



Belfast City Council

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| Report to: | Development Committee |
| Subject: | Community Chest: Easter programme |
| Date: | March 2011 |
| Reporting Officer: | Cate Taggart, Community Development Manager, ext 3525 |
| Contact Officer: | Cate Taggart , Community Development Manager ext 3525 |

| 1 | Relevant Background Information |
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| 1.1 | Prince William and Kate Middleton are to marry at Westminster Abbey on 29 April 2011, which has been declared a bank holiday in celebration. A limited number of community organisations and Community Centre Committees have requested information in relation to opportunities for support for community activities to celebrate the Royal Wedding |
| 1.2 | In line with previous practice, we have agreed the use of BCC Community Centres as location for activities outside our normal opening hours with BCC absorbing related facility and staff costs. |
| 1.3 | The bulk of enquiries have come from local community organisations and have centred on access to small grant support. Some requests for financial support have also been received from Community Centre Committees. |
| 1.4 | In consultation with other services managing grant programmes there is no specific related planned activity other than a possible fund within the Peace III bonfire management programme. SEUPB are currently considering a request from the Good Relations Partnership to utilise under spend through the provision of up to £50,000 to existing groups on the Tackling Physical Manifestations Programme to develop local community events to mark the Royal Wedding and/or the impending Royal Visit. The maximum cost for each individual event would be up to £1,000. |
| 1.5 | Also the Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit are opening a Community Festivals Fund which is subject to formal Letter of Offer from DCAL. The closing date for the first tranche of this annual fund is 23 rd March 2011. The total programme budget is £158,000 and allocations are normally spread evenly across each of |

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| | <p>the 4 open calls. This is a highly competitive fund with applications in the main sponsored by well established community based arts organisations. Any application for funds in support of Royal Wedding celebration events would have to meet the programme's definition of a Festival:</p> <p><i>A Festival is a series of activities within a condensed time period of at least one day in length (i.e. 8-10 hours). Activities are usually different but related. A Festival is not one event scheduled over several days i.e. a series of similar events (e.g. one performance happening several times) nor is it a fundraising event, nor a commercial event.</i></p> <p><i>A community festival is a series of events with a common theme delivered within a defined time period. It is developed from within a community and should celebrate and positively promote what that community represents.</i></p> |
| 1.6 | The Big Lottery has confirmed there are no specific funding streams for this event. However, they were able to reference the more general funding streams which may be used for this event. |
| 1.7 | Precedent exists within the service to respond to celebration events of this nature within our Community Chest small grant stream. This mechanism was used in support of local community activity related to the Golden Jubilee in 2002 |
| 1.8 | The Community Chest is a grant aid fund that is established periodically in response to particular initiatives. This grant stream was established to allow the service to subsidise specific community activity such as, for example, responding to European themed years or local /international events or seasonal celebrations particularly at Christmas. The nature of the activities that will be funded will be decided, at any specific time, by the priorities of council however the emphasis is on community activities which promote a sense of community spirit and involvement. Access to Community Chest funding has been confined to groups in receipt of service grant aid support. The grant aid policy indicates that limits will be set on the total amount of funding available and on the amount of funding available to individual groups. All applicants are required to submit an Community Chest application form and are subject to assessment against agreed criteria. |

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| 2 | Key Issues |
| 2.1 | Officers have identified a number of potential responses for consideration. |
| 2.2 | <u>Option 1</u> : Limit our resource support to the use of BCC Community Centres and indicate there is no available related BCC grant support. Officers would sign post organisations to the Big Lottery and other funding streams as appropriate. |
| 2.3 | <u>Option 2</u> : Do above but also set aside a limited budget within the 2011/12 service small grant allocation for community activity during the Easter week. This would include proposed events to celebrate the Royal Wedding but would not be limited. Officers propose the Easter seasonal fund should be managed in line with the agreed Community Chest process whereby there is no open call for applications, rather, correspondence is issued to all current grant recipients advising them of the opportunity to access small grant support up to a maximum of £200. |

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| | <p>Correspondence would include the short community chest application form with details of eligible activity and indicate priority will be given to programmes where the emphasis is on community activities which promote a sense of community spirit and involvement. It would also include details of any related monitoring requirements which would be designed commensurate to the level of grant support.</p> |
| 2.4 | <p><u>Option 3:</u> Alongside option 1, set aside a limited budget within the 2011/12 service small grant allocation and invite applications from local community groups via public advertisement.</p> <p>Indicate the maximum likely grant size (£200) and outline eligible activity and criteria for consideration as Option 2 above. Successful applicants would also be subject to commensurate monitoring requirements.</p> |
| 2.5 | <p>Given the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited level of interest which however does include community centre committees, community organisations and elected members • Limited timeframe in which to manage any competitive call • Limited total grant budget • Officers can sign post groups not currently in receipt of service grant support to the Big Lottery fund or if agreed the Peace III Tackling Physical Manifestations Programme <p>Officers recommend Option 2. All applications would be assessed under current criteria and allocations made within delegated authority permissions. Officers suggest that committee may wish to extend eligibility to requests from Community Centre Committees.</p> |
| 2.6 | <p>If approved, officers across all funding streams will share applicant information during the assessment process.</p> |

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| 3 | Resource Implications |
| 3.1 | <p>From agreed grant budget stream 2011/12. In order to ensure sufficient resources for other grant categories, officers would suggest an upper allocation limit of £20,000 based on a maximum individual grant of £200.</p> |
| 3.2 | <p>DSD have not yet advised councils of levels of funding under their Community Support Programme. The draft BCC Community Service Grant Aid Programme 2011/12 has been developed to reflect the 2010/11 level of support and the BCC grant match has been included in the revenue estimates for the Service.</p> |
| 3.3 | <p>Staff resources would be allocated from within existing teams, however, depending on the level of interest, Option 3 would be resource intensive particularly given the obvious time constraints.</p> |

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| 4 | Equality and Good Relations Considerations |
| 4.1 | <p>Any available resources would be open to all organisations defined by the preferred option.</p> |

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| 5 | Recommendations |
| 5.1 | <p>Committee are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Support the use of the Community Chest grant stream to subsidize specific community activity during the Easter period. The grant would be made available to community and voluntary groups, including community centre committees, wishing to organise small-scale events which would be assessed against existing criteria. Applications can include, but would not be limited to, activity to celebrate the Royal Wedding. ii. Agree £20,000 as the total amount of funding available and limit the amount of funding available to individual groups to £200 iii. Note that application approvals and related payments will be authorised by the Director of Development in accordance with the authority delegated to him. |

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| 6 | Decision Tracking |
| Cate Taggart will action decision April 2011 | |

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| 7 | Key to Abbreviations |
| NRP Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership | |

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| 8 | Documents Attached |
| Appendix1 – Guidelines for Applicants | |

Appendix 1: Guidelines

1. The funding made available will be on the basis that the celebration activity should be seen as an inclusive occasion and should be accessible to all who wish to celebrate.
2. It should support the Council's aim to promote and support the cultural diversity of the City.
3. The funding is for small-scale local community events or activities during Easter which promote a sense of community spirit and involvement.
4. Applications can include, but are not limited to, activity to celebrate the Royal Wedding.
5. Any proposal must represent value for money.
6. Groups receiving funding must¹:
 - be non-profit making organisations/groups;
 - enclose copies of their valid Constitution or set of rules;
 - have a bank or building society account, in the name of the group, which requires at least two (unrelated) signatures on each cheque or withdrawal;
 - enclose copies of the most recent annual accounts or formal statements of income and expenditure. These must be audited or signed as approved by an office bearer;
 - enclose a copy of their child protection policy and follow our child-protection guidelines if working with children and young people;
 - make sure that the project has enough insurance cover (we are not responsible for providing insurance for or claims which arise from grant-aided projects);
 - provide a budget report outlining expenditure, and
 - agree to provide a short report on how the funding has been used and applied to the work of the group.
7. Events or projects should be organised in the month of April 2011.
8. Grant aid will not be available for activities which are party-political in intention, use or presentation.
9. Travel costs will not be available for projects outside Ireland or the United Kingdom.

¹ Where the information in relation to point 6 is already assessed and/or held on file, groups will not be asked to resubmit