

## **Glór na Móna youth funding crisis**

### **Proposal for BCC Support, 25 February 2022**

Established by a group of community activists in 2004 with the modest intention of providing social and educational opportunities for the local Irish-speaking community in the Upper Springfield, Glór na Móna rapidly developed into an ambitious, locally rooted working-class organisation that links the language revival to the community development and regeneration. From 2009, it has pioneered Irish-medium [IM] youth-work, now catering for hundreds of young people each week across the city.

In addition to youth work; Glór na Móna also led the way on community education and regeneration; participatory democracy practices; projects focussing on inter-generational family language transmission and social language use; and local community history and heritage recovery. All our activities utilise the Irish language, the unique community resources and local environmental amenities to challenge socio-economic inequalities by targeting poverty and social exclusion.

Glór na Móna have received specific youth funding from the EA (and previously the BELB) for 12 years. In December 2020, we were given 1-year legacy funding until March 31<sup>st</sup> 2022 as part of an agreement that we would transition into the EA's new funding scheme. Then in November EA presented proposals to the West Belfast Local Area Advisory Forum for a full-time collaborative Irish Medium West Belfast funding specification that received unanimous support from all West Belfast Youth clubs.

However, in January 2022, they informed us that the EA senior management in Youth Service had pulled the proposals and decided that there was no budget for our Youth Club in Upper Springfield. When we asked what alternative arrangements EA had in mind for our young people, they told us to apply for a maximum £2,200 grant for electricity and suggested we ask volunteers to run the club.

This will effectively amount to 98% of our youth project funding of £86,000 which will be removed from April 1st. If implemented, this funding cut will result in the loss of 5 posts, including a Full-Time Youth Leader in charge, a 25-hour worker and 3 x 15 hour part-time workers. This will put our professionally qualified staff out of work and our young people out on the street with no alternative provision. We respectfully request a one-off discretionary fund of £86k to secure our service.

Le mórmheas,

Feargal

Dr Feargal Mac Ionnrachtaigh  
Stiúrthóir Feidhmiúcháin

Glór na Móna

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