North, live in relative poverty.

All these statistics are horrifying and need to be addressed. Poverty exists in every part of Northern Ireland and as we know, there are pockets of our own constituency that have particularly high levels of deprivation.

It is a frightening and a damning indictment on our society and unfortunately the problem is only likely to get worse.

The rise of the Universal Credit claimant count and the expected end of the furlough scheme will probably see a further increase in these numbers, with the two-child tax credit rule and benefit cap only adding to the pressure on families with children. More families will find themselves subject to the worst excesses of Tory austerity.

The COVID crisis can only have exacerbated the problem. The economic impact of the pandemic is likely to see these figures rise and push even more children into further deprivation.

Members, already we have 121,000 children who are not only suffering the effects of poverty now but are also at risk of worse outcomes in terms of education and physical and mental health.

We must be mindful that behind these figures are families and children living in poverty and anxiety. No parent wants to raise their child in poverty and the effects must be traumatic.

When children see the stress and desperation in their parents that is bound to have a negative emotional impact on them.

Sterling work has been carried out in my area by our health visitors and community-based groups, such as St Vincent DePaul and the Salvation Army, but we need to see a clear plan to reduce poverty here. Tackling poverty and empowering people needs to be a key priority.

Poverty leads to a lot more worrying things: addiction, poor mental health and suicide.

The Minister for Communities needs to honour a commitment to produce a Child Poverty strategy made more than a year ago.

This issue is beyond urgent and I hope she heeds the call and convenes a child poverty task force”.

Councillor MA McKillop stated children were living in poverty and families had to choose whether to eat or heat across the Borough.

Councillor Bateson clarified Minister Hargey’s key commitments and initiatives undertaken to provide support. He agreed with the sentiment of the Notice of Motion however advised a long term anti-poverty strategy management plan and expert panel was in place.

Councillor McQuillan agreed with the motion, however, he considered it was a matter for Stormont.

Councillor Dallat O’Driscoll voiced shock that the Committee felt it had no influence.

Amendment

Proposed by Councillor Holmes

Seconded by Councillor Watton

- to recommend that Council note the sentiments expressed within the Notice of Motion on Child Poverty; as this is a devolved matter from Westminster, the sponsors of the Notice of Motion should write to their local MLA’s and have their concerns raised at Stormont.

Alderman Hillis stated his support for the amendment.

The Chair put the Amendment to the Committee to vote.

14 Members voted For; 2 Members voted Against; 0 Members Abstained.

The Chair declared the amendment carried.

6. NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR DALLAT O'DRISCOLL SECONDED COUNCILLOR BEATTIE, REFERRED FROM THE 2 MARCH 2021 COUNCIL MEETING:

This Council expresses deep concern about the financial consequences of Brexit for Executive departments including the loss of £70 million in EU Structural Funds for the Department for the Economy; regrets that the level of funding promised to the devolved institutions by the British government will not be equivalent to EU Structural Funds, notes that any loss of funding will result in

significant negative consequences for Northern Ireland's economy and society; expresses concern that plans to operate the UK Shared Prosperity Fund from Westminster represent moves to centralise regional development policy; and calls upon the Minister for the Economy and the Minister of Finance to urge the British Government to commit to using the Shared Prosperity Fund to replace in full the EU funding lost as a result of Brexit and operate in a way that respects devolution settlements.

Councillor Dallat O'Driscoll read a statement in support of her Notice of Motion, supported by Councillor Beattie.

"As we know the EU Structural funds were a vital set of EU funding pots designed to support economic development and to reduce inequality between regions across Europe. Here, they represented the second largest EU area of spending, after the Common Agricultural Policy.

Over the past number of years EU structural funds have had a hugely positive impact on the economy and society in Northern Ireland. They have been utilised across a vast range of departments, projects and localities.

In the period 2014-2020, NI was in receipt of around 500m euros of EU Structural funds –60% of which was through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and 40% via the European Social Fund (ESF). Both funds attracted high levels of matched funding.

For example, Structural Funds investment provided an additional £15.9 million to support Northern Ireland's film industry, and more locally contributed £5.9 million to tourism projects for the Giant's Causeway.

As members will be aware, following Brexit, it was announced that our lost EU funds are being replaced by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

However, despite the earlier promises from the UK Government, in 2021/22, it is understood that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund will not be equivalent in value to EU structural funds.

As Stormont's Economy Minister herself recently warned, the loss of EU funding "represents a huge financial risk" for her Department and there is little sign that the London will step in to fill the void.

It has been estimated that the Department for the Economy is facing a £70 million shortfall in 2021/22 from this loss of EU funding.

There is little sign that Westminster will step in to fill our funding void. To date, not only is there very limited details on the SPF mechanisms but it is understood that it will not provide a full replacement for EU structural funds, and it will not be devolved.

Obviously that raises questions about the basis on which funding will be allocated and this comes at a time when there is desperate need to support economic recovery".

Councillor Beattie addressed committee:

“We need confidence that firms and communities right across Northern Ireland will get appropriate assistance.

The British Government has stated that levelling up is one of the UK Government’s policy objectives. However, there is no detail and, therefore, no assurance that the SPF will help to level up across the UK.

The Economy Minister needs to take some responsibility for this shortfall, push the UK Government to match funds and provide clarity for people and businesses here on what the practical implications of any loss of funding will be.

Going forward, Department of Economy initiatives are critical to both the covid recovery (e.g. the anticipated voucher scheme worth £92 million) and promoting the benefits of the Protocol in terms of EU-UK market access for businesses choosing to locate in NI.

The loss of such a large amount of funding in this Department will have significant consequences for both business survival and our covid recovery as well as the wider economy.

Members, we must call upon the Ministers for the Economy and of Finance to urge the British Government to commit to using the Shared Prosperity Fund to replace the EU funding lost as a result of Brexit and to operate in a way that respects devolution settlements”.

Councillor Bateson did not disagree with the sentiments of the Notice of Motion, however, he advised it was the responsibility of the British Government.

Amendment

Proposed by Councillor Holmes

Seconded by Councillor Watton

- to recommend that Council note the sentiments expressed within the Notice of Motion on the financial consequences of Brexit; as this is a devolved matter from Westminster, the sponsors of the Notice of Motion should write to their local MLA’s and have their concerns raised at Stormont.

Councillor McQuillan stated his support for the Amendment.

The Chair put the Amendment to the committee to vote.

The Chair put the motion to the Committee to vote.

14 Members voted For; 2 Members voted Against; 0 Members Abstained.

The Chair declared the amendment carried.

7. NI 100 CENTENARY WORKING GROUP

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Community and Culture as read. The Head of Community and Culture invited questions.

The purpose of this additional report is to seek approval from Members FOR:

- The proposed Community Grants Programme for Council's NI100 Programme,
- The approach to the implementation of the Stained Glass window project
- To provide members with a further update on progress against phase 1 projects.

Background

At the November 2018 Corporate Resource & Policy Committee meeting a Notice of Motion was carried and subsequently agreed at the Council meeting held in the same month, stating

'That this Council establish a working group, consisting of 6 members by d'Hondt, to explore a programme of events and activities to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Northern Ireland in 2021.'

The Terms of Reference were agreed by Council in July 2020 and the Working Group have been meeting regularly to progress a draft programme and associated branding, with updates being provided to committee.

Overall progress to date:

- a) Terms of Reference for group agreed and adopted in July 2020 by council.
- b) Programme themes have been developed by the working group and agreed by council in July 2020.
- c) Draft programme outcomes have been agreed by council.
- d) Branding agreed (January 2021) – see Annex A (circulated).
- e) Phase 1 programme, associated budget agreed and working group to be involved in the grant funding process (January 2021).
- f) Projects within phase 1 have commenced – details in Annex A (circulated).

The notes of the working group meeting for January 2021 and draft notes for February 2021 are attached for information in Annex A (circulated).

NI 100 Grants Programme

Council approved an indicative budget for an NI100 Grants Programme of up to £80,000 in January 2021. At the working group meeting held in February, working group members agreed the following approach to the implementation of the grants programme, subject to council approval:

Purpose of Grant Programme

The purpose of the NI100 Small Grant Programme is to provide funding for community and voluntary groups to contribute to an overall programme of events and activities to mark the 100th anniversary of Northern Ireland by celebrating people, places and products through community, cultural and sporting activities with an opportunity for good relations activities and to build awareness of the anniversary.

Overview of Fund

Successful applications to the NI100 Small Grant Programme would be required to focus on at least one of the four programme themes and meet at least one of the outcomes of the overall programme.

Levels of Grant Aid

The level of grant aid for groups to encourage collaboration and avoid potential duplication at a local level are proposed as follows:

- Single organisations - maximum grant of £1,500.
- Two organisations working together: maximum grant of £3,500.
- Three or more organisations working together: maximum grant of £5,000.

Applications would be considered for events and activities up to 31st March 2022.

Grants awarded can cover up to 100% of overall eligible project costs.

Further details in relation to eligibility criteria and draft questions are contained within Annex B of the report (circulated).

Stained Glass Window Coleraine Town Hall

The working group were provided with three options in relation to the outworking/delivery of the stain glass window project within Coleraine Town Hall:

Option 1 - Council led internal process through the NI 100 group and associated Historical advisory panel.

Option 2 - Council facilitated/led with community consultation on subject matter/concept.

Option 3 - Council facilitated/community led process involving a range of local groups who would co-design the project facilitated by the artist commissioned for the project.

Members voted to proceed with Option 1 – a council led internal process.

Recommendations

To proceed with the proposals laid out within the above report as per recommendation of the working group, in relation to both the implementation of Council's NI100 Community Grants Programme and approach to the implementation of the Stained Glass window project.

Councillor Bateson questioned how money could be spend on a stained glass window, when the ownership of Coleraine Town Hall was in question. Councillor C McShane stated her dissatisfaction using public funds for a building Council did not know if it owned.

Councillor McCaw queried why there was no planned community consultation for the proposed stained glass window.

Referring to the Grant programme, Councillor Watton stated he would like the 8 week timescale looked at again.

Councillor Knight-McQuillan responded to issues raised, she outlined the Land and Property Policy guidance, and advised applications may be expedited, however, was a necessary requirement to give the Land and Property Department time to gather the information. Councillor Knight-McQuillan clarified there was already a stained glass window in place at Coleraine Town Hall and Option 1 had been recommended due to timing, she further advised The

Honourable, The Irish Society had been consulted and an historical panel formed part of the Group.

Alderman Baird felt the closing date should be amended due to the potential for rural groups having limited access to broadband.

The Head of Community and Culture clarified the recommendation from the Working Group was subject to ownership issues being clarified and the issue sat with the Civic Facilities Department. She advised the Key Themes had been agreed by Council, the Grant Programmes would meet the objectives, to align with the outcomes and will be screened. The Head of Community and Culture advised there was the potential for a Phase 2 Grant Programme for funding not utilised from other projects not proceeding. She stated there had been 5 calls for grant programmes of less than 4 weeks during Covid, but, that it was a matter for committee.

Proposed by Councillor McAuley

Seconded by Councillor Knight-McQuillan

- To recommend that Council proceed with the proposals laid out within the above report as per recommendation of the working group, in relation to both the implementation of Council's NI100 Community Grants Programme and approach to the implementation of the Stained Glass window project.

The Chair put the motion to the committee to vote.

12 Members voted For; 4 Members voted Against; 0 Members Abstained.

The Chair declared the motion carried.

8. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

- * **Councillor MA McKillop, having declared an interest, did not participate in the Item.**

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Community and Culture as read.

The purpose of this report is to provide the outcome of the assessment of the applications received to the Community Grant Programmes for 2021-22 and to provide recommendations in relation to grant awards to be made through the following two programmes:

- **Community Development Support Grant (CDSG).**
- **Social Inclusion Grant (SIG).**

Background

Approximately 50% of the Community Development Grants are provided through the annual Department for Communities (DfC) Community Support Programme. At the time of writing the report, the amount of funding from DfC for 2021-22 is not yet known, however since the grant covers costs from 1st April Council is asked to make decisions in principle, subject to confirmation of necessary match funding from DfC. Proposed funding awards are on the assumption that DfC allocations to Council will be at the same rate as 2020-21 amounts.

As part of the business planning process, a report was brought forward to Council in November 2020 to approve grant funding programmes for the 21-22 period, inclusive of the two aforementioned grant programmes.

The grant programmes were opened for applications on 1st December 2020 with a closing date of 29th January 2021. Four online information events were held in early December in order to provide potential applicants with detailed information and guidance about the individual grant programmes. An online workshop on how to write a successful application was also held.

The Community Development team assessed applications received against the criteria as stated in the Guidance Notes for each programme. Applicants were required to attain a score of at least 65% in order to be recommended for funding, in line with Council's Grant Funding Policy.

An extract from the Guidance Notes for the grant programmes, detailing eligibility and assessment criteria, is attached at **Annex A** (circulated).

Community Development Support Grant

- a. Purpose of Grant Programme: To contribute to the running costs/overhead costs incurred by core community development organisations.
- b. Levels of Grant available: Community Development groups with premises can apply for grants of up to 75% of costs up to a maximum grant of £2,000. Community Development groups without premises can apply for grants of up to 75% of costs up to a maximum grant of £1,000.
- c. Applications Received:

No. of applications received	61
No. of applications withdrawn	1
No. of ineligible applicants	4
No. of unsuccessful applications (scoring less than 65%)	2
No. of successful applications (scoring 65% and above)	54
Total value of CDSG funding recommended	£ 93,592.60 (100% i budget)

A list of the applications received, the assessment scores and maximum eligible funding amount recommended are listed in Annex B (circulated).

Four of the applicant organisations were deemed to be ineligible as the applicant organisation did not meet the eligibility criteria for the grant programmes. Two applications did not score sufficiently high enough to be awarded a grant. Detailed feedback will be provided to these organisations and support offered to develop projects and source other funding.

Social Inclusion Grant

- d. Purpose of Programme: To provide small grants to local community and voluntary organisations that are involved in activities that encourage people within their community, particularly those that are socially isolated, to participate in social and recreational activities.
- e. Levels of Grant: 85% of costs up to a maximum grant of £500.
- f. Applications Received:

No. of applications received	20
No. of applications withdrawn	2
No. of ineligible applications	3
No. of unsuccessful applications (scoring less than 65%)	0
No. of successful applications scoring 65% or more	15
Total value of SIG funding recommended	£7,390 (100% indicative budget)

The three applications were ineligible as they had annual income in excess of £50,000, as outlined in Section 1.8 of the Guidance Notes. A list of the applications received, the assessment scores and maximum eligible funding amount recommended are listed in Annex C (circulated).

Summary

Total amount recommended for funding through CDSG	£ 93,592.60
Total amount recommended for funding through SIG	£7,390.00
Total amount recommended for funding	£100,982.60
DfC contribution*	£50,491.30
Anticipated net cost to Council	£50,491.30

*Based on assumption that DfC allocations to Council will be at the same rate as 2020-21 amounts.

The Community Development team are undertaking a review of the Community Development Support Grant and Social Inclusion Grant as an action identified in the Community Development Strategy and will present findings and proposals during the approval cycle for annual grant funding for 2022-23.

Recommendation

Approve awards for funding through Community Development Support Grant and Social Inclusion Grant for 2021-22 as detailed in Annex B & C (circulated) subject to the necessary funding being available from DfC.

Proposed by Councillor McAuley
 Seconded by Councillor McQuillan and

AGREED - To recommend that Council approve awards for funding through Community Development Support Grant and Social Inclusion Grant for 2021-22 as detailed in Annex B & C (circulated) subject to the necessary funding being available from DfC.

9. CODE OF PRACTICE FOR REDUCING BUREAUCRACY IN GRANT MAKING

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Funding Manager.

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members a Code of Practice for reducing Bureaucracy in Grant Making.

Background

On 10 November 2020 a notice of motion was agreed by the Leisure & Development Committee and approved by full Council on 1st December 2020:

“That this Council reviews the application process for Council community grant funding with a view to streamlining the process and ensuring easier access for community organisations. Community organisations across Causeway Coast and Glens report that community grant funding process is extremely demanding and time consuming for often very little sums of money. Our Community Organisations across the area are invaluable to the prosperity of Causeway Coast and Glens and its people and are run by dedicated community volunteers who already have significant demands placed upon them. Council community grants should not be a significant burden to these volunteers who give their time and energy to making this a better place to live and we as a Council should be doing all we can to support them”.

Central Governments Code of Practice

The Funding Unit Manager has completed desk research and is recommending implementing a Central Government approved Code of Practice for Reducing Bureaucracy in Grant Funding to Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations (VCOs).

The Code of Practice was developed in 2015 as a result of a cross departmental project, led by the Department for Social Development (DSD), with a Steering Committee comprising of the Permanent Secretaries of the Department of Finance and Personnel and DSD, the Comptroller and Auditor General and the Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action. The Committee agreed that the Code of Practice, to be used by all central government funders, was the best mechanism for addressing bureaucracy in grant funding.

All Northern Ireland departments have indicated their support for the principles contained within the Code which has also been welcomed by the Northern Ireland Audit Office.

All public sector funders outside of central government, such as local councils, are being strongly encouraged to apply the principles, with suitable adjustments for their own context and requirements.

The Code applies to revenue grant funding only. It does not apply to capital funding grants, procurement or to EU funding.

It is recognised that it may be necessary on occasion to depart from applying individual principles for sound business reasons and such departures should be documented.

Aims of the Code of Practice

The aim of the Code is to assist and support those involved in the administration of grant funding.

The Code aims to embed a risk based approach to the administration of revenue grant funding to help streamline funder's procedures, achieve greater consistency and reduce duplication of effort. It is specifically aimed at areas of the process where clear potential for a reduction in bureaucracy was identified.

Overarching Themes

The Code of Practice sets out the overarching themes applicable to revenue grant funding and identifies a number of principles to be applied at various stages of the grant funding process. It also sets out a number of principles when administering

lower value grants i.e. small and micro grants. (Small grants are those between £1,500 and £30,000 and micro grants are those below £1,500).

Theme 1 Collaboration - There should be a collaborative approach to revenue grant funding of Voluntary and Community Organisations (VCOs) in order to minimise duplication of effort.

Theme 2 Proportionality - There should be proportionality of effort throughout the revenue grant funding process - when seeking applications for, appraising, awarding, checking, monitoring and evaluating grant funding.

Theme 3 Timeliness - The revenue grant administrative process should be completed in a timely way.

Principles of the Code of Practice

The Code of Practice was developed on nineteen specific principles which are attached in Annex A (circulated).

Financial Systems and Control Assessment (FSCA)

The FSCA is used to assess the internal financial controls and procedures within a VCO and to determine the level of financial competence of the VCO. Once completed the assessment can be recorded and shared on the Government Funding Database so other funders can use it without having to undertake separate assessments.

While effective financial verification is essential it is important that the level of verification is proportionate to the risk presented by the VCO:

- Where VCOs are rated as “adequate” it reaffirms that the VCO is deemed fit to handle public funds and a funder’s normal verification processes should be applied.
- Where the VCO is rated as “robust” a VCO may be granted easements in terms of the level of financial verification carried out by Council.
- Where a VCO has a proven track record, they should not be routinely subject to a verification check but could form part of a pool of projects which may be chosen for checking as part of a random sample.
- Where a VCO has never received government funding, and has therefore no track record of managing a grant or delivering a project, it would be appropriate to treat them in the same way as an “adequate” rated VCO in respect of the level of financial verification to be undertaken.
- Micro grants are usually claimed by very small VCOs and are typically for equipment, utilities, insurance, venue hire or advertising. As claims are simple and amounts small the recommendation is that grant-aid should be paid in advance or where this is deemed to be particularly risky, on receipt of a claim and its associated invoices, which can be easily and speedily checked.

The FSCA rating is extant for three years after which it is formally reviewed. Should Council have a material concern about the VCO at any time the rating can be re-assessed.

Standard Reporting

Standardising reporting formats or accepting a report which the VCO already prepares for their Board could potentially ease the burden on VCOs whilst still meeting the requirements of Council and external funders.

Project monitoring should be limited, for example, to a few lines on how equipment was used or what a funded event achieved.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Elected Members consider the following:

- 1) Council adopt the DFP Code of Practice for Reducing Bureaucracy in Grant Making. (Annex B).
- 2) Micro grants (below £1,500) to be paid in advance.
- 3) Small Grants (£1,500 - £30,000) - 75% of running costs to be paid at the outset of the project with the remainder paid on successful delivery of the project.
- 4) Council cease carrying out 100% verification on all grant-aid and instead start using Financial Systems and Control Assessment (FSCA). The FSCA is used to assess the internal financial controls and procedures within a Voluntary Community Organisation (VCO) and to determine the level of financial competence of the VCO:
 - a) Where VCOs are rated as “adequate” it reaffirms that the VCO is deemed fit to handle public funds and a funder’s normal verification processes should be applied.
 - b) Where the VCO is rated as “robust” they may be granted easements in terms of the level of financial verification carried out.
 - c) Where a VCO has a proven track record, they should not be routinely subject to a verification check but form part of a pool of projects which may be chosen for checking as part of a random sample.
- 5) It is recommended that where a VCO is rated “robust” and has multiple grants from Council a Lead Financial Verifier arrangement be put in place and the expenditure of only one of the projects verified.
- 6) It is recommended that random sampling is used for organisations with a proven track record.
- 7) Community Development Support Grant is for annual running costs for VCOs. It is recommended that successful applicants are awarded grant-aid for 3 years as per Principle 2 of the Code.
- 8) It is recommended that standardised reporting formats are used or accepting a report which the VCO already prepares for their Board.

Alderman Hillis welcomed a Notice of Motion being acted on. He queried whether the micro grants value could be higher.

The Funding Manger advised it would be unwise to alter, as it would weaken the audit trail, internally and externally in order to justify any amendments.

Proposed by Councillor Bateson
Seconded by Councillor McQuillan and

AGREED – to recommend that Council:

- 1) Council adopt the DFP Code of Practice for Reducing Bureaucracy in Grant Making. (Annex B).
- 2) Micro grants (below £1,500) to be paid in advance.
- 3) Small Grants (£1,500 - £30,000) - 75% of running costs to be paid at the outset of the project with the remainder paid on successful delivery of the project.
- 4) Council cease carrying out 100% verification on all grant-aid and instead start using Financial Systems and Control Assessment (FSCA). The FSCA is used to assess the internal financial controls and procedures within a Voluntary Community Organisation (VCO) and to determine the level of financial competence of the VCO:
 - a. Where VCOs are rated as “adequate” it reaffirms that the VCO is deemed fit to handle public funds and a funder’s normal verification processes should be applied.
 - b. Where the VCO is rated as “robust” they may be granted easements in terms of the level of financial verification carried out.
 - c. Where a VCO has a proven track record, they should not be routinely subject to a verification check but form part of a pool of projects which may be chosen for checking as part of a random sample.
- 5) It is recommended that where a VCO is rated “robust” and has multiple grants from Council a Lead Financial Verifier arrangement be put in place and the expenditure of only one of the projects verified.
- 6) It is recommended that random sampling is used for organisations with a proven track record.
- 7) Community Development Support Grant is for annual running costs for VCOs. It is recommended that successful applicants are awarded grant-aid for 3 years as per Principle 2 of the Code.
- 8) It is recommended that standardised reporting formats are used or accepting a report which the VCO already prepares for their Board.

10. GRANTS GOVERNANCE PANEL

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Funding Manager.

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Members the establishment of a Grant Governance Panel. Members have periodically requested greater involvement in the grant programme process, therefore a Grant Governance Panel will provide an opportunity for improved governance.

Background

The Funding Unit was established in October 2015. The strategic function of the Unit is to provide funding support services which includes corporate management & administration of Council’s Grant Funding programmes. The Funding Unit is a central processing unit for grant applications and has responsibility for managing the grant assessment process, the development of grant funding policy and the annual review of grant programmes and policy.

Council’s grant funding policy sets out a framework for the processing of grants. The overall aim of the funding process outlined in the policy is:

“To have a consistent, customer focused process with relevant assessment and evaluation procedures with appropriate appeal and monitoring systems in place”.

Elected Members have requested that officers give consideration to ways in which they can have involvement in the grant assessment process. The current process used is as follows:

- Grant applications are received by the Funding Unit via the online Funding Hub.
- Funding Unit undertake stage 1 eligibility checks on all applications to assess an organisations suitability to receive public funds.
- Grant Assessment panels, comprising Officers from relevant service areas and Funding Unit staff undertake the assessment and scoring of applications.
- A report on the outcome of the assessment process is taken to the Leisure & Development Committee and then to full Council for approval.

Grant Assessments in 2020-21

In the 2020-21 Grant Funding Period the funding Unit administered 23 Grant programmes compared to 14 in the previous year:

- 1348 applications totalling £3,231,825.46 were received and processed compared to 389 applications totalling £1,244,665.76 in the previous year.
- 1348 stage 1 eligibility checks were undertaken (compliance & governance - constitutions checked and verified; accounts checked).
- 1348 applications were assessed and scored.
- 1005 applications were successful.
- 1005 letters of Offer issued to date totalling £1,660,121 compared to 279 totalling £800,646.80 in previous financial year.

Due to the increased volume of applications in 2020 and the need to ensure grant-aid was delivered quickly to support the community response to Covid-19, the grant assessment process was adapted, moving from officer assessment panels to individual grant assessments being carried out by officers from the relevant service areas – the assessments were reviewed by the Funding Unit to ensure accuracy and consistency across all assessments.

This process has worked well, it is much more efficient and has hugely reduced the staff time spent in assessment panels.

The Grant Assessment Process

Grant applications will continue to be assessed by Officers with knowledge of the programme requirements and subject area. The Funding Unit will then bring a percentage sample of the assessed applications to Grant Governance Panel. (The sample process is detailed in section (ii) of Annex A (circulated)).

There will be exceptions required in the process because of the requirements of external funders such as DAERA Rural Business Scheme and the Policing & Community Safety Grants, where the governance and decision making is with an external funder or a Partnership body.

Proposed Role of the Grant Governance Panel

The role of the Governance Panel is proposed to have two separate oversight elements:

a. Strategic Oversight.

The panel will review policy, programmes, eligibility criteria and management of risk. This is generally done on an annual basis through the Annual Members review Workshop, it may now be appropriate for the panel members to be first part of this process.

b. Validation Function.

The panel's role is to ensure that the scoring of applications has been undertaken in an appropriate fashion and to provide validation of the sampled applications and the overall process.

For the panel to be most effective it needs to retain a degree of objectivity and distance from individual applications, while at the same time being able to demonstrate that it has adequately considered the quality of the assessments. The role of the panel will involve checking that the scoring in the sample considered is in line with guidance and is accurate.

The Assessment Panel can:

- Request a remarking of individual applications where these are found to be inaccurate or inconsistent.
- Review a further sample of applications if there are significant failings in the sample considered (specifying the basis for further sampling).

Grant Governance Panel Membership

The purpose of the panel is not to make decisions about individual grants, but rather to ensure that the process used to assess grant applications is fair, objective and equitable, aligned to the Council's wider strategic and corporate objectives.

To do this, panel members should have a sound understanding of the Council's overarching grant programmes and alignment to the Council's wider corporate priorities and governance requirements.

Recommendations

It is recommended that a Grant Governance Panel is established, based upon the principles outlined in this report.

Members are asked to consider the size and appointment process i.e. D'Hondt or other.

Members will be supported by the Funding Unit Officers and other relevant service officers as required.

Once the Panel is convened, detail Terms of Reference will be tabled for member's consideration.

Councillor MA McKillop queried whether there were adequate resources within the Funding Unit.

The Funding Manager advised addressing the issue would depend on the final Terms of Reference and would be looked at, as part of this.

Councillor Holmes stated a personal opinion, he was not comfortable with the recommendation, and considered staff were employed to the job and committee scrutiny required.

Proposed by Councillor MA McKillop
Seconded by Councillor Schenning

– to recommend to Council that a Grant Governance Panel is established, based upon the principles outlined in this report; the size, 6no; and appointment process, by D’Hondt.

The Chair put the motion to the Committee to vote.

11 Members voted For; 4 members voted Against; 1 Member Abstained.

The Chair declared the motion carried.

11. EVENTS RECOVERY FUND

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Tourism and Recreation, to present findings of the assessment process for the 2021/22 Tourism Event Recovery Programme. Recommendations for the allocation of funding to eligible applicants are included in this report.

Background

Since 2016, the Council’s Tourism and Recreation service, in conjunction with the Funding Unit, administer a Council financed funding programme to provide financial assistance to events taking place throughout the Borough. This fund is called the Tourism Event Funding Programme and targets tourism and recreation event organisers under two separate packages, the Large Events Fund and the Tourism Events Growth Fund.

At the December 2020 Leisure and Development Committee meeting, approval was given to replace the Tourism Event Funding Programme, for one year only, with a Tourism Event Recovery Fund.

The rationale for the development of the Tourism Event Recover Fund was discussed at the October 2020 Leisure and Development meeting, after early consultation with the event organisers, who normally benefit from TEFP highlighted concerns regarding the future sustainability and survival of the events from 2021 onwards. There has also been consultation on the difficulty to deliver the outputs set as part of the funding programme with regard to visitor numbers, overnight stays, economic return and target markets.

In recognition of the potential damage to the range of events, the Tourism Events Recovery Programme has been developed as an alternative approach for 2021/22. This takes an adaptive and more flexible approach to the programme delivery for the incoming year and make allowances for the difficulties that event organisers have, and are likely to experience.

Key features include:

- A non-competitive approach to the application process.
- A reduction in the economic outputs required at assessment.
- Definition of core costs widened.
- Application restricted to successful applicants within the past two years.
- An increase in percentage funding on total project costs.
- A single application process for both the previous Growth Fund and Large Events Fund applicants.

An Overview of the Fund

The purpose of the programme is to support former successful TEFP applicants to assist with core running costs for those who wish to 'moth ball' their event for one year, or to assist organisers who wish to run their event in full or in a reduced format in 2021/22.

Only event organisers previously funded through TEFP in the last two financial years (2019/20 and/or 2020/21) are eligible to apply based upon the following agreed criteria.

- a. Funding Parameters. The lower event budget range set out in the previous Tourism Events Growth Fund and the Large Tourism and Recreation Events Fund no longer applies (this allows for small levels of expenditure to take place if appropriate). The maximum grant award is £100,000.
- b. Visitor Numbers. The need to demonstrate that the event attracts visitor numbers has been removed (previously the Growth and Large Funds required 1000 and 5000 visitors respectively).
- c. Number of Days. Applicants must demonstrate that the event still takes place over a minimum of 2 days although these are no longer required to be consecutive.
- d. Economic Benefit. No requirement to demonstrate return on investment. (In previous years a 5:1 return for the Large Tourism Event Fund and 3:1 return for the Growth Fund on Council funding was expected).
- e. Levels of Award. Up to 75% of total project costs can be offered (previous levels were up to 50%).
- f. Marketing and Communication. Events will be expected to ensure that any marketing or communications showcase the Causeway Coast and Glens as a destination for visitors. This applies to the domestic market only.
- g. What Can Be Funded? Eligible costs include:
 - Insurance.
 - Programming Costs including virtual.
 - Venue Hire.
 - Performance/Artist Fees.
 - Transport.
 - Equipment Hire/Purchase.
 - Consultancy Costs (that relate to health and safety planning in respect to COVID19).
 - Advertising/Communications.
 - Premises/Rent.
 - PPE and social distancing equipment.
 - Administration (stationery, postage etc).
 - Utilities.

2021 / 22 Application Process

On Friday 18 December 2020, all 12 of the eligible TERF applicants received a verbal update from Council's Events Development Officer informing them of the

process and the proposed 20 January opening date and Mandatory Workshop date on the 25 January.

Each applicant was then asked to email / contact Council's Events Development Officer before Monday 4 January to express their organisations interest in being considered for the Tourism Events Recovery Fund 2021-22.

By 8 January 2021, all eligible applicants had provided correspondence either expressing their interest in the grant programme or whether they were unlikely to be applying for any funding.

Applicants were then issued with further updates via email on the 19 January from the Events Development Officer advising them of the opening date of the 20 January. The correspondence also included details regarding the mandatory workshop for all applicants on the 25 January and that the Funding Unit would then inform them when their application would go live along with details regarding guidance notes and submission details.

On the 20 January, all eligible applicants received an email from Council's Funding Development Officer inviting each organisation to submit an application to this 'closed call' competitive process by 12noon on Friday 19 February 2021. The instructions included a link to the Council's online funding hub facilitated by the Funding Unit, the fund guidance notes along with event management and marketing plan templates. The email also reminded applicants about the submission process, date of the mandatory workshop and availability of one to one tutorial sessions.

Funding Eligibility

Each of the 12 successful applicants from the last two years was issued an application pack with guidance notes. They were asked to attend a mandatory workshop with Council Officers to determine whether or not their event was likely to take place in some form during 2021/22 or whether it required to be 'moth balled' for this period. Organisers were given a choice to either complete:

- Option 1 – Application to seek financial assistance to cover core costs for an event that will not run.
- Option 2 – Application to seek financial assistance to cover eligible costs for events that can run either in full or in a reduced format.

Mentoring and Training for Applicants

With the challenges presented by Covid-19 and the change from the Tourism Event Funding Programme, the Council's Tourism Events Team and Funding Unit spent a significant amount of time working on a 'one to one' basis with event organisers. On 25 January 2021, applicants were presented with the following detail at an online workshop:

- Differences between TERF and TEF parameters.
- Changes to the application process.
- Detail of new questions (eg. Current status, scenario planning and delivery options).
- Level of detail required in responses to obtain acceptable scores.

Criteria was also presented at the workshop for applicants and included: Impact of Covid-19, Event Management (including Covid-19 mitigations), Media and

Marketing Impact (Domestic Market), Understanding Road Closures and Street Trading Legislation, Event Development, Visitor Experience, Event Sustainability and Skills Retention and Economic Support / Benefit to Events Sector.

All applicants had the opportunity to ask questions relating to the process and all the presentations and templates delivered at the workshop were shared to each applicant.

This was followed by four opportunities for virtual one to one sessions for applicants. These were made available before the TERF application closure deadline with Council's Events Development Officer. These sessions presented the opportunity for both guidance and clarity and enabled relevant questions in relation to the application to be asked before submission of the application. Below is a list of dates that were made available for one to one sessions for all applicants:

- Wednesday 3 February 2021.
- Thursday 4 February 2021.
- Monday 8 February 2021.
- Tuesday 9 February 2021.

The following events booked in and attended the one to one sessions:

- Super Cup NI.
- Stendhal Festival.
- Co. Londonderry Agricultural Show.
- Heart of the Glens Festival.
- Ballylough Living History Trust.
- North West 200.

Assessment Process

The Tourism Events Recovery Fund uses a single approach as detailed in 5.0 of this report, at the point of application, event organisers were prompted on the online funding hub to choose one of two grant options. The questions differed depending on the option selected.

Application Questions (Option 1) for events that will not run in 2021/22:

Applicants were asked to respond to questions on the following:

- Event position for 2021 / 2022 including reason(s) for cancellation decision.
- Event budgetary position (impact on budget, sponsorship / funding reductions etc).
- Details of request for Council support - Breakdown of eligible fixed costs.
- Details of how Council funding on eligible fixed costs will assist with event sustainability, retain volunteer / staff, knowledge and skills within the organisation for 2021 / 2022.
- Details of how Council funding for 2021 / 2022 will assist with planning for event delivery for 2022 (eg. Early development of marketing campaign, event development).

Application Questions (Option 2) for events that will take place in 2021/22:

Applicants were asked to respond to questions on the following:

- Event position for 2021 / 2022 including reasons (s) for wishing to proceed.
- Event budgetary position (impact on budget, sponsorship / funding reductions etc).
- Outline proposal of the various event delivery options (scenario planning) including costs and grant request associated with each (in line with Covid-19 restrictions).
- Details of the event management plan.
- Details of how Council funding will assist with event delivery, sustainability and skills retention within the organisation for 2021 / 2022.
- Details of how the event would support local artists and suppliers in their Covid-19 recovery.
- Details on media and marketing impact.
- Details of how the event will promote a quality visitor experience and be promoted to the domestic market.
- Details of how Council funding for 2021 / 2022 will assist with planning for event delivery for 2022.

The Scoring Panel met on the 24 and 25 February 2021 and each submission was assessed against the criteria within the scoring matrix which was weighted accordingly. The minimum threshold pass rate was applied at 65% as per Council policy.

Summary of Applications

A summary of the applications received with scoring is detailed in Annex A (circulated). All successful applicants will be asked to attend a project initiation meeting, issued with a Letter of Offer and details on COVID 19 conditions and restrictions.

The total amount of grants requested through eligible and qualifying applications was £396,538.50.

For the period 2021/22 the allocated budget for the Tourism Recovery Fund is £400,000 (reference Leisure and Development December 2020)

For the period 2021/22 the allocated budget for the Tourism Recovery Fund is £400,000 (reference Leisure and Development December 2020).

Recommendation

Elected Members are asked to approve the allocation of the Tourism Event Funding to successful applicants as detailed in Annex A with the reductions outlined.

Councillor C McShane expressed her dissatisfaction, she queried the terminology of the fund for a non-competitive application process and increase in budget. Councillor C McShane sought clarification of successful applications in 2020 when events were cancelled and whether there were other Central Government departments providing funding for events not taking place this year.

The Head of Tourism and Recreation referred to the Leisure and Development committee process in October and December 2020. He advised a key influence,

a one-off funding programme for Event providers' survival of events going forward into 2021, to support through and encourage sustainability.

In response to questions, the Head of Tourism and Recreation provided detail on Option 1 and Option 2.

In response to Councillor MA McKillop, the Head of Tourism and Recreation listed the events planned to take place in 2021 and Option 2.

Councillor Holmes suggested the report have been presented in two parts and had been presented poorly to media.

The Funding Manager clarified 100% verification all expenditure of the Fund.

Alderman Baird recorded her thanks to those having the determination to proceed faced with a crisis, she supported the economic benefit to Causeway Coast and Glens.

Proposed by Councillor C McShane
Seconded by Councillor Bateson

- To recommend that Council does not give a higher award to any organisation that has been successful in the last two years, than previously awarded;
- That events not taking place in 2021 do not receive funding;
- That Council proactively research what Central Government potentially have available eg: TNI, or other, external sources.

The Chair put the motion to the Committee to vote.

4 Members voted For; 12 members voted Against; 0 Members Abstained.

The Chair declared the motion lost.

Proposed by Councillor Holmes
Seconded by Alderman Hillis

- To recommend that Council approve the allocation of the Tourism Event Funding to successful applicants as detailed in Annex A with the reductions outlined.

Councillor Bateson requested a Recorded Vote.

The Chair put the motion to the Committee to vote.

12 Members voted For; 3 Members voted Against; 1 Member Abstained.

The Chair declared the motion carried.

Recorded Vote Table

For (12)	Alderman Baird, Hillis
	Councillors Anderson, Callan, Holmes, Knight-McQuillan, McAuley, McCaw, McQuillan, Schenning, McLean, Watton
Against (3)	Councillors Bateson, C McShane, Nicholl
Abstain (1)	Councillor MA MAKillop

The Chair declared a recess at 9.23pm.

* **The meeting reconvened at 9.30PM.**

12. TOURISM EVENTS PROGRAMME 2021

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Tourism and Recreation and Assistant Events Manager.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present Members with an update on the Covid 19 constraints related to the delivery of events in 2021, and a recommendation specific to Council's Event Programme.

Background

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council has a significant remit with regard to the support, delivery and facilitation of tourism events within the region. The past 12 months have been extremely challenging and have significantly impacted on both Council-led events and the support provided to the third sector.

In December 2021 the Council approved the establishment, for one year only, of a Tourism Events Recovery Fund. This fund is designed to support existing event organisers who have benefited from the Tourism Event Funding Programme in the past two years (see separate Leisure and Development report).

The Coronavirus pandemic has severely curtailed the Council led event programme over the past 12 months, with the majority of events being cancelled in 2020. Halloween and Christmas took place in a reduced format, and mostly through a virtual medium.

Challenges for Delivery of Events in 2021 – Government Restrictions

The current Government advice on Indoor and outdoor gatherings allows up to **six people** (including children of all ages) from a maximum of **two households** to meet outdoors, or in non-domestic indoor settings for a permitted reason. These regulations will be reviewed on 16 March 2021 as part of the NI Executive's planned pathway out of current restrictions.

Published on 3 March 2021, the NI Executive's pathway states that strategic priorities remain with the health and wellbeing of citizens, societal, and community wellbeing, economic wellbeing and revitalizing the economy.

Nine pathways (sectors) have been developed by the NI Executive, each having five phases through which the objective is to reduce and remove the restrictions that are currently in place. Events are included in the 'Culture, Heritage and Entertainment' pathway.

Progress through the five phases will vary and will be dependent on updates on evidence that allows a balance of the benefits to society with the potential impact on the transmission of the virus (COVID 19).

Due to the unpredictable course of the pandemic the NI Executive has not issue a timetable linked to the recovery pathway. They have however detailed review dates i.e. 16th March 2021, 15th April 2021, 13th May 2021 and 10th June 2021.

Without a timetable event planning for 2021 is simply speculative.

Implications for Planning Council-led Event Programme

Many of the Council's managed events require significant lead-in time and committed resources. Event management, planning, outsourced suppliers, professional services, marketing activities and traffic management consultants, mostly need to be procured and contracts agreed months in advance of the event taking place. Safety Advisor Group (SAG) consultation for events such as the Auld Lammas Fair starts 7-8 months in advance, with tender documentation and pyrotechnic licences applied for several months in advance.

The absence of a recovery programme makes it very challenging to curtail existing furlough arrangements, initiate planning, commit resources and enter into contractual agreements for the Council event programme.

Proposed Approach for Delivery of Council Event Programme 2021

With the unpredictable course of the pandemic, the Tourism Events Team has been investigating a revised approach for delivery based on the planning implications and restrictions in place currently and in the foreseeable future.

A summarised proposal is detailed in Table 1 below (circulated).

Consultation and Assessment of Event Delivery Options

Officers have continued to liaise and seek advice from various agencies in relation to the potential planning opportunities for events in 2021/22. Whilst the NI Executive's 'pathway out of restrictions' details five phases for 'Culture, Heritage and Entertainment', dates have not yet been issued. Regarding entertainment and recreational gatherings, Council has not yet received definitive advice on the assessment and requirements for reasonable measures to mitigate for the risks. To date, the only advice is that event organisers must adhere to the Health and Safety at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000. Council Officers have sought clarification and guidance on how to achieve this in relation to mass gatherings and events.

The Tourism Events Team has attended regular meetings with colleagues from other Local Authorities. Feedback and benchmarking has shown that all other Councils are planning to reduce their event programme and carry out, where possible, virtual delivery where applicable. Derry City and Strabane and Belfast Council has stated that they don't plan to deliver events 'in the physical world' prior to Halloween. Local Authorities continue to monitor the regulations and await NI Executive guidance on events, mass gatherings and timings.

The Tourism Events Team has consulted with community partners and agreed with the recommendations for delivery in Table 1, for Ballymoney Spring Fair, Rathlin Sound Maritime Festival and the Salmon and Whiskey Festival.

Consultation has also taken place with multi agencies, including the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS), St Johns Ambulance, the Council led Safety Advisory Group (SAG) and Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS). This consultation assessed the potential for deployment of these services if required and possible constraints on delivery.

For each event, Officers looked at the type of delivery that is possible, based on information, advice, Government restrictions and timings. Internal and external risks have been assessed and these have influenced the type of proposal for each event, as detailed in Table 1. For information, Annex A (circulated) details the risks identified with the Auld Lammas Fair.

Budgetary Position

The budget allocation for the delivery of Council events was prepared at the end of 2020 and was based on the delivery of Council-led events, where COVID19 was not an impediment. The revised proposals for delivery offer revenue savings against the agreed allocation within the Tourism and Recreation budget.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee gives consideration to the current situation and approves the revised approach for the delivery of Council-led events in 2021 as detailed in Table 1, within the report.

Councillor Knight-McQuillan sought clarification of the differing costs associated with the virtual events.

The Assistant Events Manager provided a response associated with each event, Councillor Knight-McQuillan stated it did not answer her question.

Alderman Hillis considered also budgeting for events in the event Covid restrictions should ease.

The Head of Tourism and Recreation detailed the scale of the difficulties, the Safety Advice Group was not meeting and there was no steer nor guidance from The Executive. He advised Alderman Hillis' suggested course was also being looked at.

Councillor McAuley felt the costs for the virtual events did not seem worthwhile.

Proposed by Councillor McQuillan

Seconded by Councillor McAuley

- to recommend that Council does not run virtual events; that the funding is set aside for later in the year and revisit Halloween and Christmas virtual events at the end of the Summer.

Councillor C McShane welcomed the Blue Sails Consultancy report, she requested the Rathlin Sound and Salmon and Whiskey Festival funding was rolled to next year to ensure strategic planning with the events.

Councillor McCaw sought information on the impact of the virtual Halloween and Christmas events. The Director of Leisure and Development confirmed it would be presented to the next Leisure and Development Committee meeting.

Councillor McQuillan withdrew his motion, with the agreement of his seconder and supported by Councillor Watton, he considered deferring consideration until further figures were known.

The Director of Leisure and Development drew caution with any proposed delays.

Proposed by Councillor Holmes

Seconded by Alderman Hillis

- To recommend that Council approve the revised approach for the delivery of Council-led events in 2021 as detailed in Table 1, within the report.

The Chair put the motion to the Committee to vote.

8 members voted For; 7 Members voted Against; 0 members Abstained.

The Chair declared the motion carried.

- * **Councillor Schenning left the meeting during consideration of the Item at 10pm.**

13. THE GLENS VISITOR INFORMATION PROVISION

Report, previously circulated, to seek Members' approval for the provision of a Visitor Information Service in the Glens area.

Background

The Destination Management team manages six networked Visitor Information Centres (VICs) within the Borough: Ballycastle, Bushmills, Ballymoney, Coleraine, Limavady and Portrush. It also manages one non-networked office, Rathlin Boathouse.

In addition to fulfilling the VIC remit on a year round opening basis, three out of the four centres offer front of house provision for other service areas within Council, namely, Roe Valley Arts Centre, Ballymoney Town Hall and Portnagree House in Ballycastle. Coleraine VIC acts as a reception for the Town Hall but does not provide front of house for any other Council Service.

Seasonal offices are also open from Easter to October at Bushmills, Portrush and Rathlin Boathouse. All offices are currently closed following government guidelines and staff are on furlough.

A gap exists in the provision of a visitor information service within the Glens. Council has addressed this in the past six years in the form of a service level agreement with an operator in the Glens. This contract will come to an end as of 31 March 2021.

The Glens is the gateway to the Borough and is situated along the Causeway Coastal Route. The visitor information service in the Glens is often the first touch point for many of our international visitors. As such, it offers more than visitor information from direct enquiries over the counter and via telephone/internet, it offers that personal, authentic and friendly welcome which enhances visitor satisfaction, encouraging longer stays, increased spend, repeat visits and a positive portrayal of what the destination has to offer visitors.

Requirements for Services

The tenderer must deliver the following services;

Opening Hours:

- March – June, September, October: Monday – Saturday 10am – 2pm.
- November: Monday – Saturday 10am to 1pm.
- July and August: Monday – Saturday 10am – 5pm, Sunday 12noon - 4pm.
- Closed December to End February.

- The Information Office should be open all bank and public holidays.
(With the exception of Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day)

1.1 Standards of Service

Provide a personal and impartial service at all times.

Stock and display free literature from relevant outside agencies/bodies of the destination.

Hold a reference manual for the use of visitors with details of all accommodation, places to eat, attractions etc. in the destination.

Respond to any telephone enquires within 5 rings, written and email enquiries within 24 hours.

1.2 Accommodation and experience booking service

The office will offer an accommodation and experience booking service for local tourism providers.

1.3 Staffing

Staff must participate in a relevant induction training programme and undertake any other training programmes as reasonably requested by Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

1.4 Administration

The staff will record statistics on all enquiries and report on a monthly basis.

Subject to government restrictions in relation to Covid19

When the office cannot be physically opened to the public, a telephone and email service must be provided at a minimum during the listed opening hours.

Efforts must be made to make the office environment compliant with best practice in terms of minimising the risk for staff and visitors from Covid19.

Procurement Process

Following procedures detailed in the funding policy, Causeway Coast and Glens Council has invited quotations from experienced operators to provide 'Visitor Information Services' in the Glens. This service in the Glens will exist to promote the Causeway Coast and Glens as a holiday destination, communicating what it has to offer the holidaymaker/visitor with regard to accommodation, activities, events and attractions, and other tourism related products, as well as providing the warm welcome expected by visitors.

The procurement process for this appointment involved a public notice in 'The Chronicle' newspapers and via E-Sourcing NI and expressions of interest were sought. The terms of reference were issued and one company responded. The submission deadline was 12 noon Tuesday 23rd February 2021.

As with previous tenders for this service in the Glens, the maximum budget allocated to this is £20,000.

The following company submitted documentation:

- The Glens of Antrim Historical Society

Summary

	Score	Rank

Glens of Antrim Historical Society	100	1st
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Recommendation

It is recommended that Council approves:

Appointment of The Glens of Antrim Historical Society as the Causeway Coast and Glens Council's preferred candidate for the provision of Visitor Information Services in the Glens, subject to clarification of all requested information and agreement on 'the terms and conditions of contract'.

This appointment would be for a twelve month period commencing on 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022 with the option to extend for two further periods of 12 months each from 1st April, subject to satisfactory performance and council budgets.

Proposed by Councillor MA McKillop
Seconded by Councillor C McShane and

AGREED – to recommend that Council Appoint The Glens of Antrim Historical Society as the Causeway Coast and Glens Council's preferred candidate for the provision of Visitor Information Services in the Glens, subject to clarification of all requested information and agreement on 'the terms and conditions of contract';

14. CAUSEWAY COAST WAY – PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Tourism and Recreation, via PowerPoint presentation (1 illustrative slide).

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Members to assert a Public Right of Way at Atlantic View Holiday Park, Clare Park adjacent to Clare Road on the western side of Ballycastle. This is a non-contested assertion from the land owner in order to secure future public access on this path.

Background

In April 2018 Council Officers presented a blueprint document on the Causeway Coast Way which received Members' approval to pursue the strategic direction and where possible deliver on the proposed interventions that were detailed. These interventions included the creation of new off road sections at coastal locations and where the walking experience can be taken off road.

A section identified for development as part of the Causeway Coast Way is the coastal strip within the boundary of Atlantic View Holiday Park, Ballycastle. **Annex A** (circulated) details the existing Public Right of Way (in blue) and the proposed new Public Right of Way (in orange).

The Atlantic View Holiday Park owner has plans for redevelopment of the field on the eastern side of the wooded area on Clare Road and Officers are keen to secure a connection from Clare Road to the perimeter of the holiday park along the coastal fringe and back again to the road. By securing this perimeter it also allows for future development to take the Causeway Coast Way off road where possible.

The landowner has agreed to facilitate the assertion of the Public Right of Way subject to the condition that when Council develop the Public Right of Way, a fence will be erected to prevent the public from straying off the Public Right of Way into the Holiday Park.

Future Proposals

The site is located at the holiday park adjacent to Clare Road on the western side of the town and was once part of the Hugh McGildowny's Estate. A Public Rights Of Way (PROW) exists at the eastern end of the site and there is an opportunity to link this PROW, with a new PROW, which can in the interim return to the road and in the future extend westwards. The site enjoys panoramic views of Rathlin Island, Fairhead, Mull of Kintyre and Islay.

Subject to funding being secured, future works will require construction of a path, along with cliff edge stabilisation and fencing.

The new section of public right of way and associated works will only be developed if funding has been secured.

The Public Right of Way Assertion protects access on foot for members of the public and prevents future opportunities to obstruct access. At this stage, an assertion does not require Council's agreement to maintain or provide indemnity on the land. The new section of Public Right of Way will only become accessible to the public once the pathway has been developed.

Council Officers hope that future funding programmes will allow for coastal walking opportunities at this site.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Leisure & Development Committee recommends to Council the assertion of the proposed Public Right of Way at Clare Park, Ballycastle, as indicated on Annex A. This is subject to a signed Public Right of Way Assertion Statement.

Alderman Baird, Councillors C McShane and MA McKillop welcomed the report and commended staff.

Proposed by Councillor C McShane
Seconded by Alderman Baird and

AGREED – to recommend that Council approve the assertion of the proposed Public Right of Way at Clare Park, Ballycastle, as indicated on Annex A. This is subject to a signed Public Right of Way Assertion Statement.

15. CLOUGHMILLS PLAY PROVISION / ASSET DISPOSAL

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Sport and Wellbeing, to seek Members approval to release a disused play area in the village of Cloughmills and forward the site to Corporate Services for further consideration as an asset for disposal.

Background

When Councils merged in 2015, Play Park asset records noted one play park located in the village of Cloughmills – Cloughmills Bio Park. The Play Audit

completed in 2017 rated the play park in the upper mid category for play value (Score 555). Equipment was listed in good condition and offering a good level of play value.

The audit acknowledged that there may still be a level of demand for further fixed play within the area which could be met through expansion of the Bio Park.

(Play Investment Strategy; extract page 121)

Current Position

An area of council ownership in the village has been identified as having the potential for residential development/asset realisation. Further investigation has shown that the area was previously used for play / recreation space but was abandoned in legacy Ballymoney BC times due to frequent and costly anti-social behaviour. All play equipment was removed and residents now have use of the Bio Play Park at the "Old Mill" site.

The area continues to be subject to antisocial behaviour which is causing upset and disturbance to the residents in nearby houses. (see red outline area as marked in attached photograph Annex A (circulated))

Officers are currently taking a project through Council's Capital Project Programme for a pitch and associated pavilion building in the village. Subject to affordability and completion of the project there will open recreational space available for the residents of the village to participate in outdoor games / recreational activities in addition to the Bio Play Park.

Recommendation

The old play area at Strand Park, Cloughmills is now surplus to requirements and the recommendation is that the site is transferred to Corporate Services for consideration as a Land & Property matter i.e. asset disposal.

Proposed by Councillor McAuley

Seconded by Councillor McLean and

AGREED – to recommend that the old play area at Strand Park, Cloughmills is now surplus to requirements and that the site is transferred to Corporate Services for consideration as a Land & Property matter i.e. asset disposal.

16. ON THE BALL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Sport and Wellbeing, to update Members on progress in the potential introduction of free sanitary products in sports grounds and public buildings to combat the ever-growing issue of period poverty.

Background

In January 2019 Council adopted a Notice of Motion in support of the "On the Ball" campaign. One of the key elements of that notice of motion was the feasibility of implementing that scheme in the Council facilities across Causeway Coast & Glens council area and all council owned sport & leisure facilities.

Current position

Officers across Sport & Wellbeing and Estates have considered the practicalities and associated costs of providing free sanitary products in its main leisure facilities.

They have engaged with a neighbouring Council who have already trialled a similar scheme in its council buildings – Leisure Centres and Civic Buildings (Derry City & Strabane District Council). Feedback indicates that uptake (with some initial wastage occurring) has stabilised, however there is no way of measuring the direct benefits i.e. helping females of low income to access period products.

Council is in the process of renewing its service contract for sanitary products and has investigated the cost of converting the dispensing machines to coin-free across the suite of buildings where these machines are located.

The table below details where these machines are located;

Roe Valley Leisure Centre	Roe Valley Arts & Cultural Centre
Coleraine Leisure Centre	Tourist Information Centre, Benone Avenue
Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre	Council Offices Limavady
Jim Watt Sports Centre	Riada House
Sheskburn House	Ballymoney Town Hall
East Strand Sports Complex	Ballysally Community Centre
Riada Stadium	Drumaheglis Caravan Park
Kilrea Sports Complex	

Currently each coin operated machines costs £15 p/a. ¹The supplier stocks each machine and retains all income.

The cost of a free vending machine is £55 p/a, plus the additional costs of purchasing stock.

Proposed Trial Period

In order to inform Members on the "...feasibility of implementing that scheme in the Council Offices across Causeway Coast & Glens council area and all council owned sport & leisure facilities", Officers propose a one year trial, providing free sanitary products in Council's 3 major and he 3 minor leisure centres:

- Limavady - Roe Valley Leisure Centre.
- Ballymoney – The Joey Dunlop Leisure Centre.
- Coleraine – Coleraine Leisure Centre.
- Ballycastle – Sheskburn House.
- Garvagh – The Jim Watt Leisure Centre.
- Dungiven – Leisure Centre.

On completion of the trial period, a further report will be brought back to committee for consideration as to whether it is feasible to continue and extend the scheme

¹ Corrected to **£60** per annum at the Committee meeting held 16 March 2021 (typing error)

in accordance with the original Notice of Motion to all Council offices and all sport and leisure facilities.

Recommendation

For one year, provide free sanitary products in Council's 3 major and 3 minor leisure centres, in order to assess the viability of implementing the 'On the Ball' Campaign across all Council offices and all sport and leisure facilities.

Proposed by Councillor McAuley

Seconded by Councillor MA McKillop and

AGREED – to recommend that Council, for one year, provide free sanitary products in Council's 3 major and 3 minor leisure centres, in order to assess the viability of implementing the 'On the Ball' Campaign across all Council offices and all sport and leisure facilities.

The Chair advised the following Items were for information.

17. DFC COVID FUNDING UPDATE

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a monthly update on the additional funding received from the Department for Communities (DfC) to support the voluntary and community sector as it continues to recover and help citizens to get through the COVID-19 pandemic and on the Anti-Poverty Stakeholder Steering Group and Action Plan.

Background

The Department for Communities has made a series of additional funds available to Councils through the Community Support Programme in order to support efforts of the community and voluntary sector and help alleviate the social and economic impact of the pandemic. The Leisure & Development Committee requested that this item remain on the agenda for regular updating to the Committee.

Progress Report

- 298 grants totalling £636,823 have been awarded to date to community and voluntary organisations for support for people who are experiencing difficulties with access to food, fuel poverty and connectivity.
- Causeway Coast and Glens Anti-Poverty Stakeholder Steering Group is now well established with an agreed Terms of Reference and has met fortnightly with 9 meetings to date between Nov 20 – Feb 21.
- An engagement survey, focus groups and key stakeholder meetings have taken place with key stakeholders and wider community and voluntary sector organisations who are undertaking poverty related work.
- A final draft Anti-Poverty Action Plan has been prepared and will be brought to Leisure & development Committee when fully endorsed by Steering Group.
- Wraparound support service is in place – LCDI are leading on a consortium of advice organisations and food banks to deliver this service between Jan-Mar 21. The service is delivering an individually tailored wraparound support programme

for people who have been adversely impacted by the economic fallout of the pandemic or who aren't currently availing of services to address their immediate crisis needs as well as to help them back to a position of financial stability.

- An awareness raising campaign 'Where to Turn' is currently underway with weekly social media posts and press article. Information leaflets containing contacts of emergency support services have been developed and will be distributed through a variety of channels including community groups. Further promotions including bus shelter advertising are planned.

18. DAERA RURAL TOURISM COLLABORATIVE EXPERIENCE

Information report, previously circulated.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to detail an opportunity to avail of funding from a pilot programme, which aims to develop and promote visitor experiences within rural parts of the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area, for the benefit of the visitor economy. £50,000 of funding is available through the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) Rural Tourism Collaborative Experiences Programme (at 75% funding).

Background

The Rural Tourism Collaborative Programme is a pilot programme delivered by DAERA aimed at boosting tourism in rural areas. This funding will enable local Councils to identify businesses and other potential partners to develop quality visitor experiences, based around a geographical area, theme, attraction or key market segment.

The tourism experiences should offer visitors an end-to-end holistic product that meets their needs, increases dwell time and thereby drives economic growth within rural areas.

Funding secured

Council Officers have secured maximum funding of £50,000 through the Rural Tourism Collaborative Experience Programme (75% funding). £25,000 has been allowed for the facilitation service to work with the local tourism sector in the Binevenagh and Glens areas of the Council. An additional £41,666 will allow for resourcing, product development and marketing activities. The total contribution from Council is therefore £16,666, which has been allocated from the Council's Destination Marketing and Product Development budget.

Project Brief

The project aims to bring rural businesses and other potential partners together to develop a number of NI Embrace a Giant Spirit brand aligned tourism experiences within the Binevenagh and Glens areas of the Council based on a 'Cultural and Heritage' theme. Participants will be encouraged to work together to identify the uniqueness of the area and package a range of authentic local products that can be promoted as a tourism experience.

The tourism experiences will focus on encouraging visitors to immerse themselves actively in the locale, interacting with local people, engaging the senses, and learning the history and stories of the places through different narratives such as

storytelling, music, language, sport, craft and outdoor activities. The experiences may be in different locations, guided, self-guided or within a workshop. Local food, drink, and accommodation will be threaded through these new experiences to offer an end-to-end holistic product.

The resulting experiences should create a real 'sense of place' and appeal to the 'Culturally Curious' target market segment.

Project Outcomes/Benefits

This is a pilot programme, and after consultation with DAERA and Tourism NI, initially targets the Binevenagh and Glens areas. There are a number of businesses within these areas that currently offer a range of experiences. By connecting these businesses/ experiences together and with the addition of new collaborations and partnerships it is hoped that this programme will result in:

- Increased visitor spend.
- Increased visitor numbers.
- Increased dwell time and address seasonality.
- Increased employment opportunities.
- Marketing intelligence, research and support for the experience product target market to ensure that the new experience fits into the core existing markets and experience brand for Northern Ireland.
- Development of a measurable Action Plan that will deliver on a new experience.
- Brand development in line with Northern Ireland Embrace the Giant Spirit.
- Development of the experiences, including digital and media.
- Launch of new tourism experiences on both domestic and global platform.

Due for completion by 31 March 2022, this project invests in new and improved experiences and aligns to 'Northern Ireland – Embrace a Giant Spirit'. Development and promotion of this project will assist in spreading the benefits from a visitor economy and helping to create viability in our rural areas.

19. CORRESPONDENCE

Report, previously circulated, to present correspondence for Members' information.

19(i) Protection from Stalking Bill

Correspondence has been received the NI Assembly on the Protection from Stalking Bill. The Committee for Justice would welcome comments/views on the contents of the Bill. Details of the Bill can be found at <http://nia1.me/4fm> or by emailing protectionfromstalkingbill@niassembly.gov.uk

The closing date for submissions is 16 April 2021.

Alderman Baird welcomed the Bill which she considered was timely, considering the recent news from London.

Councillor Callan queried whether Council had received correspondence from The Minister of Finance regarding new Civil Service hubs.

The Director of Leisure and Development advised he would look into the matter raised.

20. MATTERS REPORTING TO THE PARTNERSHIP PANEL

There were no matters for reporting to the Partnership Panel.

21. CONSULTATIONS

Report, previously circulated.

21 (i) SONI Shaping our Electricity Future.

Consultation detail circulated.

The information contained in the following item is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'

Proposed by Councillor Holmes
Seconded by Councillor Anderson and

AGREED – to recommend that Council move, '*In Committee*'.

* **Press and Public were disconnected from the meeting at 10.33pm.**

22. COLERAINE BOMB MEMORIAL

Confidential report, previously circulated.

The Chair invited Dr M Braniff to present her report via Powerpoint presentation, Dr L Faulkner-Byrne was in attendance to answer questions.

The purpose of the report was to present the key findings and options for consideration emerging from a public opinion consultation, carried out between November 2020 and January 2021 as detailed in the information report presented to Council on 17th November.

The purpose of the consultation was to determine:

- Public opinion on a permanent structural memorial to those who lost their lives in the 1973 bomb, including the location, structure and design of the potential memorial.

The process was designed to consult and engage meaningfully and appropriately, with those affected by the Coleraine Bomb that took place on 12th June 1973.

Background and Findings were presented in the report.

Options on How to Proceed

1. Do not proceed any further (high risk)
2. Locate a permanent structural memorial at the Railway Road (site of bomb) (medium risk)
3. Locate a permanent structural memorial at the Town Hall (medium risk)
4. Facilitation and engagement with family and victims and survivors (low risk).

Councillor McLean thanked the Consultants for a very thorough report, he stated there was some urgency required with the memorial, as older generations had passed since and considered the families should decide the factual wording on it.

The Head of Community and Culture clarified timescales of between 12-18 months for the whole project, depending on the scope, plans and design, that a plaque in the interim could be put in place.

Councillor Anderson advised the Memorial should be put in place as soon as possible.

Councillor Watton stated his personal opinion was the location of the Memorial as at Coleraine Town Hall.

Proposed by Councillor McLean
Seconded by Councillor Anderson and

AGREED - to recommend that Council approve facilitation and engagement with family and victims and survivors, to be completed by June 2022.

* **Dr M Braniff and Dr L Faulkner-Byrne left the meeting.**

23. LARCHFIELD PLAYPARK TENDER REPORT

Confidential report, previously circulated, presented by the Head of Sport and Wellbeing, to update Members on progress with the repair and renewal of Larchfield Play Park; and request approval to proceed with the recommendation in the Tender Report at a cost of £37,665.

Background was circulated within the confidential report.

Recommendation

Members are requested to approve the recommendation from the Larchfield Tender report and appoint Wicksteed at a cost of £37,665.

Councillor Bateson welcomed the report and proposed its adoption. He thanked the Head of Sport and Wellbeing and Kilrea Enterprise Group.

Councillor McQuillan thanked Kilrea Enterprise Group.

Proposed by Councillor Bateson
Seconded by Councillor McQuillan and

AGREED – to recommend that Council to approve the recommendation from the Larchfield Tender report and appoint Wicksteed at a cost of £37,665.

24. ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS NOTIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 12. (O)

The Chair invited Alderman Fielding to address Committee.

24 (i) CCTV Provision (Councillor McCaw)

In light of an uplift in anti social behaviour in Portstewart and Portrush, can we please have a report brought back next month on reintroducing CCTV in town centres?

24 (ii) CCTV Provision (Alderman Fielding)

In light of reports in the media of an increase of anti-social behaviour in some of our coastal towns has any consideration been given to pursuing options for re-introducing public area CCTV provision since the last report to Council in October 2019.

The Chair considered the above submissions collectively.

Councillor McCaw proposed in light of recent high profile reports of anti-social behaviour, that Council reconsider options for public area CCTV and have a report brought back on potential options for reintroducing CCTV, include splitting costs with PSNI.

Alderman Fielding highlighted problems in Portrush, Portstewart and Ballycastle. He advised, that when the night time economy restarts, he would like CCTV in place. Alderman Fielding advised PSNI have confirmed CCTV did act as a deterrent to enable Police to intervene; the PSNI, Community and Council would benefit, whilst not agreeing that Council would be the sole funder.

Alderman Fielding proposed Council, PSNI and PCSP part funded CCTV; that Options are brought back and consult with PCSP. He advised of an initiative within Derry City and Strabane District Council which was part funded.

Councillor Watton agreed with implementing CCTV, in light of problems with drugs within the community.

Councillor Holmes felt the situation had not changed since the previous decision, that it was a matter for the Department for Justice, however, he had no issue with a report coming back.

Councillor MA McKillop considered CCTV as a deterrent and stated she would like to see a report.

Councillor C McShane voiced mental health and wellbeing impact on coastal towns for example, rallying in North Antrim and Ballycastle and did require to be looked at.

Councillor McLean urged caution, he advised the Finance Committee were looking at capital and revenue expenditure, that Council had to be realistic, CCTV was not a requirement by law.

The Director of Leisure and Development clarified that whilst PSNI acknowledge the benefits of CCTV, Council had no statutory responsibility, the Department of Justice had stated there was no funding available. The Director of Leisure and Development detailed the current technology was not fit-for purpose and advised of current specification standards required.

The Director of Leisure and Development agreed to request PCSP review the report on CCTV, to investigate what has changed and what could be taken forward, the report to be brought back as soon as possible.

MOTION TO PROCEED '*IN PUBLIC*'

Proposed by Councillor Anderson
Seconded by Alderman Hillis and

AGREED – to recommend that Council move '*In Public*'.

There being no further business the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 11.27PM.

Chair