



## Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Support for Sport – Event Funding
Date:	15 September 2010
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen Director of Development ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Tim Husbands, Head of City Events & Venues, ext 3470

### Relevant Background Information

The Support for Sport Scheme has funded clubs and organisations for the past seven years. The scheme has four main elements, Development Grants, Large Development Grants and Hospitality Funding (all of which are allocated by the Sports Development Unit through the Parks and Leisure Committee) and Events Funding which is allocated by the Events Unit through the Development Committee.

The Support for Sport Scheme (Events Funding) in the current financial year totals £97,500 and is allocated to sports events being organised in Belfast during the year 2010 -11.

Currently the Events Unit provides two publicly advertised and promoted opportunities per year to apply for funding. These tranches allow for groups to apply for funding for two distinct periods – spring/summer and autumn/winter.

Applications are assessed for funding under the Agreed Assessment Criteria ( see Appendix 1).

### Key Issues

Following a public notice in January 2010, a large number of Events Funding applications were received, referring to events taking place during the period 1 April 2010 – 30 September 2010. The applications were then assessed by officers using the assessment criteria agreed by the Development Committee in March 2008.

Due to the unprecedented number of applications, the situation arose whereby if all funding was allocated as per previous years, almost all the £97,500 available would have been exhausted during this first tranche.

To avoid this position, Committee agreed that the funding during this period would be subject to a 30% reduction (after assessment). This was to ensure that there was a sufficient remaining allocation of funding available for the next instalment of events happening between 1 October 2010 and 31 March 2011 (the second tranche).

The result was that 30% of the funding remained for this second tranche.

Although the process was fully approved, some Members at the time expressed concerns that some groups might be disadvantaged by the revised process. Taking these concerns into account in considering an appropriate process for the forthcoming year 2011/12, Members are now being requested to consider the introduction of a single annual public call from applicants. This concept would eradicate the predicament as the scheme would be advertised and processed only once per annum. All applicants, organising an event over the course of one year from 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012 (and subsequent years thereafter), would apply to meet the one deadline. Ideally this advertising process would take place in late November each year. Applications could then be assessed and approved well before the earliest of the events taking place in the new financial year starting from the 1 April 2011 onwards.

### **Resource Implications**

#### Financial

The current total Support for Sport Scheme (Events Funding) for 2010/2011 is £97,500.

Amendment to the process would have no financial implications, but if considered would produce a more equitable process for applicants seeking Support for Sport funding. It would also streamline the committee approval process, as this would only be required once in a financial year, rather than twice.

Members are asked to note that any public advertising to promote the scheme would only be undertaken with the caveat that all funding would be subject to funding being made available as part of the Council's annual estimates.

### **Recommendations**

The Committee is asked to consider the key issues and approve the officer recommendation to promote and call for applications for the Council's Support for Sport scheme once per annum in order to ensure equity to applicants.

### **Decision Tracking**

Officers will monitor funding and evaluate outcomes post-project delivery. These outcomes will be presented to Members as part of the City Events Unit key performance indicators. Further to ratification the Support for Sport (Event Funding) will be amended to an annual process, commencing with advertisement of the scheme in November 2010.

Time line: December 2010

Reporting Officer: Tim Husbands

### **Documents Attached**

Appendix 1 – Agreed Assessment Criteria