



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Development Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Community Festivals Fund
<b>Date:</b>	13 August 2008
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Marie-Thérèse McGivern, Director of Development ext 3470
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Tim Husbands, Managing Director, Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Halls ext 1400

### Relevant Background Information

The Development Committee considered reports in January, April and May regarding the proposed transfer of Community Festivals Funding from the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) to Local Authorities. This funding was previously administered through the Northern Ireland Events Company.

Previous Committee reports have highlighted a number of issues with the proposed transfer and issues have been raised within Council and with DCAL particularly regarding the level of funding being offered.

At the Strategic Policy and Resource Committee in June it was recommended to commit £120,000 to a Community Festivals Fund with a request to DCAL that they consider increasing their contribution to match that from the Council. DCAL has since responded that they are sympathetic to Council's position and Belfast City Council will have first priority should any surplus funds materialise, but at this early stage they have no declared surplus to re-distribute. Policy and Resource Committee also outlined the procedure and timescale for administration of grant and requested the rationalisation of approval of delegated authority for the Director of Development to manage the award of grants under the Community Festivals Fund.

Council has since accepted the award from DCAL to manage the Community Festivals Fund in the Belfast area. The total fund value for Belfast is £197,300. From this an operating budget of 10% (£19,730) has been set aside, leaving an amount available for distribution of £177,570.

## **Key Issues**

A report has been compiled (**See Appendix A**) to establish funding guidelines and administrative and management procedures. In order for it to commence delivery of grants by September 2008 with a single call running until March 2009.

Issues for consideration by Development Committee:

- the minimum and maximum level of financial offer for the Community festival Fund
- established CFF criteria for the Council broadly based on DCAL guidelines but in line with the current Development Department's strategy and strategic objectives
- the establishment of a grant delivery procedure for the department to implement, in order to effectively administer CFF in the timescale required.
- the rationale for seeking delegated authority
- the engagement of an external consultant as lead assessor to manage the CFF assessment and evaluation processes.

### Timescale

Advertise scheme	2 September 2008
Deadline for applications	19 September 2008
Recommendations approved by Chief Officer	30 September 2008
Information Sessions on CFF	4 & 5 September 2008 ( <b>See Appendix B</b> )
Grant awards made	1 <sup>st</sup> October 2008

## **Resource Implications**

### Financial

The total fund value for Belfast is, accordingly, £197,300. From this an operating budget of 10% £19,730 has been set aside for the administration of the scheme

### Human Resources

There are implications for additional staffing resources required to administer the proposed fund.

## **Recommendations**

It is recommended that Members note the contents of the report and approve the :

- 1) Procedure and timescale outlined for administration of grant
- 2) Criteria and Guidance Notes for the Community Festivals Fund
- 3) Communications plan for the scheme
- 4) Delegated authority for the Director of Development to manage the award of grants.
- 5) Engagement of an external consultant as lead assessor to manage the CFF evaluation and assessment process.
- 6) Minimum and maximum levels of financial offers from the fund, of £2,500 and £10,000 respectively

<b>Documents Attached</b>
---------------------------

Appendix A Recommendations for the delivery of the Funding Guidelines, and administrative procedures of the Community Festivals Fund 2008/2009
Appendix B Information sessions schedule

<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
-----------------------------

CFF Community festival Fund
DCAL Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

PAGE BREAK