



Subject:	Department for Communities' Access and Inclusion Programme 2021-22
Date:	12 May 2021
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development
Contact Officer:	Eimear Henry, Senior Manager – Culture and Tourism

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
	Belfast City Council is invited to apply for and administer the Department for Communities' (DfC) Access and Inclusion Programme 2021/22 on behalf of Belfast based arts, culture (including leisure) or heritage organisations.
2.0	Recommendations
	The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Grant permission for Council to apply for, promote, assess and manage DfC's Access and Inclusion Programme 2021/22.

3.0	Main report
3.1	The Department for Communities are intending to invite local Councils to administer their Access and Inclusion Programme 2021/22 within their respective local Council areas and to submit an application for funding to the Department by 18 June 2021. DfC intend to formally launch the programme as a competitive process on 24 May 2021.
3.2	<p>The Department for Communities' Access and Inclusion Programme aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Improve access to arts, culture (including leisure and active recreation) and heritage venues across NI for people with disabilities; ii) Increase participation in arts, culture (including leisure), heritage, and active recreation activities by people with disabilities.
3.3	The Council oversees the assessment and recommendation of projects via a competitive open call internally and externally and is responsible for delivery of all projects in receipt of funding.
3.4	Tourism, Culture Heritage & Arts Unit managed the 18/19 and 19/20 Access and Inclusion Programme within Belfast and received support for 24 projects with total value of £412,554, of which five were Council projects. In 2020/21, they administered 11 grants, total value £185,443. Examples of projects supported include improved access to City Hall and the Tropical Ravine; easier access for audience and participants to not for profit cultural venues across the city; and installation of new specialised playground facilities.
3.5	Capital works and equipment costs are eligible under this programme and maximum grant remains at £30,000. Projects must complete on or before 31 March 2022.
3.6	<p>Two new requirements proposed for this year are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Applications for Council owned venues must be supported by an accessibility audit either completed by a qualified Council official or an accredited body. Applications for third party owned venues must have the endorsement of the Council. - Applicants must commit their own financial resources, minimum 10% of project cost
3.7	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>Contribution of 10% of project cost is an eligibility condition. This resource will need to be sourced by the applicant.</p> <p>Council has staff resources to oversee the administration of this Programme.</p>

3.8	<p>Some Council staff have been trained to carry out accessibility audits.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>TCHA will work closely with the Council's Equality Unit and the Department for Communities to ensure positive equality implications which is the central component of the Programme. Officers will discuss the Programme with the Council's Disability Advisory Panel in June.</p> <p>There are no rural needs or good relations implications.</p>
4.0	Appendices
	There are no appendices for this report.