



Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Report to:	Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Requests for Financial Assistance / Support Fund
Date:	20 March 2015
Reporting Officer:	Ronan Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources

1.0 Background

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| 1.1 | At the Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 30 January it was reported that as part of the non-recurrent expenditure requirements report that around £800k was available to be allocated on a non recurrent basis. At the same meeting it was agreed that £175k from the £800k would be allocated to the Tribunal Advisory Service leaving a total of £625k. |
| 1.2 | Two further requests for funding were presented to Members at their meeting on 20 th February totalling £406,363. These were: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a joint request for £316,327 shared across five organisations based in Belfast for Peace and reconciliation related projects delivered by members of republican and loyalist communities who were imprisoned as a result of the conflict.• A request for £90,036 for funding from WAVE 'to assist in maintaining programmes for victims and survivors of the conflict for the delay in Peace IV EU funding coming to fruition' |
| 1.3 | At the meeting Committee agreed to defer consideration of these requests pending further information on what the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister were doing to support the specific organisations in question. Council Officers have been advised that while the five ex-prisoner groups have outlined to Ministers their resource requirements for the interim period from April to the likely commencement of the Peace IV Programme, the matter is still under consideration by the Ministers. |
| 1.4 | Members were also presented with a report at the meeting on 20 th February on the Community Development Grant Programme 2015/16 outlining options to in relation to the reduced budget allocation from DSD. At this meeting Committee agreed to defer consideration of the provision of the funding bands in relation to the Capacity Building and Community Buildings Revenue Grant Programme to enable further information to be obtained. |
| 1.5 | This report sets out the most up to date position on the requests for funding outlined above and also |

	outlines how the allocation of some of the non recurrent finance could reduce the shortfall in the Community Development Grant Programme in relation to Capacity Building and Community Buildings Revenue Grant Programme.
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2.0	Requests for Funding
2.1	An OFMDFM official has confirmed the Ministers have also received a request from the 'From Prison to Peace' Network, convened by the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland and that this is currently being considered by the Ministers. No further information is available at this stage. Also the group have reduced the funding request to the Council from £316,327 to £272,075 to cover costs for a period of one year.
2.2	Subsequent to media coverage on the previous Committee decision, the Chief Executive has received correspondence from Teach na Failte. Teach na Failte is also a support group for ex-prisoners. In the letter, they express concern that it and another group have been excluded from the proposal submitted to the Council and challenge the transparency of the process. They are seeking clarification from the Council on its decision-making process in relation to this matter.
2.3	It should be noted that Teach na Failte is included in the proposal currently with OFMDFM, but that the group has not requested funding from the Council.
2.4	Officers have spoken to OFMDFM officials in relation to the request from WAVE Trauma Centre. As described by WAVE in their correspondence to the Council, it is not anticipated that there is any overlap in funding between OFMDFM and this request. The details and request for funding remain the same at £90,036 to cover costs for a period of 9 months April to December 2015.
3.0	Community Development Grant Programme 2015/16:
3.1	At the SSP&R committee meeting on the 13 th February members considered a progress report with regard to the Community Development Grant Aid Programme for 15/16. The purpose of this report was to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To update members on the progress of the Community Development Grant Programme 2015/16 and outline challenges due to the delay in the Executive budget decision and a reduced budget allocation from DSD. • To seek approval to update the area allocation model for our Advice grants to reflect the latest demographic and deprivation data (as instructed by the Development Committee Feb 2012) • To consider any revision to the funding bands for the Capacity Building and Revenue funds.
3.2	Members agreed the proposed area allocation model for Advice Grants, but requested that officers revisit the proposed quality threshold and band qualifiers presented for Capacity and Revenue grant categories. Any amendments would allow council to fund a larger number of organisations, and thus more local community based services, while continuing to offer a significant individual grant contribution. Additionally, by reviewing and reducing the threshold and band qualifiers, additional funds would ensure groups with lower capacity, or those who are first time applicants to Council, will not be disadvantaged when compared to groups which have a higher capacity or a longer-term working relationship with Council.

3.3 Officers now propose that the quality threshold score for both grant categories is reduced to 50%. They further suggest that committee agree a fourth funding band which will give a smaller grant offer to those eligible applicants who have not achieved the proposed quality threshold score of 50%. This reflects committee discussion to support organisations during this transitional period to allow them to address any identified weaknesses in their applications in relation to both organisational governance and programme content. We would suggest that if this is acceptable, any agreed funding would be conditional on the applicant group agreeing to accept capacity development support from Community Services staff.

i. Capacity Grant

3.4 Reduce the quality threshold score to 50% and apply individual grants across the following 4 funding bands:

Note:

Band A - > 70% offer max grant of £42,200

Band B - > 60%<70% offer max grant of £28,150

Band C - > 50%<60% offer max grant of £23,500

Band D - < 50% offer max grant of £15,000

If agreed this would allow council to offer financial support to 29 organisations. The total additional budget made available from non recurrent finance will inform the value of the individual grant allocation to groups in the new Band D but it is proposed that this should not exceed £15,000.

ii. Community Buildings Revenue Grant

3.5 Apply a quality threshold score of 50% but fund all eligible applications which fail to attain this score through the introduction of a fourth category which is capped at £5,000 no matter what the size of the building or the programme.

Note:

CALCULATION OF AWARD based on size of building and community programme.

30-50 points at F= Grade One

51-90 points at F= Grade Two

91 points or more at F= Grade Three

Grade 1 facilities - receive up to £6,500

Grade 2 facilities - receive up to £13,000

Grade 3 facilities - receive up to £18,000

Grade 4 facilities - receive up to £5,000

3.6 If agreed this would allow council to offer financial support to 82 organisations. As with the Capacity Grant above, the total additional budget made available from non recurrent finance will inform the value of the individual grant allocation to groups in the new Grade 4, i.e. those groups who have not achieved the 50% threshold score. It is proposed, however, this would not exceed £5,000.

3.7 In summary. If acceptable, this will support a consistent approach across both programmes i.e. quality

	threshold of 50% and the introduction of a fourth funding band value which will be fully dependent on the level of additional non recurrent finance available. The current values are therefore for illustration only and these will be recalculated depending on the additional resources allocated by Committee.																					
4.0	Transitional Funding																					
4.1	<p>At the meeting of the Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on the 30 January 2015, Members considered the use of non recurrent finance available to cover the one-off costs for 2015/16.</p> <p>The report to members included the following table summarising the sources of the non recurrent finance available indicating that approximately £800k of non recurrent finance was available.</p> <p>Sources of Funding 2015/16 (as per Shadow SP&R Report 30.01.15)</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>2014/15 Year End Balance</td> <td>1,344,759</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Local Government Reform Fund</td> <td>331,511</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leisure Transformation Programme Fund</td> <td>420,000</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Capital Under spend</td> <td><u>2,219,843</u></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Funding Available</td> <td></td> <td>4,316,113</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Funding Required</td> <td></td> <td><u>3,510,811</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Balance Remaining</td> <td></td> <td>805,302</td> </tr> </table> <p>As referred to in paragraph 1.1 above, the Committee agreed to allocate £175k of the balance remaining to the Tribunal Advisory Service and it was agreed that a further report on the use of the remaining balance should be presented to the meeting of the Committee in February 2015.</p>	2014/15 Year End Balance	1,344,759		Local Government Reform Fund	331,511		Leisure Transformation Programme Fund	420,000		Capital Under spend	<u>2,219,843</u>		Total Funding Available		4,316,113	Funding Required		<u>3,510,811</u>	Balance Remaining		805,302
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5.0	Resource Implications																					
5.1	The report considers potential options for the allocation of the remaining £625,000 of non recurrent spend as detailed in paragraph 1.1																					
6.0	Equality and Good Relations Implications																					
6.1	None																					
7.0	Call In																					
7.1	This report is subject to call in																					
8.0	Recommendations																					
8.1	<p>Given that the position of OFMDFM with regard to funding applications has not been finalised and the subsequent correspondence received from Teach na Failte, it is recommended that the consideration of external funding requests should be deferred until the April meeting of the Committee when a further report on the applications received together with the current position of OFMDFM and any other external funding implications will be available.</p> <p>To enable the implementation of the proposed approach to capacity and community buildings (revenue)</p>																					

	grants in 2015/16, as outlined in the separate report being considered at this meeting, it recommended that £230,000 of the non recurring finance be allocated to Community Services from the non recurrent finance available.
9.0	Documents attached
	None