



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Revenue Grant for Community Buildings
Date:	9 June 2010
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Catherine Taggart, Community Development Manager, ext 3525

Relevant Background Information

Revenue Grant For Community Buildings was introduced in 2004. Priority within this grant type was allocated to areas of greatest social need whilst endeavouring to ensure balanced provision throughout the City. Within this category of funding Council was endeavouring to award funding towards running costs for community buildings. Precedence is given to neighbourhood groups that can demonstrate a broad based programme of activity. The size of the building, programme content throughput and current running costs will determine the maximum amount of running costs that can be awarded.

The Community & Leisure Services Sub Committee at its meeting on 11 May 2004 awarded seventy seven Revenue Grants to Community Organisations for the period 2004–2007. Due to the timescale for the Departments Grant Aid Review these awards were subsequently extended for the period 2007/08 and 2008/09 by the Community and Leisure Services Sub Committee on 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 at its meeting on 12 December 2007 agreed a one-off additional allocation to the Revenue Grant budget of £50,000. This would allow new applications from Community Organisations who had established or had acquired premises since the 2003/04 open call. Four applications were recommended for funding at this time (2007). Following a lengthy Departmental review of all grants the Development Committee at its meeting on 10 February 2010 agreed to extend Community Services Revenue Grant for one year with no less than 90% of the budget being allocated to the groups which are currently funded and up to 10% being held for new groups who wished to access the fund.

Principles of the application Process

Organisations submit a funding application including supporting documentation such as governing documents, annual reports, financial statements, policy documents, centre programme, targeted groups, geographical focus etc. The lengthy assessment process involves an intensive staff resource input to assess applications against the grant criterion. This includes site visits.

Applications from Community Organisations operating in the same geographical area are subject to assessment in relation to potential duplication of programme and target groups including use of a digital mapping process. Funding awards are allocated on the basis of grade 1, 2 and 3 awards.

Level of applications

Twenty applications for Revenue Grant for Community Building were received by the closing date of 15 April 2010.

The cumulative total amount requested by the 2010/11 cohort of applications is £202,728.00. The total available budget for this grant type 2010/11 is £81,858.

Key Issues

1. If recommended groups were awarded funding under previous funding bands this would amount to £139,029 with an agreed budget of £81,853 resulting in a significant overspend of £57,176. In order to come within budget it is proposed to award an equal amount of £7231.20 to the higher graded applicants and under £5000 to lower graded applicants. This will meet the agreed available additional budget.
2. Applications that have been rejected for Revenue Grant (appendix 2) will be offered the right to appeal the decision. No budget has been withheld to address potential appeals.
3. The Development Committee (April 2010) agreed the recommendation of an options paper outlining final proposals with regard to the long term future of the Community Services Revenue Grant

Resource Implications

Budget available £81,858.00.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee notes the contents of this report and agrees to the following:

1. Recommendations for Revenue Grant for Community Buildings 2010/11 (Appendix 1); and
2. Recommendations for rejection of Revenue Grant for Community Buildings 2010/11 (Appendix 2)

Decision Tracking

Further to agreement and ratification, organisations will be informed whether or not they have been recommended for and awarded funding by letter. Successful applicants will be required to enter into a funding agreement with Council.

Timeframe: July 2010

Reporting Officer: Catherine Taggart

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 - Recommendations for Revenue Grant for Community Buildings 2010/11

Appendix 2 - Recommendations for rejection of Revenue Grant for Community Buildings 2010/11