



## Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Revenue & Community Development Project Grants March 2008
Date:	11 June 2008
Reporting Officer:	Marie-Thérèse McGivern Director of Development ext. 3470
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### Relevant Background Information

The Grant Aid Policy 'A Guide to Grant Aid for Community Organisations' was agreed by Council in January 2004. Two of the six grant types contained within the Policy are Revenue Grant and Community Development Project Grant.

#### 1. Revenue Grants

Awards are allocated under three categories or grades towards the running costs of community facilities. Precedence is given to neighbourhood groups demonstrating a broad based programme of activity. The grade of award is determined by the size of the building, programme content, throughput, and current running costs. When applications are received from organisations operating in the same geographical area, assessment is made in relation to potential duplication of programme and target groups including use of a digital mapping process.

The Community & Leisure Services Sub-Committee of 11 May 2004 awarded 77 Revenue Grants for the period 2004-7. Due to the timescale for the Department's Grant Aid Review these awards were subsequently extended for the period 2007-8 and 2008-9 by the Community & Leisure Services Sub-Committees of 5 September 2006 and 8 May 2007 respectively. In extending the contract period the Committee was aware of the potential risk of limiting equality of treatment and opportunity of those organisations which had not had the chance to apply for this grant previously. Subsequently, the Development Committee 12 December 2007 agreed a one off additional allocation to the Revenue Grant budget of £50,000 to allow new applications from groups who had established, or had acquired premises, since the 2003-4 open call.

## 2. Community Development Project Grants

Project grant awards of up to £500 are available for small scale community projects that contribute to the overarching aim of building the capacity of local people. Specifically projects which:

- Develop the programme of a community building
- Enable new community groups to become established
- Contribute to the organisational costs of community projects
- Support training courses for Committees/Volunteers

An open call for applications is advertised each year in March and October.

## **Key Issues**

### 1. Revenue Grants

A total of 10 Revenue Grants were received by the submission date of 1 March 2008. Applications have been assessed under the same due processes as applied to those received at the previous application date of October 2003. In addition to the general eligibility criteria for this grant, Groups have had to demonstrate that they meet the specific additional criteria as agreed by the Development Committee December 2007. Four applications have been recommended for funding to the cumulative amount of £20,031.63. These are listed at Appendix 1. Six applications have been recommended for rejection and these are listed and the reasons for rejection given at Appendix 1. Where an application for Revenue is rejected by Committee, the applicant Group is notified of its right of appeal in relation to this decision. Any appeals submitted will be considered by Committee at a subsequent meeting.

### 2. Project Grants

A total of 64 Project Grant applications were received by the submission date 1 March 2008. Fifty six applications have been recommended for funding to the cumulative amount of £31,936. These are listed at Appendix 2. Eight applications are recommended for rejection for the reasons listed at Appendix 2.

Both grant types have been assessed within current agreed eligibility criteria, and there is no equality or environmental implications. Where possible, it is intended that Development Staff will offer support to those groups not recommended for funding in order to assist them to improve practice and reapply for grant aid support at a later stage.

## **Resource Implications**

### Financial

The budget for Revenue awards is agreed as £50,000 so recommendations are within the maximum additional allocation agreed by Committee.

The available current Community Development Project Grant budget category is £55,166 so recommendations are within budget limits.

Human Resources

There is no additional staff resource required other than those normally deployed in the administration and assessment of this grant category.

Asset and Other Implications

There is no impact on any physical BCC asset.

**Recommendations**

Members are requested to approve the recommendations in respect of Revenue Grants at Appendix 1 and Community Development Project Grants as attached at Appendix 2. Members should note that the recommendation in regard to Community Development Project Grant application number 995 (Ligoniel Improvement Association) is subject to specific additional assurances being supplied by the Organisation. These assurances are in relation to the possible consequences to the Organisation of alleged irregular financial activities. Payment of this award will progress only upon receipt of these assurances.

**Documents Attached**

Appendix 1 – Revenue Grant Applications  
Appendix 2 – Project Grant Applications

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