

Elected Member Information Booklet

Belfast City Council

Community Development Grants

2015 – 2017

Introduction

Belfast City Council is responsible for distributing a number of distinctly different but complimentary community development grants. The grants support Council's corporate agenda to promote and support engaged and active communities; reduce inequalities and tackle disadvantage; and to invest in local neighbourhoods (BCC corporate plan).

The grants support community development groups to enable people to engage in the long term, value based process of community development. Inherent in these values and aligned to Council's statutory duties is tackling inequality and disadvantage and taking proactive steps to include underrepresented groups to participate in civic life.

Community Development Grant Outcomes

Each applicant has to explain which of Council's community development outcomes they will achieve with our investment, and how. Those outcomes were agreed by Council in February 2013 as:

- Residents are active and involved in positive ways
- Communities are engaged and influential
- Community groups are resilient and thriving, achieving more of their objectives in improving their contribution to local wellbeing
- People have access to welcoming and inclusive space which is used by residents from all sections of the community
- People have access to services and support by benefiting from information, advice and advocacy

Community Development Grants 2015/17

We have updated each grant to ensure that the application process is clear and straightforward for groups, the scoring is more transparent and Council can appropriately monitor progress and evaluate the impact of the funding. In 2015/17, the Community Development Grants will be:

- **Advice and Information Services Grants**
The agreed allocation model will fund appropriate consortia to ensure generalist advice services across Belfast
- **Capacity Building Grants – up to £50,000pa**
Fund leadership within the community development sector; meet the capacity building needs of member groups and the area/residents
- **Revenue Grants for Community Buildings – up to £20,000pa**
Provide running costs for community buildings to enable groups to meet community needs
- **Summer Scheme Grants – up to £3,000pa**
To invest in diverse summer scheme provision for 5-14year olds across the city
- **Community Development Project Grants – up to £750pa**
Support small scale community projects that enhance and improve quality of life
- **Community Chest – funding dependent**
One off grants to animate the groups we currently support to run small scale themed events which promote a sense of community spirit and encourage involvement in the local community

All applications for the grants must evidence community development needs and submit an action plan to explain how they will address them; the quality of this contributes two thirds of the applications' final score. The other third of the final score comes from questions that help Council determine how capable the organisation is to deliver their proposal e.g. their experience of delivering similar programmes with similar budgets and how well the organisation is managed.

The budget that is submitted with each application is assessed to ensure that the costs are both reasonable and necessary for delivery.

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Community Development Eligibility Requirements

Grants are available to formally constituted, autonomous community development groups that contribute to our community development outcomes to the benefit of people from Belfast.

Applicants must have an appropriate governing document that explicitly states:

1. Community development as a primary objective; this would include promoting the benefit of the area, relieve poverty, sickness and the aged, improving social welfare and quality of life, providing generalist advice services etc.
2. Membership must be inclusive of your identified community and open to its full range of opinion
3. Your organisation must hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) at which each member has an equal vote
4. Your group must have a Management Committee or Board of Directors with a clear democratic process for the selection of members i.e. election at AGM
5. An annual statement of accounts must be presented at the AGM
6. The report for the year must be presented by the committee at the AGM

It is unlikely that thematic activity such as arts, culture, sport etc. would be funded from community development grants unless they meet the community development criteria and the programme is of a community development nature. However groups can apply for these activities under Council's small grants which are available twice a year. www.belfastcity.gov.uk/funding

Some of the grant streams have additional eligibility criteria, which is detailed in the appropriate sections of this Member Booklet

Raising Awareness and Supporting Applicants

The grants will be formally launched at a high profile event in City Hall, followed by the first formal information and awareness rising session to which all of the community groups that are registered with community services, central grants unit and the old BCIP team will be invited.

This will be followed by a number of more localised information and awareness sessions and every effort will be made to focus on community groups in the areas of North Down, Lisburn and Castlereagh which will be transferring to Belfast.

The information and awareness sessions will introduce groups to the updated paperwork, and will provide an overview of the application process, the available funding and monitoring and financial requirements associated with our grant aid. These sessions will include enough information to support experienced or confident groups to be able to make a successful application.

In addition, a "helpdesk" that is staffed by community services officers will be in operation to answer queries.

In recognition of groups applying for funding for the first time, or committee members being nervous about completing applications, a number of advice clinics will also be offered to groups of community development organisations. Each advice clinic will be focused around one of the grants and will offer an in depth journey through the application form with the opportunity for applicants to ask questions.

Once the "helpdesk" phone number is known and the dates for the launch, awareness raising sessions and advice clinics are confirmed, all Members will be encouraged and supported to signpost the community groups in their constituency to them.

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Advice and Information Services Grants

Each year the Council provides approximately £860,000 split between advice consortia in north, south, east, west and central Belfast using a Council agreed funding allocation model. Our consortia approach to managing advice services has been recognised as best practice by the DSD in their Opening Doors Strategy for the provision of generalist advice services.

In addition to Council's community development outcomes, applicants must be able to clearly demonstrate how they will meet the following 5 **DSD's Opening Doors Strategic Outcomes**:

- I. **High level generalist advice provision** – requires that advice provision is based in locations which meet the needs of the most disadvantaged based on accessibility, population levels and deprivation levels
- II. **Maximising access to basic advice provision** – requires that advice centre's make adequate and flexible provision to reach the greatest number of disadvantaged communities and individuals through the provision of a broad range of outlets. This may include outreach services, web-based information and telephony services.
- III. **Resourcing the sector in the future** – requires that action is taken to sustain the delivery of core advice services by maximising resource allocation through the development of additional funding streams or income generation and making best use of human and physical resources and assets.
- IV. **Quality of provision** – requires that the service delivered meets a consistently high standard.
- V. **Using existing resources effectively** – requires collaboration and co-operation across the sector to rationalize and minimise duplication of services of services especially in training and management information systems.

To be eligible for an Advice Grant your **consortium** must:

1. Meet the community development eligibility criteria where the consortium's governing document explicitly states that your primary objective is to offer generalist advice
2. Be registered with Belfast Advice Forum
3. Include both CAB and Advice NI; all other consortium members must be registered with either
4. Have a formal partnership agreement that includes the process by which the plan for the consortium is formally agreed
5. Operate under a single formally agreed plan
6. Have very clear geographical boundaries within which you operate
7. Must employ appropriately trained, paid advice workers

Eligible applications will be **scored against**:

- Their fit with the strategic outcomes of the programme (30%)
- Demonstration of need (25%)
- Demonstration that they provide a high quality service (15%)
- Organisational culture, capability and commitment to excellence (20%)
- Communications strategy and plan (10%)

Supporting Applicants

An information session will be provided to Belfast Advice Group to brief them about the programme for 2015/17.

Technical support will be provided to the consortia's including the advice organisations in Lisburn and Castlereagh to support them on the best service delivery model for generalist advice services across the new Belfast City Council boundaries which come into effect from April 2015.

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On-going officer support will continue to be provided to the consortia's throughout the 2 year funding period 2015-2017 in the delivery of their agreed work plans.

Capacity Building Grants

In 2013/14, Council distributed £667,866 of Capacity Building Grants to 19 groups across Belfast.

To be eligible for a Capacity Building Grant your group must:

1. Meet the community development eligibility requirements
2. Be seen as a **“lead”** community development organisation advocating the interests of your member community groups, area and residents
3. Be a locally based capacity building organisation operating within a defined geographical catchment area, i.e. a defined **geographical** area which is smaller than north, south, east, or west
4. Be an organisation that supports community groups and residents in your area
5. Provide a range of **capacity building activities** for your area, to strengthen the ability of local community groups to build their structures, systems, people and skills
6. Lead on the development of local community **infrastructure** e.g. networks, forums etc

The maximum Capacity Building Grant 2015/17; is anticipated to be £50,000 per annum

Eligible applications will be scored against:

Quality of Programme (2/3 total score)

- How well the applicant has established the capacity building needs they will contribute to using Council’s community development outcomes (20 points)
- How well the overall programme is planned (15 points)
- How well the programme will be evaluated (10 points)
- How well the programme will engage potential beneficiaries (10 points)
- How well Belfast city Council’s funding will be acknowledged (5 points)
- How well the proposal will meet the identified capacity building needs and contribute to Council’s community development outcomes (20 points)

Capability to Deliver (1/3 total score)

- Experience of delivering capacity building activities with similar budgets (15 points)
- Experience of establishing and sharing local needs; then responding to them (15 points)
- Experience of working with other groups/agencies (10 points)
- Evidence of being a well managed organisation (10 points)

Officers are expecting a significant increase in the number of applications for capacity building grants because the sector is unclear about future DSD neighbourhood renewal funding, and prudent groups are likely to apply for Council funding if it will be open for applications before BRO.

Revenue Grants for Community Buildings

In 2013/14, Council distributed £588,413 of Revenue Grants for Community Buildings to 67 groups across Belfast.

The programme delivered from the building must respond to community needs with a broad based programme and support community development. A broad based programme must meet at least 3 different community needs, and work with all three age ranges: children and young people and adults and older people.

Applications for revenue grants for community buildings are open to neighbourhood groups, as well as thematic groups which operate across a number of neighbourhoods, or on a citywide basis.

The maximum Capacity Building Grant 2015/17; is anticipated to be £20,000pa

To be eligible for a Revenue Grant for Community Building your group must:

1. Meet the community development eligibility requirements
2. Operate a diverse programme of activity to meet community needs and support community development
3. Operate from a building that is welcoming and inclusive
4. The centre must be compliant with all relevant legislative requirements for the running of a community building
5. Have the right to use the building to deliver your programme

Eligible applications will be scored against:

Quality of Programme (2/3 total score)

- How well the applicant has established the community needs they will address using Council's community development outcomes (20 points)
- Usage rates for the building (20 points)
- The community building will be welcoming and inclusive (10 points)
- How well the programme will be monitored and controlled (10 points)
- How well Belfast city Council's funding will be acknowledged (5 points)
- How well the programme will meet the identified community needs and contribute to Council's community development outcomes (20 points)

Capability to Deliver (1/3 total score)

- Size of the building (20 points)
- Experience of delivering a broad based community development programme from a community building (10 points)
- Experience of establishing and responding to local needs (20 points)
- Resident/user involvement in the running of the centre (10 points)
- Experience of working with other groups (10 points)
- Evidence of being a well managed organisation (20 points)

Successful applicants will be offered a grant that contributes to the running costs of the building

Community Development Small Grants

In 2013/14, Council distributed £270, 648 of small grants, made up of Summer Scheme, Project Grants and Community Chest

Community Development Project Grants support small scale community projects that enhance and improve quality of life by funding programme development, costs for small projects, supporting new community groups and funding short courses for committee members and volunteers.

From 2015, Community Development Project Grants will be administered by Council's Central Grant's Unit. The maximum amount a group can apply for in one year is £750; the first call will be open for projects and seasonal celebrations that take place across the whole year – April to March.

There will be a second call for projects from October to March, and only groups that were unsuccessful in the first round are eligible to apply. The second call will be budget dependent.

Because Community Chest offers a swift mechanism to access the sector its possibility will be maintained and used should any money be made available from central government or from Council departments to engage communities around a specific issue.

Summer Scheme Grants are for play schemes that offer an equal opportunity for all local children and young people 5-14 years to participate in a programme of at least 2 weeks duration. Groups must actively promote child safety with at least 2 adults (18yrs and over) supervising at all times. Whilst Council has minimum supervision ratios; groups should strive for a 1adult: 5children ratio at all times and children should never be left unattended under any circumstances.

The summer scheme should offer a wide range of social, educational and recreational activities that may be delivered inside an appropriate centre or outside venue. The activities should be suited to the stage of development and ability of local children and young people aged 5-7 years, 8-11 years and 12-14 years. Whilst the summer scheme should offer a ranging programme, groups should not participate in assault courses or any activity that needs a signed health and safety disclaimer.

Summer Scheme grants will be administered by the Central Grant Unit for 2015/17, and

Eligible applications will be scored against:

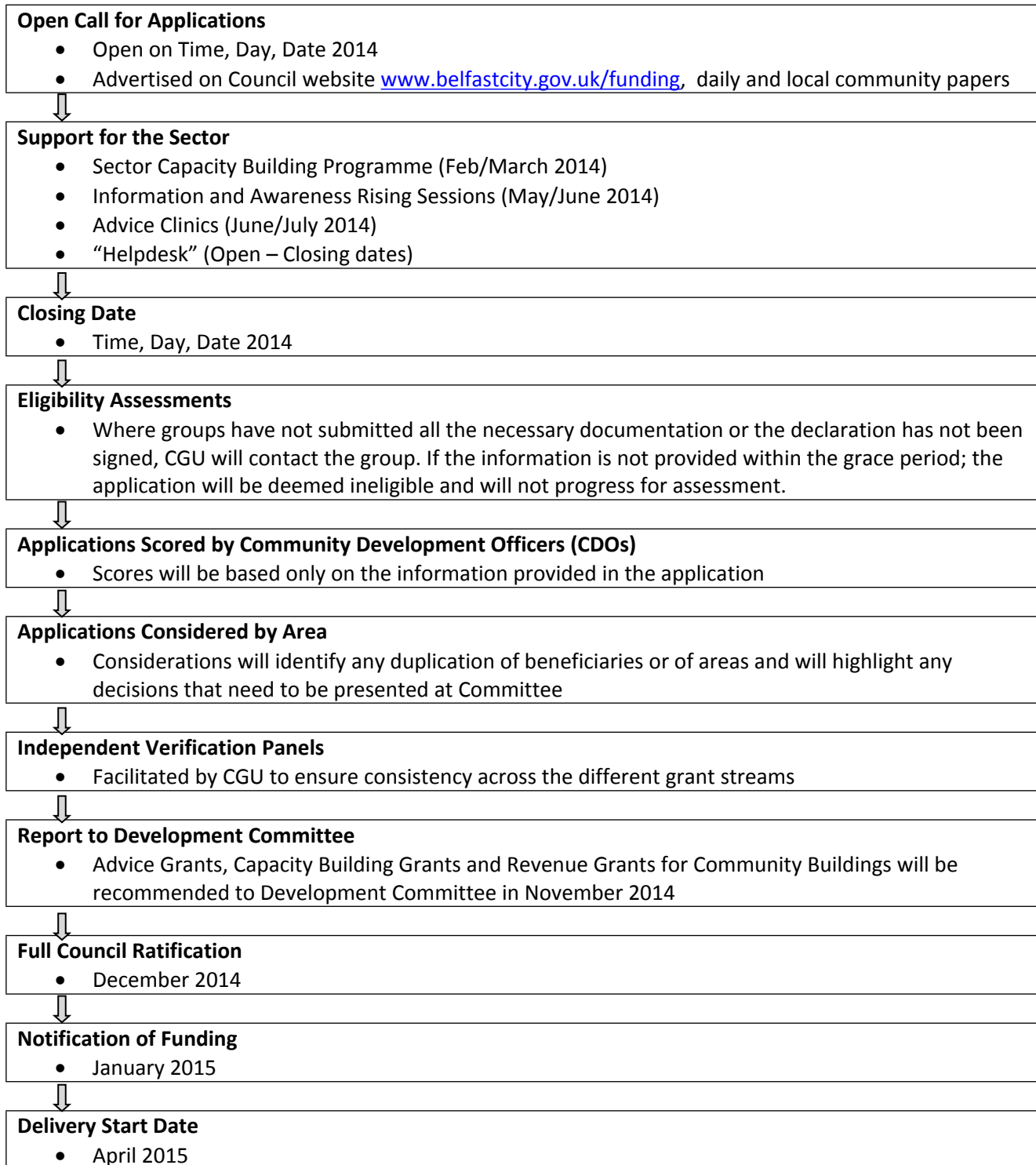
Quality of Programme

- Length of the summer scheme (min 2 weeks)
- The number of age groups included
- The balance of activities that take place in the centre or at outside venues
- The extent that the programme includes social, and or recreational, and or educational activities

Capability to Deliver

- Have a child protection policy and procedures
- Extent of previous experience
- Can evidence of appropriate ratios of children to adults

The Community Development Grants 2015/17 Application and Assessment Process
Advice Grants, Capacity Building Grants and Resource Grants for Community Buildings



Training and Support for Successful Applicants

Successful groups will be advised of their funding award and any associated terms and conditions in their letter of offer which they must countersign and return.

The initial grant payment will not be made until at least one member of the group attends a bespoke training event. The training clarifies the responsibility that rests with the group has to deliver the proposal as outlined in their application; it confirms the process they must follow if they need to make a change to the proposal; it takes them through the monitoring paperwork they will have to complete and submit; outlines the consequences of not submitting the necessary monitoring within the required timescale; it explains how they should submit their financial claim; and confirms their responsibilities in acknowledging Council funding.

Most importantly it establishes the working relationship between the Community Development Grant recipients and officers from Community Services and Central Grants Unit; so that should any support needs be identified by the groups, Council can respond in an appropriate and timely manner.

Evaluating the Impact of Community Development Grants

Successful groups will submit regular monitoring reports, an annual and end of funding evaluation report. Whilst this information is important, the scope is limited to each piece of work separately and it would be useful if Council could evaluate the impact and value of the whole programme.

A 3rd party organisation will be commissioned to undertake an evaluation of the impact made by our funding and its value to the community. The evaluation report will consider the monitoring information submitted by groups, but it will be further explored with the groups that were funded and with some of their beneficiaries.

