

**Ms Suzanne Wylie
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Voluntary and Community Division
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29 March 2017

Dear Ms Wylie,

Community Support Programme: Department for Communities Funding for 01 April 2017 to 30 June 2017

Subject to the conditions outlined below for the financial year 2017/18 the Department for Communities (DfC) will provide grant aid towards Belfast City Council's Community Support Programme (CSP).

The period **01 April 2017 to 30 June 2017** offer combines 2 separate elements: Community Support General and Advice Grant, the details of which are explained further in this document.

The award is as follows:

Community Support General	£215,991.00
Advice Grant	£135,009.00
Total CSP Award	£351,000.00

The award is a contribution towards achievement of the overall Programme objectives and performance will be measured against those objectives.

Payments under this programme will be made in **July 2017** provided that:

:

- The Memorandum of Understanding which includes acceptance of this Offer is returned to the Department signed by Chief Executive within 28 days from the date of this letter;
- The Council's Community Support Plan (including performance indicators) is received in the Department by 30 June 2017;

- A CSP Expenditure Profile authorised by either the Council's Chief Executive or Director of Finance is provided to the Department along with Bank details; within 4 weeks from the date of this letter.
- The correctly completed CSP Grant Claim & Progress Report Form authorised by either the Council's Chief Executive or Director of Finance, showing actual expenditure against the agreed profile and demonstrating achievement against the funded activities outlined in the Council's Community Support Plan is forwarded by the Council to reach the Department within the required deadlines outlined in Annex1. (Please note: the CSP Grant Claim & Progress Report Form is one document which will be issued to Council in due course).

This grant is subject to normal Government accounting rules and must be subject to your Council's internal financial controls and may be subject to scrutiny by the Local Government Auditor. The Department may require additional financial assurances and declarations and any other documents it deems necessary for the purposes of financial control and audit.

In order to facilitate monitoring and reporting, the **01 April 2017 to 30 June 2017** CSP Expenditure Profile enclosed at **Annex 2** must be completed and returned to the Voluntary and Community Division within 28 days from the date of this offer, (this is also available as an Excel document which will be issued to Council separately): I also require the Council's bank details to be entered on the form at **Annex 3** and the Chief Executive should sign and return the Memorandum of Understanding at **Annex 4**.

Publicity

The DfC logo should be carried on any signage, advertising or publicity material associated with the programme and the financial support from the Department should also be acknowledged in any media publications or statements.

Government Funders Database

In acceptance of this funding Belfast City Council undertakes to take all steps necessary to ensure that all CSP awards to the Voluntary & Community Sector made in 2017/18 are recorded on the Government Funding Database in a timely manner and no later than 4 weeks after the award. In this respect, please contact VCD for the provision of advice and support.

Finally, this offer shall remain open for a period of 28 days from the date of this letter. Failure to return one complete copy of the CSP Expenditure Profile and the Memorandum of Understanding, duly signed and dated on behalf of the Council within this period may result in the offer being deemed as withdrawn.

Yours Sincerely

Peter Toner
Head of Business Support and Charities Team
Voluntary and Community Division

ANNEX 1

CSP: Grant Claim Procedures for 01 April 2017 to 30 June 2017

The following documentation is required in order to process CSP Grants

Period of Claims:

01 April 2017 to 30 June 2017, to be claimed July 2017

Documentation to be submitted with Claim	Date required
CSP Expenditure Profile for 01 April 2017 to 30 June 2017	Within 28 days of date of letter of offer
Returned Memorandum of Understanding – signed by Chief Executive	Within 28 days of date of letter of offer
Bank details – signed by the Chief Executive or Director of Finance	Within 28 days of the date of letter of offer
CSP Grant Claim & Progress Report Form - To cover the period 01 April 2017 to 30 June 2017 . Must be signed by the Chief Executive or Director of Finance in the Council. The CSP Grant Claim & Progress Report Form must show the same details of expenditure as the CSP Expenditure Profile. If there are to be any changes a revised CSP Expenditure Profile must be submitted for approval. It should also detail progress made towards targets outlined in the Council's Community Support Plan. The CSP Grant Claim & Progress Report Form must cover the appropriate period. N.B. Proof of expenditure must accompany the CSP Grant Claim & Progress Report Form – such as a spreadsheet which should be certified by the Chief Executive or Director of Finance.	July 2017
The Councils Community Support Plan for period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.	30 June 2017

Please note: Claims submitted without the appropriate and complete documentation will not be processed and returned to the Council for corrective action. Only claims completed on the **CSP Grant Claim & Progress Report Form** will be approved for payment.

Claims will only be paid following approval by the Programme Delivery Team.

ANNEX 2

COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAMME: Grant 01 April 2017 to 30 June 2017

**01 April 2017 to 30 June 2017 CSP Expenditure Profile for:
Belfast City Council**

Area of expenditure	Council Contribution	DfC Contribution	Total
Community Support Staff			£ -
Resource Centres - Council Run			£ -
Resource Centres - Voluntary Run			£ -
Community Centres - Council Run			£ -
Community Centres - Voluntary run			£ -
Grants to other voluntary groups			£ -
Capacity building and training with voluntary groups			£ -
Contingency provision			£ -
Work on Community Support Plan			£ -
Advice organisations - CAB			£ -
Advice organisations - Other			£ -
Other			£ -
Total	£ -	£ -	£ -

Signed.....Date.....

Name.....
(Chief Executive or Director of Finance)

BANK ACCOUNT DETAILS

Council Name	
Account name (if different)	
Account number	
Name of Bank	
Address of Bank	
Bank sort code	

Name _____

Position _____

Date _____

(Chief Executive or Director of Finance)

Belfast City Council

COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAMME: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Overview

1. This Memorandum outlines the policy background and financial and administrative arrangements between the Department for Communities (hereinafter referred to as the “Department”) and Belfast City Council (hereinafter referred to as the “Council”) in relation to the Community Support Programme. This memorandum will take effect from 1 April 2017 and will be binding on both parties until 30 June 2017. It will complement other internal guides and instructions relating to the various elements of the programme.

Policy Background

Community Support Programme (CSP)

2. The Community Support Programme was established in 1975 and is a joint programme involving the Department and Councils. It supports the provision of community centre’s, local advice services, resource centre’s, grants to community groups and the employment of community support staff in Councils. The funding for the programme comes in part from the Department with the remainder provided by Councils from rateable income.
3. Following a review of the programme in 2001 entitled *Beyond the Centre*, all Councils developed three-year Community Support Plans to identify how they intended to support the local voluntary and community sector and deliver local community and advice services. This process required Councils to consult and engage with communities through the planning process. Each plan must contain:-
 - A baseline audit covering all community support services provided in the Council Area, whether by the Council or other agencies;
 - A needs analysis based on meaningful community consultation, to measure the gap between existing provision and community need, particularly in areas of disadvantage; and
 - A three-year action plan to address the identified needs within the resources available.

4. The Voluntary and Community Unit in the Department for Social Development worked with Councils to produce a good practice guide on the planning process to refine and improve existing Community Support Plans. This guide has been adopted by the Council network and will be used in development of new plans.
5. The provision of local advice services is an integral part of the CSP. The Department makes its “Advice Grant” in addition to the expenditure the Council sets aside for this purpose. To enable the Department’s contribution to be drawn down, the Council agrees to make a contribution to local advice provision from its own resources of at least **£97,932.25**, during the period **01 April 2017 to 30 June 2017**. The table below sets out details of both the Department’s and the Council’s contributions for the period **01 April 2017 to 30 June 2017**.

	DfC Advice Grant	Council Contribution	Combined Total
Belfast City Council	£135,009.00	97,932.25	£232,941.25

The provision of local advice services should be delivered in line with the requirements of the ‘Strategy for the delivery of generalist advice services in Northern Ireland 2015 – 2020, *Advising, Supporting, Empowering* (Oct 2015).

Notification, Reporting and Payment

6. Any individual project supported under the Community Support Programme, with **Central** Government costs of more than £500k, must be referred to VCD for approval in advance of a contract being awarded.

The Department will notify the Council each year of its allocation to the programme, using the agreed formula. To ensure that the Department receives assurance that funding will be targeted to the areas of need identified and agreed in the Council’s Community Support Plan, the Council will complete a CSP Expenditure Profile and forward it to the Department for approval.

7. The Council will complete the CSP Grant Claim & Progress Report Form which provides a financial statement of spend signed by its Director of Finance and details of performance against a range of performance indicators. The programme is subject to the same local government audit as other Council spend.

8. The Department will consider the documentation and release payment where it considers that the Council has successfully demonstrated progress in the delivery of actions outlined in its Community Support Plan. Areas of dispute will be resolved at the lowest working level. Unresolved matters will escalate through the normal line management processes.
9. The Council will make claims for payment using the bespoke CSP Grant Claim & Progress Report Form. Requests will be authorised by the Council's Chief Executive or Director of Finance. All claims will be subject to the following guidelines:-
 - A CSP Grant Claim & Progress Report Form will be provided to the Department every six months even if no payment request is made;
 - Each claim will cover the whole of the period in question and include a breakdown of the amount of eligible expenditure;
 - The Department will make every effort to pay claims promptly and will normally make payment within 30 days from receipt of the fully documented claim. (However, the Department accepts no liability in respect of loss attributable to delay in the payment of claims or to any suspension, reduction or cancellation of grant); and
 - Grant payments will be made directly into the Council's bank account.

Note: All expenditure claimed relating to the Financial Award must be incurred between the period 01 April 2017 to 30 June 2017

Changes to the funded activity and spending pattern

10. Any change to the individual categories of expenditure, expenditure profile or programme objectives must be agreed in advance.

Audit

11. This grant is subject to normal Government accounting rules and is also subject to the Council's internal controls and scrutiny by the Local Government Auditor. The Council will provide the Department with copies of its annual statement of account no later than eight months after the end of the financial year to which the statement relates. The Council shall also provide the Department with copies of all audit reports from the Local Government Auditor or similar body which relate to any aspect connected with the dispersal of this grant, especially the community services and finance functions of the Council.

Access

12. Both the Council and the Department will comply with the deadlines set for any requests for information concerning the programme. The Department, the Comptroller & Auditor General/Local Government Auditor or their representatives will be provided with all such accounting and other information relating directly or indirectly to the Programme as requested. The Department, the Comptroller & Auditor General / Local Government Auditor or their representatives will have permission to enter upon any premises owned or occupied for the purposes of inspecting an asset or accounting record relating to the funding.

Monitoring

- 13 The Council will ensure that all necessary monitoring information is sent to the Department in accordance with the timescales outlined above. The Department will collate all monitoring and financial returns and produce a Post Programme Evaluation Report covering the period from **01 April 2017 to 30 June 2017** for the Programme. Both parties will comply with any deadlines set for requests for information concerning implementation of the programme. Where this is not possible both parties will agree mutually suitable alternatives.
- 14 Department representatives from the Voluntary and Community Division will meet with the Council's Community Support Officers and or other Council Officials as appropriate on a regular basis to monitor delivery of community support plans and to share information on wider funding and community development issues.

Publicity

- 15 The Council will ensure that the Department's logo is carried on any signage, advertising or publicity material associated with the project and that the financial support is also acknowledged in any media publications or statements.

Principles

- 16 Both parties agree that adherence to the following principles will help to ensure the achievement of the programme objectives:
 - Recognition of each other's legitimate roles and interests;
 - Information sharing and transparency;

- Sharing risk;
- Openness and transparency in communications through regular network meetings;
- Regular review of plans;
- The Department notifying the Council of the amount of grant by end of June each year;
- The Department processing claims within 30 days of satisfactory documentation and financial statement being received;
- The Council submitting claims and providing relevant documentation by agreed dates; and
- The Council maintaining records to enable reporting against performance indicators.

17 Confirmation of the Department's Offer and Acceptance by the Council.

_____ Date **29 March 2017**

Peter Toner
Head of Business Support and Charities Team
Voluntary and Community Division

_____ Date _____

Chief Executive
Belfast City Council