



Belfast City Council

Report to: Development Committee

Subject: Community Services Grant Aid Programme 2011/12

Date: January 2010

Reporting Officer: Cate Taggart, Community Development Manager, ext 3525

Contact Officer: Cate Taggart, Community Development Manager, ext 3525

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	<p>At the 14th October 2009 Committee, members considered a report on the Departmental Grants Review. This report noted that there would now be three strands of funding including the Community Access Fund, the Annual Fund and the Multi-Annual Fund. These strands were determined by the average level of funding currently allocated to successful organizations: under £10,000, between £10,000 and £25,000 and £25,000+.</p>
1.2	<p>Community Services offer a range of grants as set out in the policy 'A Guide to Grant Aid for Community Organisations', which was agreed by Council in January 2004. The grant categories could be sub-divided into large and small grant categories. The service, with support from the newly created Department Grant Aid Unit, is working to align service grants into the Departmental Grant programme. The time-frame to align the MAF grant types has been agreed as from April 2012. This applies to the Advice & Information grant and the Capacity Support grant.</p>
1.3	<p>Small Grants: Traditionally Community Services manage 3 small grant schemes and these include Community Development Project Grant, Summer Play Schemes and Community Chest awards. They are subject to application and allocated competitively against agreed criterion. The grant programme for 2010/11 is operating within current procedures and it is intended to continue this approach in 2011/12 in advance of the new Community Access small grant programme. This was agreed as part of the Development Department Grant Aid Review and is scheduled for implementation in autumn next year for the 2012/13 funding rounds.</p>

1.4	Large Grants. The community grant programme includes three larger grants: Revenue; Capacity Building Grant and Advice Services
1.5	The Community Revenue grant is available to eligible organisations delivering wide ranging community development programmes in community buildings at neighbourhood and area level. While assessment focuses on the range and content of the local service, the grant specifically assists groups with general building costs, e.g. utilities, Insurance, Health and Safety, Cleaning, Admin, Telephones etc.
1.6	In April 2010, members considered a paper outlining options for the future management of the revenue grant programme and agreed to continue the Revenue grant as an 'annual' stream for 2011/2012 to permit sufficient time for appropriate preparatory work including supporting policy development and a risk management framework to be put in place. It was agreed that following the policy work there would then be a carefully co-ordinated move to 'multi-annual' after 2012. This work is being progressed by the Community Facilities Unit and the Departmental Grant Aid Unit.
1.7	All 2011/12 Revenue grant support will be dependant on satisfactory monitoring and the submission of robust and eligible programmes for 2011/12.
1.8	Arrangements have yet to be agreed for the administration of the Capacity grant and our support for Advice & Information consortia in 2011/12 financial year.

2	Key Issues
	<u>Advice & Information</u>
2.1	Members are aware that BCC is a significant investor in the delivery of independent advice services across the city and have developed a successful model of consortia advice provision based on geographical providers (North, South, East, West and city centre). BCC investment focuses on generalist advice provision to the community at large.
2.2	Previous papers have noted that these are challenging times for both the voluntary advice sector and government. Future support needs to note a real need for collaboration and the sharing of resources and services to address the challenges presented by welfare reform and the difficult economic climate.
2.3	In the current year, BCC have administered £825,631.00 funding for the sector, which includes a restricted grant of £469,902 from DSD. DSD have not yet indicated the level of funding for Advice and Information services for next year.
2.4	In light of the ongoing roll out of the DSD strategy <i>Opening Doors Strategy for the Delivery of Voluntary Advice Services</i>, committee agreed we should review and refine the BCC Support Strategy for Advice Services post 2011 and develop a related action plan. Furthermore it was agreed that this work will be developed closely with members and key stake-holders. It was further agreed that a key component of the strategy development will be to agree the appropriate number and location of Advice Centres and related outreach provision across the city

2.5	<p>In November 2009 DSD advised that then Minister Ritchie intended as part of the Opening Doors strategy to publish further guidance "in consultation with councils" before piloting the new advice framework in partnership. At that time, DSD indicated their intention to invite expressions of interest from councils to permit a pilot phase in 2010. Furthermore implementation of the new framework should take account of and fit the new council areas post RPA. DSD indicated that adoption of the agreed model will coincide with RPA implementation time scales then expected to occur in 2011.</p>
2.6	<p>This draft guidance has only just been published for consultation by DSD with the intent to assist Councils in the provision of voluntary advice services. Officers have initiated plans to draft a BCC response which will include mechanisms to ensure member participation. The closing date for response is 7th March 2011.</p>
2.7	<p>The shape of the 2011/12 Community Services grant support for the Advice sector will therefore be influenced by the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the ongoing roll out of the DSD Opening Doors Strategy which has been significantly delayed the level of available funds: BCC and DSD. alignment of this MAF grant to the new Departmental Grant Aid Unit.
2.8	<p><u>Recommendation:</u> For the 2011/12 grant programme, officers propose that members consider extending the current 2010/11 grant offers into the next financial year. Any grant offer would be dependent upon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The consortia satisfactorily meeting 2010/11 monitoring requirements The submission of appropriate annual work plans, related budget and key targets and outcomes
2.9	<p>Officers will present a refined grant programme proposal which incorporates recommendations from the agreed DSD strategy and which aligns this grant with the MAF procedures set down by the Departmental Grant Aid Unit. This work will be presented to committee in advance of a public call for applications in Autumn 2011.</p>
2.10	<p><u>Capacity Support</u> The Capacity Grant was competitively allocated via open application for the 2010/11 financial year with 17 organisations successfully offered grants. This grant category primarily funds larger community support organisations who offer capacity building support to their member and other local groups. The organisations also provide networking support, contribute to local area planning and are a voice for community issues for their locale.</p>
2.11	<p>In the current year BCC have administered funding in the amount of £601,662.28 in support of community infrastructure (Appendix 1). One organisation was not paid (as it has been dissolved) and Play Resource Centre are paid from the budget via a Service Level Agreement authorised by Committee in 2009. The budget includes levered grant from DSD. DSD have not yet indicated the level of funding to District Councils for the Community Support Programme for next year.</p>
2.12	<p>The current situation of reduced financial resources is having an obvious impact on grant support for the voluntary and community sectors. Future support needs will be mindful of the requirement for collaboration and the sharing of resources and services to address the challenges presented by welfare reform and the</p>

	<p>difficult economic climate.</p> <p>The service is currently leading the development of a Community Development framework for council and committee will be aware of an engagement seminar for members scheduled on 11th February. Once agreed, this framework will inform how best council can direct their limited resources in a strategic manner in order to maximise targeted community development outcomes. It will support all departments to identify and tackle core community needs and concerns, as well as making best use of core assets and opportunities.</p>
2.13	
2.14	<p>This developing framework, alongside the DSD strategic work to inform their future approach to Urban Regeneration and Community Development, will inform the targeted outcomes of this investment in community infrastructure organisations.</p>
2.15	<p>Once council consider and agree the BCC Community Development Framework, officers will review the Capacity grant criteria and present any related recommendations to align this grant category in advance of inviting applications for 2012 in the autumn.</p>
2.16	<p>The shape of the 2011/12 Community Services grant support for community infrastructure will therefore be influenced by the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the development of the BCC Community Development Framework the level of available funds: BCC and DSD. alignment of this MAF grant to the new Departmental Grant Aid Unit.
2.17	<p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>For the 2011/12 grant programme, officers therefore propose that members consider extending the current 2010/11 grant offers into the next financial year. Any grant offer would be dependent upon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group satisfactorily meeting 2010/11 monitoring requirements The submission of an appropriate annual work plan, related budget and key targets and outcomes
2.18	<p>The total available budget for both grant categories, and the rest of the Community Service Grant Programme, will be dependant upon maintenance of the DSD Community Support Programme grant.</p>

3	Resource Implications
3.1	All allocations will be made in line with available 2011/12 grant budget streams.
3.2	The estimated DSD Community Support Programme Grant for 2011/12 is £1,535,206 which will facilitate a total Capacity Support Grant budget of £632,150 and a total Advice and Information grant budget of £825,631.00.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations

	There is no adverse equality or good relations impact.
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5	Recommendations
5.1	<p>Committee are asked to:</p> <p>Note the arrangement for the 2011/12 small grant programme and revenue grant support</p> <p>Advice & Information Grant 2011/12: agree a one year extension to the current grant contracts for the Advice and Information grant recipients pending compliance with monitoring requirements and the submission of appropriate annual work plans, related budgets and key targets and outcomes</p> <p>Capacity Grant 2011/12: agree a one year extension to the current grant contracts for Capacity grant recipients pending compliance with monitoring requirements and the submission of appropriate annual work plans, related budgets and key targets and outcomes</p> <p>Officers review current arrangements to refine future grant support programmes to align them to developing strategic frameworks and ensure compliance with the MAF arrangements / the Departmental Grant Aid Unit. Recommendations will be presented to committee for consideration and to facilitate an open call autumn 2011.</p>

	Decision Tracking
Catherine Taggart to implement committee decision.	

	Key to Abbreviations
MAF Multi Annual Funding	

	Documents Attached
Appendix 1: Advice & Information Grant - 2010/11 Appendix 2: Capacity Grant - 2010/11	



Belfast City Council

Report to: Development Committee

Subject: Community Services Grant Aid Programme 2011/12

Date: 22 15-February 2010

Reporting Officer: John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470

Contact Officer: Cate Taggart, Community Development Manager, ext 3525

1	<u>Relevant Background Information</u>
1.1	<u>At the 14 October 2009 Committee, Members considered a report on the Departmental Grants Review. This report noted that there would now be three strands of funding including the Community Access Fund, the Annual Fund and the Multi-Annual Fund. These strands were determined by the average level of funding currently allocated to successful organizations: under £10,000, between £10,000 and £25,000 and £25,000+.</u>
1.2	<u>Community Services offer a range of grants as set out in the policy 'A Guide to Grant Aid for Community Organisations', which was agreed by Council in January 2004. The grant categories could be sub divided into large and small grant categories. The service, with support from the newly created Department Grant Aid Unit, is working to align service grants into the Departmental Grant programme. The time-frame to align the MAF grant types has been agreed as from April 2012. This applies to the Advice & Information grant and the Capacity Support grant.</u>
1.3	<u>Small Grants: Traditionally Community Services manage 3 small grant schemes and these include Community Development Project Grant, Summer Play Schemes and Community Chest awards. They are subject to application and allocated competitively against agreed criterion. The grant programme for 2010/11 is operating within current procedures and it is intended to continue this approach in 2011/12 in advance of the new Community Access small grant programme. This was agreed as part of the Development Department Grant Aid Review and is scheduled for implementation in autumn next year for the 2012/13 funding rounds.</u>
1.4	<u>Large Grants. The community grant programme includes three larger grants:</u>

	<u>Revenue; Capacity Building Grant and Advice Services</u>
<u>1.5</u>	<u>The Community Revenue grant is available to eligible organisations delivering wide ranging community development programmes in community buildings at neighbourhood and area level. While assessment focuses on the range and content of the local service, the grant specifically assists groups with general building costs, e.g. utilities, Insurance, Health and Safety, Cleaning, Admin, Telephones etc.</u>
<u>1.6</u>	<u>In April 2010, members considered a paper outlining options for the future management of the revenue grant programme and agreed to continue the Revenue grant as an 'annual' stream for 2011/2012 to permit sufficient time for appropriate preparatory work including supporting policy development and a risk management framework to be put in place. It was agreed that following the policy work there would then be a carefully co-ordinated move to 'multi-annual' after 2012. This work is being progressed by the Community Facilities Unit and the Departmental Grant Aid Unit.</u>
<u>1.7</u>	<u>All 2011/12 Revenue grant support will be dependant on satisfactory monitoring and the submission of robust and eligible programmes for 2011/12.</u>
<u>1.8</u>	<u>Arrangements have yet to be agreed for the administration of the Capacity grant and our support for Advice & Information consortia in 2011/12 financial year.</u>

<u>2</u>	<u>Key Issues</u>
<u>2.1</u>	<u>Advice & Information</u> <u>Members are aware that BCC is a significant investor in the delivery of independent advice services across the city and have developed a successful model of consortia advice provision based on geographical providers (North, South, East, West and city centre). BCC investment focuses on generalist advice provision to the community at large.</u>
<u>2.2</u>	<u>Previous papers have noted that these are challenging times for both the voluntary advice sector and government. Future support needs to note a real need for collaboration and the sharing of resources and services to address the challenges presented by welfare reform and the difficult economic climate.</u>
<u>2.3</u>	<u>In the current year, BCC have administered £825,631.00 funding for the sector, which includes a restricted grant of £469,902 from DSD. DSD have not yet indicated the level of funding for Advice and Information services for next year.</u>
<u>2.4</u>	<u>In light of the ongoing roll out of the DSD strategy <i>Opening Doors Strategy for the Delivery of Voluntary Advice Services</i>, committee agreed we should review and refine the BCC Support Strategy for Advice Services post 2011 and develop a related action plan. Furthermore it was agreed that this work will be developed closely with members and key stake-holders. It was further agreed that a key component of the strategy development will be to agree the appropriate number and location of Advice Centres and related outreach provision across the city</u>
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	<p><u>DSD indicated their intention to invite expressions of interest from councils to permit a pilot phase in 2010. Furthermore implementation of the new framework should take account of and fit the new council areas post RPA. DSD indicated that adoption of the agreed model will coincide with RPA implementation time scales then expected to occur in 2011.</u></p>
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<u>2.7</u>	<p><u>The shape of the 2011/12 Community Services grant support for the Advice sector will therefore be influenced by the following factors:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>- the ongoing roll out of the DSD Opening Doors Strategy which has been significantly delayed</u> <u>- the level of available funds: BCC and DSD.</u> <u>- alignment of this MAF grant to the new Departmental Grant Aid Unit.</u>
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