

**LEISURE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING  
TUESDAY 19 OCTOBER 2021**

**Table of Recommendations**

<b>No</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Summary of key Recommendations</b>
1.	Apologies	<i>Nil</i>
2.	Declarations of Interest	<i>Councillor Anderson and Holmes</i>
3.	Any other relevant business notified in accordance with Standing Order 12 (o)	
	<i>(j) Portrush Recreation Grounds Provision: To ask the Director for details on what provisions will be made within the proposed works at Portrush Recreation Grounds to accommodate children with disabilities? (Councillor Wilson)</i>	<i>Clarity provided by Director of Leisure and Development</i>
4.	Minutes of Leisure and Development Committee Meeting held Tuesday 21 September 2021	<i>Confirmed</i>
	<b>FOR DECISION (Items 5-16)</b>	
5.	Sperrins Future Search	<i>To recommend that Council continues to fund the Sperrins Partnership Project up until March 2023 and, subject to review, until October 2023. The review will take place prior to March 2023. The cost for Council is £22,000 per annum</i>

6.	Alchemy 'Activate' Pilot Programme	<b><i>To recommend to Council that following the success of the pilot ACTIVATE programme that this be included in the future business development plan and budget allocated accordingly at £10k per annum.</i></b>
7.	Town Centre Experience Fund	<b><i>To recommend the Town Centre Experience Fund is run as a pilot scheme for the current financial year with call for applications opened during the 2021 financial year;</i></b>
8.	Town Centre Recovery Funding	<b><i>To recommend to Council that the Covid Recovery Revitalise Programme projects continue as per letter of variance received and with the additional outputs listed.</i></b>
9.	Grant Funding Policy Review	<b><i>To recommend that Council agree the Grant Funding Policy to include the updates and amendments as detailed; At 6.2 - Remove reference to 'individual'; Funding Unit Manager to report to elected members on 14 day turnaround figures achieved.</i></b>

10.	Landfill Community Grant Review	<b>To recommend to Council Option 1: No change to the current Policy</b>
11.	Annual Grants Programme	<p><b>To recommend:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. The Tourism Events Large Fund and the Tourism Events Growth Fund as outlined in Section 4 for the 2022-23 grant funding period.</b></li> <li><b>2. Community Development Support Fund - Option 3, and apply an annual CPI increase.</b></li> <li><b>3. Council 17 x grant programmes for the 2022-23 grant funding period, along with the assessment criteria and scheduling as detailed in Table 2 and summarised in Annex A, excluding the Technical Support Grant.</b></li> </ol>
12.	DfC Additional Covid Community Support Funding	<b>To recommend that Council approve the proposed amendments to the report provided to committee in August 2021 to reflect the reduced timeframe for delivery of the DfC Covid Recovery Programme, provided to council through additional DfC Community Support Programme funding.</b>

13.	Riverside Theatre	<i>To recommend to Council that the Item be deferred subject to a workshop.</i>
14.	Installation of Artwork, Portstewart	<i>To recommend that Council consider the options provided in the report, and considering the risks and benefits associated with each, proceed with option D, namely investigate the potential to develop a broader programme which reflects the sentiment of the correspondence.</i>
15.	SWB Minor Capital Works at Ballykelly Bushmills	<i>To recommend that Council approve the progression of these two projects with anticipated expenditure of £56,000 as listed in this report.</i>
16.	Festive Fund Grants Awards 2021	<i>To recommend that Council award grant-aid to projects numbered 1-11 listed in Annex 1 at a total cost of £2,750.</i>
	<b>FOR INFORMATION (Items 17-23)</b>	
17.	Public Rights of Way Investigations	<i>Information</i>
18.	Market Led Experience Development Programme	<i>Information</i>
19.	NI 100 Working Group	<i>Information</i>

20.	Community and Culture Annual Report	<i>Information</i>
21.	Prosperity and Place Annual Report	<i>Information</i>
22.	Funding Unit Annual Report	<i>Information</i>
23.	Tourism and Recreation Annual Report	<i>Information</i>
24.	Correspondence	<i>Noted</i>
25.	Matters Reporting to the Partnership Panel	<i>None</i>
26.	Consultations	<i>None</i>
	<b>CONFIDENTIAL CONSIDERATION (Item 27)</b>	
27.	Sale of the Dunluce Centre	<i>Defer for consideration by Full Council</i>

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF  
THE LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HELD  
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC HEADQUARTERS AND VIA VIDEO  
CONFERENCE, ON  
TUESDAY 19 OCTOBER 2021 AT 7:00 PM**

**In the Chair:** Councillor McAuley (C)

**Members Present:** Alderman Baird (C), Duddy (C), Hillis (C), Knight McQuillan (R), Councillors Anderson (C), Bateson (R), Callan (R), Holmes (C), McCaw (R), MA McKillop (R), C McShane (R), Nicholl (R), Schenning (R), Watton (C)

**Non Committee** Alderman Robinson

**Members In Attendance:** Councillor McCandless, Wilson, P McShane

**Officers Present:** R Baker, Director of Leisure and Development (C)  
P Thompson, Head of Tourism and Recreation (R)  
J Welsh, Head of Community & Culture (R)  
N McGurk, Interim Head of Prosperity and Place (R)  
L Scullion, Community Development Manager (R)  
R Gillan, Coast and Countryside Manager (R)  
H Perry, Museum Services Development Manager (R)  
P O'Brien, Funding Unit Manager (R)  
J Elliott, Town and Village Manager (R)  
N McGurk, Intermim Head of Prosperity and Place (R)  
D Connolly, Arts Manager (R)

I Owens, Committee & Members Services Officer (C)

**In Attendance** G Clarke/ R Sturgeon, Riverside Theatre (R) (Item 13)  
A Lennox, Mobile Operations Officer (C)  
C Thompson, ICT Operations Officer (C)

Press 4 (no) (R)

Public 3 (no) (R)

**Key:** (C) Attended in the Chamber  
(R) Attended Remotely

The Chair read the remote meetings protocol at the beginning of the meeting:

*Welcome to the Leisure and Development Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021.*

*All those in attendance should be aware that the meeting will be audio recorded.*

*This includes when the meeting is in committee. The public session of the audio recording will be published on Council's website within 2 days of the meeting.*

*Elected Members are reminded that they are personally responsible for any comments that they make at the meeting.*

*Members of the press and public will be required to leave when the meeting goes into committee.*

*If anyone loses connection, please call the number which was sent to you by Democratic Services. The number can be found in the email with the meeting link sent yesterday, 18<sup>th</sup> October 2021.*

*Members, please use the chat facility if you wish to speak. For those in the Chamber, please wait until your microphone is switched on before speaking.*

*I would also remind all in attendance that the taking of photographs of proceedings or the recording of proceedings, other than by authorised officers, is prohibited.*

The Director of Leisure and Development undertook a roll call of committee members present.

The Chair advised that Item 26 – Any other relevant business notified in accordance with Standing Order 12 (o) from Councillor Wilson would be considered as Item 3 and that submission from Alderman S McKillop had been withdrawn.

## **1. APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies recorded.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Holmes declared an interest in Item 5 – Sperrins Future Search, Councillor Holmes left The Chamber during consideration of the Item.

Councillor Anderson declared an interest in Item 6 – Alchemy ‘Activate’ Pilot Programme. Councillor Anderson left The Chamber during consideration of this Item.

## 3. ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS NOTIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 12 (O)

### 3.1 Portrush Recreation Grounds Provision (Councillor Wilson)

*To ask the Director for details on what provisions will be made within the proposed works at Portrush Recreation Grounds to accommodate children with disabilities?*

The Director of Leisure and Development explained that a pro-active approach had been taken by officers and consideration given to individuals requiring accessible facilities and that this project was one dedicated to adventure of which 20% accommodated wheelchair users. The Director of Leisure further explained that this project was subject to a consultation the outworkings of which were considered in the design.

**\*Councillor Watton joined the meeting at 7.10 pm**

## 4. MINUTES OF LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2021

Summary minute, previously circulated.

### Item 5 – Tourism and Recreation Managed Events

Alderman Duddy sought clarity from the Director of Leisure and Development that there would be no deviation from the proposals for Atlantic Link within the minute which had been ratified by Council. The Head of Tourism and Recreation explained that due to an issue with licencing there was a requirement to re-site this event, deliver virtually and divert the funding accordingly with the dates remaining as planned.

**AGREED** – to recommend that the Minutes of the Leisure and Development Committee meeting held Tuesday 21 September 2021 are confirmed as a correct record.



- \* **Councillor Holmes, having declared an interest, did not participate in the item.**

## **5. SPERRINS FUTURE SEARCH**

Report, previously circulated was presented by The Head of Tourism and Recreation.

### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is update Elected Members on the work of the Sperrins Partnership Project and to request an extension of the funding until April 2023.

### Background

In December 2018, Elected Members agreed to contribute £21,210 for the financial periods 2018/19 and 2019/20. Due to delays in recruiting staff, financial support was not apportioned for the year 19/20 until the 20/21 financial year as the Project Officer and Admin Support did not take up their Posts until Oct 2020. At a recent Sperrins Partnership Project Board meeting, Directors from the representative Councils agreed that a request would be put to the 4 lead Councils asking for 3 year's funding to allow the extension for the contracts for the Project Officer and Admin Support. See Annex A (previously circulated)

### Progress to Date

A Sperrins Partnership Project Officer and part time Administrative Support have been appointed and took up their respective roles in October 2020.

Work completed or progressing since mid-October 2020 includes:

- Approval and sign off of the Sperrins Partnership Agreement between the partner councils;
- A Governance Structure for the project drawn up and agreed at Board level;
- The formation of a Sperrins Partnership Board;
- The development and launch of a new website dedicated to the project [www.sperrinspartnershipproject.com](http://www.sperrinspartnershipproject.com);
- An official Launch of the Sperrins Future Search Report and Action Plans;
- A review and update of the Brand and Tourism Action Plan;
- The formation of the Brand and Tourism Thematic group;
- Engagement with Statutory Agencies;
- Support, assistance and promotion of collaborative projects including, the Sperrins Sculpture Trail and IAT (International Appalachian Trail) projects.

## Current Projects and Priorities

### Moving Forward

There are a number of projects each of the partners councils are leading on that will support the collaborative work of the partnership and enhance the product offering in the region.

- The Sperrins Sculpture trail will consist of 3 iconic pieces of artwork positioned in spectacular settings within the Sperrins. The sculpture trail is designed to promote the natural and built heritage of the region and encourage rural tourism and out of state visitors whilst preserving the natural assets of the rural community. This project is a working partnership between Derry City and Strabane District, Mid Ulster District Council and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council.
- The International Appalachian Trail (IAT) links the mountains in West Donegal through to Larne in Co. Antrim along the geological Appalachian trail. The route crosses 6 different council areas which include the 4 Sperrins partnership councils with varying distances in each council.
- The OM Dark Sky Park and Observatory located in Davagh Forest recently opened its doors to visitors and is the only one of its kind in Northern Ireland. The park is an initiative by Mid Ulster District Council and sits within the Sperrin AONB.
- Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council recently secured external funding for enhancement works at Banagher Glen. Once complete, the project will improve and enhance the visitor experience at this stunning location. The project will create opportunities for the local community and visitors to enjoy the site on a year round basis, and also create opportunities for visitors to explore the high Sperrins on foot.
- Garvagh Forest Trails has proved to be a very popular attraction. The project has created a community outdoor recreation hub in Garvagh Forest through the development of a multi-use walk and off-road family cycling trails. Within the Branding and Tourism element, Garvagh will feature as a Sperrins attraction.
- In Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area recent improvement work was completed at Gortin Glen Forest Park. The redevelopment of Gortin Glen Forest Park has transformed it into a family friendly outdoor experience and includes a destination play park, trim trail, additional parking and the creation of mountain biking trails.

Sperrins Partnership Project has several priorities over the coming months which

include:

- Commencing work on the delivery of the short- and long-term actions contained within the Brand and Tourism Action Plan.

- Identifying funding opportunities and creating the respective business cases (HLF, RDP, Peace Plus etc).
- Completing an audit of the tourism product of the Sperrins region.
- Forming strong cross boundary partnerships.
- Researching and identifying the best practice delivery structure for Sperrin region.
- The formation and development of the remaining Thematic Groups.

Each council was delegated to co-ordinate the thematic group meeting as outlined in the table below.

<b>Thematic Group</b>	<b>Lead Council</b>
Environment & Heritage	Mid Ulster
Infrastructure	Fermanagh & Omagh
Brand & Tourism	Causeway Coast & Glens
Community	Derry & Strabane
Management Structures	Mid Ulster

The Sperrins Partnership Project is presently funded by 4 councils at a total annual cost of £88,000. It is anticipated that the annual operating cost will remain the same for the next number of years and these costs will be purely attributed to the management and administration functions of the Sperrins Partnership Project.

With regards to implementation of projects across the thematic groups, Additional Funding will be sought from external sources. At the Director Coordinating Group meeting, held on Friday 17 September 2021, it was agreed by partners present to ask respective Councils to extend the project for 3 years. Previously circulated for members consideration:

- Sperrins Partnership Board - Terms of Reference – Annex B.
- A Project Road Map up until 2023 – Annex C (previously circulated)

#### Recommendation

**It is recommended** that the Leisure & Development Committee recommends to Council that it continues to fund the Sperrins Partnership Project up until March 2023 and, subject to review, until October 2023. The review will take place prior to March 2023. The cost for Council is £22,000 per annum.

Proposed by Alderman Duddy  
Seconded by Councillor Schenning and

**AGREED** to recommend that Council that it continues to fund the Sperrins Partnership Project up until March 2023 and, subject to review, until October 2023. The review will take place prior to March 2023. The cost for Council is £22,000 per annum

\* **Councillor Anderson, having declared an interest, did not participate in the item.**

## 6. **ALCHEMY 'ACTIVATE' PILOT PROGRAMME**

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Town and Village Manager.

### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform Members about a successful pilot programme created and delivered this summer through the Alchemy mentoring programme called 'ACTIVATE' and to recommend that the ACTIVATE programme is be included in the future business development plan for Prosperity & Place and budget allocated accordingly.

### Background

In June 2021, the ACTIVATE pilot programme was created to support start-up businesses that have participated in Invest NI's 'Go For It' programme with operationalising their business plan, in particular guiding them with the knowledge of how to do this. Focus was given to business set up, finance, HR, sales, marketing and social media.

Upon completion, the programme participants were provided with a six-month action plan outlining the next steps needed to be undertaken to bring their business idea to reality and/or grow their business. Some participants had begun trading early to midway through the programme and were provided with more niche mentoring support tailored to specific areas in particular marketing and business growth.

Council invited all past participants of the 'Go For It' programme in the last 2 years to complete a survey if interested to apply for the pilot scheme. 50 responded with over 20 being referred to the current Alchemy LITE and Growth programmes (as they were more established and could benefit from business growth support). The remaining 30 respondents were offered the new pilot ACTIVATE programme.

### Progress / Plans

The pilot programme progressed with 18 business owners at varying stages of the start-up lifecycle. Knowledge gaps that were acting as a barrier across the areas of business set up, finance, HR, marketing, sales

and social media were identified. These were addressed through a series of two-hour workshops and seven hours of one-to-one mentoring.

#### Programme content:

1. Business status review audit was carried out with each participant by an Alchemy mentor to assess the status of their business journey and to provide a series of recommended strategic actions for the business.
2. Six workshops-
  - a. Workshop one – Becoming Self Employed and employing people.
  - b. Workshop two – Basic book-keeping and reducing business costs.
  - c. Workshop three – Creating an effective marketing strategy.
  - d. Workshop four – Selling your product or service.
  - e. Workshop five – Using Facebook for business.
  - f. Workshop six – Photography, video, and graphics for social media.
3. One day (7hrs) of one-to-one mentoring was provided for each participant based on the needs of the business. Outputs included mentoring sessions via Zoom and a six-month start-up action plan.

#### Key outputs:

- 18 participants registered and completed the programme.
- Eight participants have started to trade because of Activate support.
- Seven participants are planning to start trading within the next six months.
- One participant is planning to start trading within the next 12 months.
- One participant was referred and is now participating in Innovate US because of Activate.
- Four participants were referred and are now participating in Digital Causeway because of Activate.
- Seven participants that plan to start trading within the next six months are likely to register for Alchemy and/or Digital Causeway in the future.
- Workshops were delivered live via Zoom and recorded with links to the recording being shared after the workshop. For those not able to attend online workshops, they watched via Zoom at a time convenient to them.

#### Programme Costs

Total programme costs were £9150 plus VAT and officers would be keen to deliver the programme again.

#### Recommendation

It is recommended that following the success of the pilot ACTIVATE programme that this be included in the future business development plan and budget allocated accordingly at £10k per annum.

Councillor Holmes welcomed this report given the tough times experienced by business during the pandemic.

Alderman Duddy suggested this may be a lifeline for some businesses and congratulated staff on bringing this report.

Proposed by Councillor Holmes  
Seconded by Alderman Duddy and

**AGREED** to recommend to Council that following the success of the pilot ACTIVATE programme that this be included in the future business development plan and budget allocated accordingly at £10k per annum.

## 7. TOWN CENTRE EXPERIENCE FUND

Report, previously circulated, presented by The Town and Village Manager.

### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to outline the proposed Town Centre Experience Fund and the application process for this pilot initiative contained within the Prosperity & Place Business Plan 2021-2022.

### Background

Developing initiatives that create a vibrant and sustainable town centre offer is crucial to the sustainability of our town centres.

The introduction of the pilot town experience grant in the main towns and villages is about bringing different ideas together and attempting to develop some cohesive thinking around activities which can improve the town centre experience for town centre users.

Town centre perception surveys have been conducted across the 4hubs and 8 towns as per the Northern Area Plans Settlement Hierarchy. The resultant sentiment mark awarded within the surveys will be used as a measurement for our town centres going forward.

Creating diverse town centre experiences through this grant programme will be conducive to sustaining and developing positive perceptions of our town centres as we emerge from the recent pandemic restrictions.

### Project breakdown

The project will open for grants, up to a maximum of £4,000, and groups of traders/town centre stakeholders will be encouraged to work together to

introduce new experiences, activities, marketing or event development within their respective town centres.

The grant will be confined to the 4 main hubs; Ballycastle, Ballymoney, Coleraine, Limavady and 8 town centres; Ballykelly, Bushmills, Cushendall, Dungiven, Garvagh, Kilrea, Portrush, Portstewart, as defined in the Northern Area Plan within Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

The pilot programme will be open for applications by December 2021

Grant Guidance Notes refer to Annex A (previously circulated)

Proposed outcomes:

- Increase promotion and awareness of the retail offer within our towns to contribute to the residential and visitor experience.
- Promote the town centre businesses to encourage growth.
- Keep spend within the Borough.
- Promote town centres as multifunctional places and make them places to be.

Budget available for the programme is £40,000.

#### Recommendations

The L&D Committee consider the following recommendations:

- The Town Centre Experience Fund is run as a pilot scheme for the current financial year with call for applications opened during the 2021 financial year.
- The Town Centre Experience Fund is run on an annual basis through the funding grants programme.

The Town and Village Manager asked elected members to note that for this year, due to time constraints that this would be considered as a pilot scheme.

At the request of members The Town and Village Manager clarified that this project welcomed initiatives which incorporated partnership in many forms including neighbouring towns, community and/or business partnerships.

Proposed by Councillor Schenning

Seconded by Alderman Baird and

**AGREED** to recommend to Council that:-

- The Town Centre Experience Fund is run as a pilot scheme for the current financial year with call for applications opened during the 2021 financial year.

- The Town Centre Experience Fund is run on an annual basis through the funding grants programme.

## 8. TOWN CENTRE RECOVERY FUNDING

Report, previously circulated was presented by The Town and Village Manager.

### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the progress of the second tranche of the Town Centre Covid Recovery Programme, funded by DfC, DAERA and DfI for town centres and rural businesses, and to recommend to Council that the Covid Recovery Revitalise Programme projects continue as per letter of variance received, and with the additional outputs listed in Annex A (previously circulated)

### Background as per the August Report

In July 2020 Council was awarded £894k in funding for Town Centre and Rural Business Recovery to be delivered in two tranches. The Department for Communities [DfC] £394k; Department for Infrastructure (DfI) £395k and the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) £109k.

The first tranche of funding was administered by Council as Covid grant-aid to town centre businesses and rural businesses.

The second tranche of funding was allocated to support medium to longer term recovery/actions, with the following criteria being applied by the Government Departments:

- Project spend must be capital.
- Funding aimed at helping town centre recovery.

A Steering Group comprising of Council, DfC and DAERA Officers has been formed and meets monthly to monitor project progress.

### Progress / Update

Monitoring Assessment reports are completed and filed with DfC quarterly.

Tranche 1 complete as follows:

DfC – Urban town centres : 432 urban letters of offer issued of which 75 applicants withdrew and 64 claims were not submitted. Total of 293 urban grants complete total £250,794.

DAERA – Rural town centres : 175 rural letters of offer issued of which 29 applicants withdrew and 23 claims were not submitted. Total of 123 rural grants complete total £122,367.



Projects in Tranche 2 continue, and an update is provided on all projects in Annex A (previously circulated)

A revenue fund for the programme has allowed for a library of videography and photography to be created. Following the success of the Street Art project, a Digital trail is to be commissioned of all the images along with the process and story behind each one. This project outcome will be a valuable marketing tool for a new town centre experience. The extension to the project deadline will also allow time to investigate a potential SHOP EAT ENJOY LOCAL App to be developed to promote the Shop Local message for the borough.

A request for a letter of variation was submitted to DfC in August 2021. DfC issued a Letter of Variation 30<sup>th</sup> September for acceptance as follows:

- The end date of the Project is extended to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 to reflect delays occasioned by the Covid-19 crisis;
- The reallocation of DfC Tranche 1 funding underspend, amounting to £128,869.43 with associated additional output\*, as outlined in Council's extension request dated 24<sup>th</sup> August 2021, is agreed, subject to the maximum level of grant from the Department not being exceeded; and
- The reallocation of DAERA Tranche 1 underspend, amounting to £44,633.39, for additional rural revitalise work is agreed, subject to the maximum level of grant from that Department not being exceeded.

[\*List of additional outputs is contained in Annex A, page 8.]

The Letter of Variation will allow for the additional outputs to be completed including the provision of a mobile accessible changing facility for use at council events.

### Recommendation

It is recommended to Council that the Covid Recovery Revitalise Programme projects continue as per letter of variance received and with the additional outputs listed in Annex A (previously circulated).

Alderman Baird and Councillor C McShane questioned the positioning and location of the light boxes and suggested that these could be located outside of the borough where there are higher levels of population thus promoting Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council. The Town and Village Manager said that the light boxes could be relocated within the borough, in conjunction with Estates Team and would be available to community groups at a cost.

At the request of Councillor Callan, The Town and Village Manager explained how data was captured, advised that currently the process is

being calibrated and confirmed that a report would be brought back to elected members with statistical information including how the town is performing in terms of footfall, etc. The Town and Village Manager said that she would be reporting also to Town Teams in this regard.

Councillor Callan enquired about cleaning schedules and the Town and Village Manager confirmed that this was under the remit of Environmental Services but that there would be more frequent cleaning scheduled in summer months.

Councillor C McShane expressed disappointment that there had not been sufficient uptake of the Tranche 1 monies which resulted in the allocation of funds.

At the request of Councillor Callan The Town and Village Manager agreed to speak with PCSP regarding continued anti-social behaviour in the vicinity of Blackburn Path.

Alderman Knight-McQuillan welcomed the street art within the town centres and asked that the Town and Village Manager would engage with her further regarding the chosen location for one of the designs given the dereliction in the vicinity.

At the request of Alderman Duddy the Town and Village Manager confirmed that 'parklets' report had previously been presented to elected members and was hopeful this would progress. Alderman Duddy was disappointed that no engagement had taken place between The Town and Village Manager and WISE contractors.

Proposed by Alderman Duddy  
Seconded by Councillor Anderson and

**AGREED** to recommend to Council that the Covid Recovery Revitalise Programme projects continue as per letter of variance received and with the additional outputs listed in Annex A (previously circulated).

## 9. GRANT FUNDING POLICY REVIEW

Report, previously circulated was presented by The Funding Unit Manager.

### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform members that Council's Grant Funding Policy has been reviewed for the incoming year and make recommendation on changes.

### Background

Council is committed to distributing available grants fairly, efficiently and effectively. The purpose of Council's Grant Funding Policy is to outline the agreed approach to Grant Funding in relation to resourcing external bodies to assist in the delivery of its strategic objectives and priorities.

Council annually review and approve the Grant Funding Policy for the distribution of grants. The policy was reviewed and agreed in October 2016, November 2017, October 2018, October 2019 and September 2020.

The policy is attached as Annex A (previously circulated) with proposed changes highlighted.

### Grant Funding Policy

The policy sets out a framework for the processing of grants. The overall aim of the funding process outlined in the policy is:

*"To have a consistent, customer focused process with relevant assessment and evaluation procedures with appropriate appeal and monitoring systems in place".*

### Principles

- Grant funding awards are at the sole discretion of Council but will be dependent on the Council's available and agreed level of funding which is determined in the annual budget.
- Activities grant funded must be fully consistent with the strategic aims and priorities of the strategies to be addressed.
- Due regard will be given to equality considerations in accordance with Section 75 and any other statutory duty.
- All funding applications will be determined on their objective merits. No organisation is entitled to funding because it may have been granted funding in the past or for any other reason.
- Council must ensure proper, prudent and effective use of Public Money.
- Contracted services must be tendered in adherence to the Council's Procurement Process.
- Eligibility for funding is enabled through the grant programmes with specified criteria. This allows Council to focus on supporting organisations to achieve their best and to meet clearly identified needs, which must all be bound by Council's strategic priorities.

### Grant Funding Policy Changes / Amendments

Section 1: Introduction; updated to include:

The policy will operate in conjunction with the relevant grant programme guidance documents.

Section 3: Definitions; updated to include:

This policy is relevant to the definition of grant funding, which should not be confused with sponsorship, advertising or any supply of goods or services directly to Council. Sponsorship, advertising and direct benefits received by council are a payment for which the sponsor receives something in return and therefore falls within the context of a Contract for Services.

Section 4: Accountability and Responsibilities; updated to include

The Council's Funding Unit is responsible for ensuring the agreed administration, verification, reporting and monitoring arrangements are implemented.

Council employees are required to adhere to this policy and to take appropriate action to ensure the policy aims and objectives, together with all Conflict of Interest procedures, are fulfilled.

The responsibilities of Grant Aid recipients are detailed within the Letter of Offer.

The Finance Team and the Funding Unit will consult on any VAT related payments provided to the Grantee.

The Grantee has responsibility for reviewing HMRC guidance to satisfy themselves that the application falls within a Grant and not a Supply of a Service. Guidance can be found: <https://www.gov.uk/hmrc-internal-manuals/vat-supply-and-consideration/vatsc06310>

Section 5.4: Eligibility-Exclusions;

*Replace*

"Costs that can be claimed back from elsewhere (e.g. VAT)"

*with*

"Costs that can be claimed back from elsewhere (e.g. VAT. If the applicant is VAT registered, and can claim back VAT, eligible grant will be calculated using the Net amount of eligible invoices provided using the net amount. If the applicant is not VAT registered, and cannot claim back VAT, eligible grant will be calculated using the Gross amount of eligible invoices provided.

The amount of grant awarded per the Letter of Offer is the maximum payment an applicant can receive).

The following link from HMRC is a useful point of reference in relation to VAT and grant-aid:

<https://www.gov.uk/hmrc-internal-manuals/vat-supply-and-consideration/vatsc06317>

#### Section 5.5: Breach of Letter of Offer (Clawback)

Updated to include: If funding is withdrawn the Grantee has no legal redress to have funding reinstated.

Section 6: Fraud and Corruption – At its meeting on 10 March 2021 the Audit Committee recommended that the Grants policy be updated to include a block of groups/organisations where they has been an attempt to obtain ineligible funds from Council. The policy has been updated as follows:

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is committed to carrying out business fairly, honestly and openly and has a zero tolerance towards fraud, bribery and corruption. Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council expects full compliance with the requirements of both the Fraud and Corruption Policy and Bribery Act 2010 from Groups or Individuals applying for, or in receipt of grant aid. This is also relevant to Councillors, Employees, Agents, Partners and Suppliers involved in your project/event. Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is committed to developing, implementing and maintaining effective procedures and controls to prevent any occurrence of fraud and corruption. The Fraud and Corruption Policy can be found on the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council website.

All cases of irregularities or anomalies involving attempted or suspected fraud will be reported to appropriate authorities, including the Northern Ireland Audit Office, PSNI and any other relevant funding body (if applicable) or departments within the Council (if applicable).

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council reserves the right to disallow any other grant applications and claims submitted by a group or an individual member of a group in respect of the financial year and to apply a moratorium on Council funding to any group or individual member of a group where fraudulent activity has been identified within the current financial year and for at least two forthcoming financial years. This also applies to individuals applying or claiming for bursaries.

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council will inform the group's Chairperson where attempted or suspected fraud has been identified.

#### Section 7: Review of the Policy; Updated as follows:

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months. *The Council will also monitor the implementation of the Policy at regular intervals and will respond to emerging issues and/or changing circumstance.*

### Recommendation

It is recommended that Members agree the Grant Funding Policy to include the updates and amendments as detailed.

### Substantive Proposal

Proposed by Councillor MA McKillop

Seconded by Councillor Schenning

To recommend that Members agree the Grant Funding Policy to include the updates and amendments as detailed.

Councillor Holmes asked for information on events sponsored by Council and The Director of Leisure and Development confirmed that there were legacy arrangements which were being addressed.

Alderman Duddy said it was unclear from the report that payments would be expedited as quickly as possible, suggesting it was unfair to smaller community groups and asked for the timeline from approval of monies to groups taking receipt of same. The Director of Leisure and Development agreed to engage with Alderman Duddy if he wished to raise an issue on behalf of a particular group.

Referring to 6.2 Alderman Duddy felt that a group should not be penalised due to the actions of an individual and suggested this reference should be removed.

Alderman Duddy pointed to issues experienced by some groups in terms of connectivity and capacity.

The Funding Unit Manager confirmed the process in place to assist groups in the form the Community Development Team and confirmed that targets of 14 day turnarounds were consistently met by the Funding Unit where no issues arose in respect of the claim. The Funding Unit Manager said that if groups had an issue their claim could be prioritised if contact made with the team who are always available during business hours.

### Amendment

Proposed by Alderman Duddy

Seconded by Councillor Watton

To recommend that:-

Council agree the Grant Funding Policy to include the updates and amendments as detailed; At 6.2 - Remove reference to 'individual';

Funding Unit Manager to report to Elected Members on 14 day turnaround figures achieved.

The Chair put the Amendment to the Committee to Vote

9 Members voted For; 5 Members voted Against; 0 Members Abstained

The Chair declared the amendment carried.

## 10. LANDFILL COMMUNITY GRANT REVIEW

Report, previously circulated, was presented by the Interim Unit Funding Manager.

### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to review the Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) Policy.

### Background

In Feb 2016 Council agreed the Landfill Communities Fund Policy. The policy sets out a framework for the processing of Landfill Communities Fund applications. The overall aim of the process outlined in the policy is:

*“To ensure a consistent and transparent process with proper and accountable procedures is in place”.*

In April 2016 Council agreed the Ulster Wildlife Trust as the Environmental Body to administer the fund. The LCF Policy is reviewed annually by Council.

### Policy Review 2019

The purpose of the Landfill Communities Fund Policy is to outline the agreed approach to approval of the funding in relation to LCF applications. In determining the policy Council should be mindful of the likely remaining life of the Craigahullier landfill site. There is an annual reduction in tonnage going to the site. This will continue to impact on the amount of funds available through LCF which will reduce accordingly each year as the tonnage going to landfill is reduced.

A desktop review of the policy has been carried out by Council’s Funding Unit and an option for members to amend the eligibility criteria is presented:

The policy currently states:

‘To be eligible the proposed project must be located within a 10 mile radius of a licensed landfill site within Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area. (Programme currently states that the project must

be located within a ten mile radius of either Craigahullier Landfill Site, Portrush or Craigmore Landfill Site, Garvagh)'

Members should consider changing this to:

'To be eligible the proposed project must be located within a 10 mile radius of the Craigahullier landfill site owned and operated by Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council'.

#### Recommendation

It is recommended that Elected Members give consideration to the two options presented:

Option 1: No change to the current Policy.

Option 2: Amend the eligibility criteria to state that projects must be located within a 10 mile radius of the Craigahullier Landfill Site, Portrush.

The expected value of the fund for 2022/23 is in the region of c£80k net of fees.

The Landfill Communities Fund Policy is attached at Annex A (previously circulated)

Proposed by Councillor Holmes  
Seconded by Councillor Schenning and

**AGREED** to recommend to Council Option 1: No change to the current Policy.

## 11. ANNUAL GRANTS PROGRAMME

Report, previously circulated, was presented the Unit Funding Manager.

#### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to recommend the annual grant funding programmes to Council for the 2022-23 period.

#### Background

Every year Council agrees an annual programme of grants. The grant funding programmes target resources to meet identified need and further Council's objectives as outlined in Council's Corporate Plan and individual Service Strategies.

In the 2021-22 Grant funding period the following grant programmes are being delivered:

Table 1



	<b>Grant Programme</b>	<b>No of applications</b>	<b>Amount Requested</b>	<b>No of LoOs</b>	<b>Sum of LoOs</b>
1	Building a United Community Fund	1	£1,200	0	0
2	Community Development Support Grant	62	£113,561.89	54	£93,592.60
3	Community Festivals Fund	23	£38,595.50	18	£26,110
4	Culture, Arts and Heritage Grant Scheme	14	£14,360.00	11	£11,000
5	Creative Practitioner Bursary Scheme	2	£1,370	2	£1,370
6	Enterprise Fund	34	£183,810.47	16	£62,381.83
7	Landfill Community Fund	7	£101,587.50	5	£71,587.50
8	Social Inclusion Grant	20	£10,518.37	15	£7,390
9	Tourism Events Recovery Fund	9	£1,380,411.00	9	£334,038.50
10	Rural Business Development Grant	82	£394,420.99	40	£119,000
11	Rural Revitalise Grant	159	£381,787.54	97	£146,597.58
12	Town Twinning Grant	0	0	0	0
13a	Policing and Community Safety Grants	9	£37,119.00	0	£0.00
13b	Policing and Community Safety Small Grants	4	£1,984.50	2	£984.50
14	Live Smart Environmental Grant	33	£16,277.74	23	£10,438.59
15	NI100 Small Grants	44	£140,598.03	38	£107,379.53
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>£2,817,602.53</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>£991,870.63</b>

Grant Funding Programmes 2022-23

The Annual Review of Grant Programmes Workshop for Elected Members was held on 23 August 2021 at which the proposed grant programmes for the incoming year were presented and discussed.

A summary of the proposed grants programmes for 2022-23 is attached at Annex A (previously circulated), which includes a brief overview of each proposed grant and the criteria to be used for assessment.

The Grant Funding Programmes available for the 2022/23 period are as follows:

Table 2

	<b>Grant Programme</b>	<b>Revenue / Capital</b>	<b>Council Funding Contribution</b>	<b>External Funding Rate</b>	<b>Project Intervention Rate</b>	<b>Maximum Award</b>
1.	Culture Art and Heritage Grants Programme	R	100%	0%	100%	£1,000
2.	Creative Practitioners Bursary Scheme	R	100%	0%	100%	£1,000
3.	Youth Creative Skills Bursary Scheme	R	100%	0%	100%	£200
4.	Building a United Community Fund	R	25%	75% - The Executive Office	100%	£1,500
5.	Community Development Support Grant	R	50%	50% - DfC	75%	Under Review To be agreed
6.	Community Festivals Fund Grant	R	53%	47% - DfC	75%	£750 / £1,500 / £3,000
7.	Social Inclusion Grant	R	50%	50% - DfC	85%	£500
8.	Tourism Large Event Fund	R	100%	0%	50%	£100,000
9.	Tourism Growth Event Fund	R	100%	0%	50%	£15,000
10	Christmas Festive Fund	R	100%	0%	100%	£250
11.	Enterprise Fund	R	100%	0%	100%	£10,000

12	Landfill Communities Fund	Landfill Tax	0%	100% HMRC	75%	£15,000
13	Town Twinning Fund	R	100%	0%	100%	£5,000
14	PCSP	DoJ	0%	100%	100%	TBC
15	Rural Business Capital Grant Scheme	DAERA	0%	100% - DAERA	50%	£4,999
16	Livesmart	R	100%	0%	100%	£500
17	Technical Support Grants for Capital Projects	R	100%	0%	100%	TBC
18	Town Centre Experience Fund	R	100%	0%	100%	£4,000

#### Tourism Events Fund Programme (TEFP)

The Covid19 pandemic caused disruption and cancellations to Council's Tourism Events Fund. In 2020-21 the Events submitted as part of the Tourism Events Funds were all cancelled and the late cancellation resulted in the project promoters incurring costs which Council agreed to cover at a total cost of £165,943.78.

In the 2021-22 grant funding period Council adapted to a Tourism Events Recovery Fund which allowed applicants to plan for events proceeding, or to mothball events with core costs being eligible for grant aid. In total £334,038.50 was issued in LoOs. For the incoming year it is recommended that Council proceed with the Tourism Large Events Fund and the Tourism Growth Events Fund in line with the following parameters:

- Both funds will have further relaxations of parameters as part of post-Covid recovery which will allow event organisers to have flexibility in outputs.
- Funding **only** for events which are proceeding.
- Event Project Costs **only** (no core costs).
- Reverting to previous Levels of maximum grant awards (50% up to maximum of £15k and £100k).
- Revert to the 2 Stage Application Process as introduced in 2020/21:

Mandatory Workshop to provide support and guidance for applicants when preparing plans and developing the full application for submission at Stage 2.

- Stage 1 - To determine eligibility and signpost applications to the relevant fund.

- Stage 2 – Full application with event details.

4 x one to one sessions with Stage 2 applicants before submission deadline.

### Community Development Support Grant (CDSG)

The Community Development Team has undertaken an in-depth review of the CDSG Grant programme, and a number of changes are recommended for the incoming year.

On average 50-55 CDSG awards are made annually with a budget of circa £94,000.

Issues to be considered:

- Currently the grant award is a blanket rate and does not take into consideration the scale of the community premises and resultant operating costs, or the services that are provided from the premises.
- The level of grant award has remained the same for the past 6 years and does not reflect the rising operating costs that community groups have experienced.
- The cost of annual insurance has increased in the past 5 years with an average increase circa 23%.
- The cost of utilities has increased substantially and in some instances of the groups surveyed the increase equates to circa 67%.
- During the pandemic many groups had to upgrade their Wi-Fi or install broadband which has resulted in increased annual operating costs.
- Increased cost of cleaning materials and equipment needed to maintain safe operating practices in their centres.

### Options for consideration:

Members are being asked to consider 3 categories of awards which will allow a differentiation between differing sized premises and differing scale of activities.

Category 1: Community development groups directly providing a programme of activities. The group has its own premises including a hall/space adaptable for a range of activities with one or more meeting rooms, hired by at least 3 other groups on a regular (at least monthly) basis.

Category 2: Community development group directly providing a programme of activities with a premises for their own use which is hired out by less than 3 other users on a regular basis.

Category 3: Community development group that provides a programme of activities without their own premises.

Table 3 shows the likely impact an increase in awards will have on the budget. The amount has been calculated based on assumptions using the current number and types of groups applying on an annual basis.

Table 3

Option	Group Categories	PROPOSAL	Likely Impact on Budget
<b>Option 1</b> Do Nothing	Category 1 Category 2 Category 3	Grant remains at £2,000 Grant remains at £2,000 Grant remains at £1,000	None
<b>Option 2</b>	Category 1 Category 2 Category 3	Increase grant from £2,000 to £3,000 Increase grant from £2,000 to £2,250 Increase grant from £1,000 to £1,125 <b>TOTAL</b>	£20,000 £5,000 £1,875 <b>£26,875</b>
<b>Option 3</b>	Category 1 Category 2 Category 3	Increase grant from £2,000 to £3,500 Increase grant from £2,000 to £2,500 Increase grant from £1,000 to £1,250 <b>TOTAL</b>	£30,000 £10,000 £3,750 <b>£43,750</b>
<b>Option 4</b>	Category 1 Category 2 Category 3	Increase grant from £2,000 to £4,000 Increase grant from £2,000 to £2,750 Increase grant from £1,000 to £1,500 <b>TOTAL</b>	£40,000 £15,000 £7,500 <b>£62,500</b>

**Note:** There are early indications from DfC that the level of funding Council receives through the Community Support Programme **may** increase next year due to a new formula being considered to calculate each Council's allocation.

### Technical Support Grant

The principle of developing a new technical support grant has been approved by Council. In July 2021 the Leisure & Development Committee passed a motion which recommended the development of a technical support grant. On 3rd August 2021 the recommendation was accepted by full Council:

*Option 3: Direct Strategic Investment of £15,000 in the Stage 1 feasibility study for the Harry Gregg Legacy Foundation. Funding for Stages 2 & 3 (i.e. the Planning Process) being subject to Council's consideration of the outputs recommended by the feasibility study; And going forward to recommend Option 2: Develop a new technical support grant.*

The principle of a technical support grant is revenue funding to facilitate the development of community and sporting organisations' capital project and could include funding for feasibility studies, consultation, economic appraisals, business case development and the Planning process. The parameters of the fund, including percentage intervention rate, award amounts and criteria for assessment will be presented to Council no later than January 2022. Officers will move to develop this new support programme for opening in April 2022.

### Recommendations

Recommendation 1:

It is recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee recommends to Council the Tourism Events Large Fund and the Tourism Events Growth Fund as outlined in Section 4 for the 2022-23 grant funding period.

Recommendation 2:

It is recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee considers the options for the Community Development Support Fund and recommends Option 1, Option 2, Option 3 or Option 4 to Council.

Recommendation 3:

It is recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee recommends to Council grant programmes 1-18 for the 2022-23 grant funding period, along with the assessment criteria and scheduling as detailed in Table 2 and summarised in Annex A (previously circulated)

Councillor Bateson raised concerns around awarding grants to what he described was an insensitive event in Coleraine Town Centre. The Chair advised Councillor Bateson that the matter he referred to was included in an AORB submitted outside of the prescribed deadline and the matter was not relevant to this Agenda item so could not be considered.

Councillor Bateson continued to speak and Alderman Duddy called Point of Order 24.1 'When the Mayor/Chair speaks during a debate, any Member speaking at the time must stop. The meeting must be silent' Councillor Bateson continued to make his point and Alderman Duddy called Point of Order 24.2 'Member not be Heard Further' .

Proposed by Alderman Duddy  
 Seconded by Councillor Anderson

To call Point of Order 24.2 'Member not be Heard Further'

Councillor Bateson requested a Recorded Vote.

The Chair put the motion to the Committee to vote.

9 Members voted For; 2 members voted Against; 3 members Abstained.

The Chair declared the motion carried.

Recorded Vote Table

For <b>(9)</b>	Alderman Duddy, Baird, Hillis, Knight-McQuillan Councillor Anderson, Callan, McAuley, Holmes, Watton
Against <b>(2)</b>	Councillor Bateson, MA McKillop
Abstain <b>(3)</b>	Councillor Nicholl, McShane, Schenning

The Chair noted that Councillor Bateson was not permitted to be heard further with this regard to this Agenda Item only.

Alderman Baird said that some groups were having issues using zoom which could prevent them for availing of funding opportunities and The Funding Unit Manager assured Alderman Baird that groups would be facilitated by telephone calls if required. The Funding Unit Manager encouraged elected members to make the Funding Unit aware of any issues experienced in terms of connectivity.

Alderman Duddy requested that Community Development Support Grant (CDSG) Category 1 be amended from '3 other groups' to '2 other groups' and Category 2 be amended from '3 other users' to '2 other users';

Alderman Duddy asked for the timeline on the Technical Support Grant and suggested that a decision could not be made till paper was presented to elected members. Alderman Baird felt that this Grant was a lifeline to some organisations which would use it as a foundation towards further grant aid.

The Director of Leisure and Development confirmed that Officers were continuing to develop this grant and present report to elected members in due course. The Funding Unit Manager assured members that the Technical Grant will not be in place till 1 April 2022 so therefore would not adversely affect groups wishing to apply.

Proposed by Alderman Duddy  
Seconded by Councillor Anderson

Recommended that:-

1. The Tourism Events Large Fund and the Tourism Events Growth Fund as outlined in Section 4 for the 2022-23 grant funding period.
2. Community Development Support Fund - Option 3, and apply an annual CPI increase.
3. Council 17 x grant programmes for the 2022-23 grant funding period, along with the assessment criteria and scheduling as detailed in Table 2 and summarised in Annex A, excluding the Technical Support Grant.

The Chair put the motion to the Committee to vote  
10 Members voted For; 4 Members voted Against; 0 Members Abstained

The Chair declared the motion carried.

## 12. DFC ADDITIONAL COVID COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Report, previously circulated, was presented by The Head of Community and Culture.

### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on Covid recovery Community Support Programme funding from DfC and seek approval for the proposed re-profiled expenditure.

### Background

In August 2021 a report was presented to the Leisure & Development Committee with proposals for additional Covid recovery funding expected from DfC through the Community Support Programme for community development and advice services for the period Sept 2021 to March 2022.

Proposals for this spend were developed in line with the Anti-Poverty Action Plan and Council's Community Development Action Plan for 21-22 and based on ongoing engagement with the community and voluntary sector.



These proposals, based on an assumed estimated budget of £150,000, were approved by Committee and ratified by full Council, subject to DfC funding.

Update

The Department has now confirmed that the amount to be allocated for Causeway Coast and Glens is £158,267.24. While at the time of writing this report a Letter of Offer has not been received, it is expected by mid-October.

Since confirmation of the funding was received later than expected, it is not possible to complete one of the four proposals in full within the reduced timeframe in this financial year.

Initial proposals included a Participatory Budgeting (PB) project that would allow 3 or 4 community-based organisations to host a Participatory Budgeting initiative, where local individuals and groups come up with ideas to improve their community and bid for part of a ‘community pot’. The community then votes on what ideas receive funding from the ‘pot’.

Participatory Budgeting initiatives need sufficient lead in and delivery time to complete effectively and it is not possible to roll out full PB initiatives in 3 areas in the reduced timeframe. Officers have scoped out what can be done within the timeframe and the following are the amended proposals:

- a) Undertake Phase1 of a PB ‘Community Pot’ project in one area. This will involve encouraging and supporting the community to come up with small project ideas that will encourage connections and community cohesion. Phase 2 of the project (community voting process and delivery of the winning projects) will be undertaken in 2022-23 with Community Development and Good Relations core programme budgets. The area that has been selected is Bushmills because it is an area where there is existing community activity but where there is potential to enhance intra community relationships. In addition, the initiative will energise and empower the local community in readiness to engage in development of the Growth Deal projects identified for Bushmills.
- b) Develop and deliver a Participatory Budgeting (PB) foundation learning programme. This will be open to members of communities that are interested in participating in PB in order that a skills and knowledge base is built up to allow the delivery of PB in the council area moving forward.

The budget allocation for the Participatory Budgeting strand will be reduced by £15,000 and the budget for the Well-being Resource Allocations will be increased accordingly. A further £8,267 will be added to the Well-being Resource Allocations budget to reflect the increase in the total confirmed budget from what had been estimated.

Project title	Budget approved by Council in August	Update
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	<b>2021 (subject to DfC funding)</b>	
i. Extension to Generalist Advice Service contract to provide increased availability and extended hours of provision.	£60,000	<b>£60,000</b> Will be delivered as planned and within approved budget (as per August report).
ii. Community Centres Creative Activity Programme to support a return to community centres as hubs for community activity.  This will take the form of a menu of arts, creative and recreational activities that will be delivered directly in Council Community Centres and which community operated centres can also avail of, delivered in partnership with Arts and Cultural Services.	£30,000	<b>£30,000</b> Will be delivered as planned and with approved budget (as per August report).
iii. Well-being Resource Allocations (in effect grant aid) for small community and voluntary organisations.  A programme that will provide resource allocations to smaller community and voluntary organisations (that don't operate community premises) to deliver activities that reduce social isolation and loneliness and improve well-being. – this approach has previously been used to attract participation from	£30,000	<b>Increase budget to £53,267.24</b>  to allow for increase of 23 additional groups that can benefit (original proposal beneficiary target was 25) – up to 48 groups can now be supported at up to £1,000 each.

smaller groups which do not traditionally avail of council grants.		
iv. Participatory Budgeting (PB) projects.	£30,000	<b>Reduce budget to £15,000</b>  Adjust project to carry out Stage 1 Participatory Budgeting initiative in one area and roll out a Participatory Budgeting foundation learning programme open to members of communities that are interested in participating in PB.

Recommendation

It is recommended that council approve the proposed amendments to the report provided to committee in August 2021 to reflect the reduced timeframe for delivery of the DfC Covid Recovery Programme, provided to council through additional DfC Community Support Programme funding

Proposed by Councillor Anderson  
Seconded by Councillor Schenning and

**AGREED** to recommend that Council approve the proposed amendments to the report provided to committee in August 2021 to reflect the reduced timeframe for delivery of the DfC Covid Recovery Programme, provided to council through additional DfC Community Support Programme funding.

**13. RIVERSIDE THEATRE**

Report, previously circulated, was presented by The Head of Community and Culture.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to review Council's current service contract with the Riverside Theatre - 1 August 2021-31 July 2022 and approve their annual support of £107,500.00.

Background

Council adopted its first Culture, Arts & Heritage Strategy in May 2016. The strategy spans a five-year period, effective until 2021.

The strategy focuses on 5 key themes and associated strategic aims, the first of which is of key relevance to this report, namely *'Enhancing our cultural venues & assets'*, with a view to *'use our landscape and our cultural assets and activities to enable opportunities for both local people and visitors to participate in the culture, arts and heritage of the area.'*

- The relevant outcomes from within the strategy for this project includes:
- Increased participation in cultural activities and programmes.
- Increased and appropriate partnerships in place.
- Cultural assets maximised by working in partnership; increased levels of collaboration.

Riverside Theatre is owned and managed by the Ulster University and is located in Coleraine. It has been specifically designed and marketed as the only operating professional theatre venue within the Borough, seating up to 360. The theatre can facilitate an orchestra pit in the centre of the auditorium for up to twenty players.

The unique nature of the Riverside theatre facility is described by the University as

*'The Riverside is unique, in a Northern Ireland context, by having both a totally variable stage and seating facility..... Overall, Riverside's main auditorium can be configured and used in up to six different ways - hence our claim to uniqueness in an NI context.'*

In contrast, Council's facilities are designed as multi- functional spaces and do not have the same capacity in terms of design and available formatting. Roe Valley Arts & Cultural Centre uses a 221 seat auditorium for a variety of activities, however its stage is limited in terms of capacity. Flowerfield has a 150 seater auditorium and specialises in musical provision. Ballymoney Town Hall's auditorium is 350 capacity multi-function civic space with raised staging.

A report was brought to the Leisure & Development Committee on 15 October 2019 reviewing the legacy partnership arrangement with the Riverside and providing options moving forward including a proposed 10% reduction in financial support. This proposal was declined by Council at a subsequent meeting on 5 November 2019, during which Council agreed to maintain the annual funding support of £107,500.00 and defer decision on any potential amendments to the contract for consideration in 2021.

The value of the contract is £107,500 per year and it includes the following key elements:

- The delivery of a range of music events, drama, dance, talks and literary events, including professional productions, schools' and educational productions and community/amateur presentations.
- Participation in joint programming working groups with Cultural Services staff to ensure alignment of provision across the Council area and ensure complementarity.

- Development of joint cultural programmes.
- Development of joint marketing materials to maximise the promotion of arts provision across the Borough.
- Review of Riverside Theatre Provision 2020-21

The contract sets out a number of targets for the theatre. A summary of achievements for 2020-21 and proposed targets for 2021-22 is as follows:

Description of activity	Indicative target	Achievement 2020-21	% target achieved	PROPOSED 2021-22 TARGETS
Public events - these include drama, music, dance, talks, literary events, exhibitions & workshops	60 events	70 events	117%	64 events
	7,500 participants /attendances	2,150 participants /attendees	29%	8,100
Exhibitions	4	1	25%	0
Creative workshops for young people	50 workshops	43 workshops	86%	50
	1000 participants	470 Participants	47%	900

2020-21 was an exceptionally challenging year for the cultural sector in terms of the pandemic with many venues striving to establish continuity of service through new and challenging methods such as virtual/online activity and outdoor activities when restrictions have allowed.

#### Riverside Theatre Provision 2021-22

##### Working in partnership with Council

The Riverside Theatre has previously exceeded the targets set for 2017-19 and continues to provide a varied programme of events, which equally supports both professional performance in a range of art forms and community arts activities.

Regular meetings take place between the Arts Service Development Manager and the Riverside Theatre Manager to ensure a co-ordinated approach to programming and complementarity in provision between the theatre, Roe Valley Arts & Cultural Centre and Flowerfield Arts Centre.

Collaborative programming opportunities between venues this year include Halloween, NI Science Festival, Diverse Futures NI and creativity and well-being initiatives. Opportunities to maximise and enhance the

marketing and promotion of all the venues, both in print and online, continue to be developed.

#### Widening access to under- represented or disengaged groups

Many of the programmes detailed below will be offered free to the local community and specific programmes such as Diverse Futures NI specifically target Section 75 communities. Ulster University Widening Access department also offers bursary places to the youth theatre for children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. The events will be delivered both in person and online to reach as many participants as possible in the local community.

In the eventuality of any restrictions imposed by the Covid 19 pandemic, Riverside will endeavour to deliver the outlined programme by the following methods: Online – via website / virtual spaces / social media channels /Zoom/YouTube & Facebook Live and pre-recorded; Socially Distanced and using alternative (larger) University spaces; Outdoors– making use of the large outdoor spaces on campus and in the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough.

#### Activities/projects to be delivered on behalf of council (table previously circulated)

The following activities are not inclusive of the broader activities delivered by the theatre, such as comedy acts, pantomime, music etc. Council would have traditionally made a contribution to the operational costs of the theatre in general.

However officers have been working in conjunction with the University to ensure activities the council may agree to fund will be closely aligned to CC&GBC's cultural strategy in order support the agreed outputs and outcome commitment of both our strategy and business plans, particularly in relation to:

- Supporting young people to improve existing, or to gain new skills.
- Offering new creative experiences in order to increase learning opportunities and recognise the value of the arts in terms of wellbeing.
- Increase accessibility and usage of Council supported cultural facilities or services.

Greater levels of appreciation of arts and heritage by the public.

The proposed continuation of Council support of £107,500.00 represents an estimated 34.6% of the overall projected budget for Riverside Theatre for 2021-22. 62% of Council's support is directly attributed to artistic programme delivery, with 22% towards technical and management costs, and 16% towards marketing, promotion and necessary licensing costs, as illustrated below:

<b>Item</b>	<b>CCG Council Contribution (£)</b>	<b>CCG Council Contribution (%)</b>
Direct support for Programme Fees/ Production	66,500.00	62%
Technical Programme /Duty Management Costs	23,850.00	22%
Marketing, Licencing, Overheads contribution	17,150.00	16%
	107,500.00	100%

### Recommendation

It is recommended that subject to satisfactory annual performance reviews and Council budget setting process, Council continue to support Ulster University's Riverside Theatre to the sum of £107,500 p.a. through a service-based contract for a period, not exceeding two years in order to maintain the operation of the only professional, bespoke theatre venue within the Borough.

Alderman Baird welcomed facilities on offer through the Riverside Theatre and spoke of how the Arts had been adversely affected during the pandemic and how science and art was inspiring to young people.

At the request of Councillor Watton, The Head of Community and Culture agreed to have the Arts Manager engage with him regarding embracing those in disadvantaged areas. Alderman Hillis agreed that the services of the theatre should be open to everyone.

### Substantive Proposal

Proposed by Alderman Baird

Seconded by Alderman Hillis

To recommend to Council that subject to satisfactory annual performance reviews and Council budget setting process, Council continue to support Ulster University's Riverside Theatre to the sum of £107,500 p.a. through a service-based contract for a period, not exceeding two years in order to maintain the operation of the only professional, bespoke theatre venue within the Borough.

Councillor Callan said that the position of the Democratic Unionist Party was that Council should not be funding a building not under their control and questioned the viability of the proposal. Councillor Callan asked for an update on the Estates Strategy at the University of Ulster and felt that someone from the University of Ulster should be available to answer questions from elected members. The Director of Leisure and Development said that he had not requested someone from University of Ulster to present regarding Riverside Theatre.

The Head of Community and Culture said that there had been no engagement for some time between Council and University of Ulster although the Arts Manager and the Theatre Manager meet monthly and agreed that the service based contract on our behalf was possibly at odds with good practice. The Head of Community and Culture reminded elected members that at present Council are not in a position to set up theatre style for events thus the contract with Riverside Theatre and that bespoke contract deliverables were made available by this resource.

Councillor Callan pointed out that at present the facilities referred to in the contract proposed were not actually open for use as events featured took place in the Octagon or the Diamond area of Riverside Theatre, making reference to events cancelled or postponed in recent days.

The Head of Community and Culture explained that at present works of a remedial and health and safety aspect were ongoing and agreed to report back to elected members regarding progress.

Alderman Hillis pointed out that for Council to run a theatre themselves the cost would be considerable more.

Alderman Duddy suggested that a workshop be held in advance of a further report being brought back to elected members, also suggesting that theatre provision could be provided by Council owned venues including Roe Valley Arts Centre or Coleraine Town Hall as examples.

#### Amendment

Proposed by Councillor Callan

Seconded by Alderman Duddy

To recommend to Council that the Item be deferred subject to a workshop.

The Chair put the Amendment to the Committee to Vote

14 Members voted For; 0 Members voted Against; 0 Members Abstained

The Chair declared the amendment carried.

**\*The Chair called a recess at 10.15 am**

**\*The Meeting resumed at 10.30 am**



## 14. INSTALLATION OF ARTWORK, PORTSTEWART

Report, previously circulated, was presented by The Head of Community and Culture.

### Purpose of Report

To provide options for Members to consider a potential art installation in Portstewart following correspondence tabled at the leisure & Development meeting in June 2021 from Mr Sam Burnside.

### Background

Correspondence received from Mr Sam Burnside, and previously circulated to Members, included a request that council consider the installation of artwork which includes the inscription of a poem written by Mr Burnside, who has offered to donate copyright of the poem to the Council.

Mr Burnside expressed an interest in Portstewart and having written the poem, which acknowledges Henry McCullough, guitarist in Wings and Jimmy Kennedy who wrote Red Sails in the Sunset. The poem is attached as part of the correspondence received in Annex A (previously circulated) of the report.

The poet has shared the piece with a relative of Mr McCullough as well as engaging with a number of residents in relation to same.

The proposal requests that council considers funding and installing either an appropriately placed free standing stone, glass or granite plaque attached to a wall with the text of his poem along waterfront in Portstewart with the view of enhancing the civic space of the town, as an example of 'poetry in public'.

The correspondence cites examples of his previous poetry commissions for public and private spaces for both public institutions, a charity and a private individual. Mr Burnside has identified a number of these being as the result of a public competition/procurement to develop particular pieces.

### Options

A number of options are provided for council to consider, as requested by members.

<b>Option description</b>	<b>Issues</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Indicative/estimated cost to council</b>
A. Do nothing	Correspondence not progressed by council following request.	No cost to council.  No potential challenge from other	Nil

	Potential negative PR from some members of the community.	artists/creative practitioners in terms of proceeding with requests without criteria or consistent rationale (such as an existing programme or project council has built into business plans) or public/open competition process to enhance public spaces.	
B. Granite slab fixed to wall/or ceramic plaque with text painted.  seafront location or Flowerfield building (either internally or externally).	<p>Identification of potential suitable sites in council ownership.</p> <p>Advertisement consent from Planning.</p> <p>Stakeholder/community consultation required if on public land.</p> <p>No current artistic scheme in place that the proposal can fit within (sets precedence) – potential challenge from other local artists.</p> <p>Additional cost implication for council – not in budgets.</p>	<p>Enhancement of public realm.</p> <p>Or enhancement of Council's Flowerfield site.</p> <p>Promotion of the arts, subject matter relates to CC&amp;GB area and local talent.</p> <p>Act as a catalyst for public expression of the arts (potential to develop a trail promoting local artists over time, depending on resources).</p>	<p>Rough estimate provided by stonemason and installation £4,000 (granite slab).</p> <p>Or Circa £2500 for ceramic plaque</p> <p>Capital project and arts staff time.</p>

<p>C. Free standing 'stone'/ Sculpture.</p>	<p>Identification of potential suitable sites in council ownership or obtaining consent from 3<sup>rd</sup> party site owner.</p> <p>Planning permission and costs.</p> <p>Stakeholder/comm unity consultation.</p> <p>No current artistic scheme in place that the proposal can fit within (sets precedence) – potential challenge from other local artists.</p> <p>Additional cost implication for council – cost prohibitive.</p> <p>Additional project for capital works.</p>	<p>Enhancement of public realm.</p> <p>Promotion of the arts, subject matter relates to CC&amp;GB area and local talent.</p> <p>Act as a catalyst for public expression of the arts (potential to develop a trail promoting local artists over time, depending on resources).</p>	<p>Estimate for design, build and installation based on small scale sculpture projects previously completed (depending on size/design) £15,000+ (difficult to estimate without final design and ground works investigation etc).</p> <p>Not including planning costs, capital project and arts staff time.</p>
<p>D. Arts staff to investigate the feasibility of developing a broader programme reflecting the sentiments/ objectives of the proposal, liaising with Mr Burnside and other arts practitioners.</p>	<p>Proposal as it stands would not receive immediate deliverables.</p> <p>Without immediate action, momentum may be lost.</p>	<p>A range of stakeholders are engaged in developing potential programmes to maximise participation.</p> <p>Inclusive and broader programme developed which considers the potential to include other areas, artists</p>	<p>Staff time.</p> <p>Minimal direct costs, until included in direct programming costs or external funding secured to progress.</p>

<p>As a result, develop a programme, for example creative trail projects and seeking relevant funding opportunities for same.</p>		<p>and subject matters.</p> <p>Equitable approach embedded.</p> <p>Local talent promoted.</p> <p>Additional offering for local residents and tourists alike, raising awareness and appreciation of the arts in public.</p> <p>No immediate additional, unplanned cost pressures to council.</p> <p>Enhancement of public realm.</p>	
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Recommendations

That members consider the options provided in the report, and considering the risks and benefits associated with each, proceed with option D, namely investigate the potential to develop a broader programme which reflects the sentiment of the correspondence. Offer the opportunity to engage a broader range of creative practitioners, including Mr Burnside in developing same and seek funding to progress.

Proposed by Councillor Schenning  
 Seconded by Councillor Anderson and

**AGREED** to recommend that consider the options provided in the report, and considering the risks and benefits associated with each, proceed with option D, namely investigate the potential to develop a broader programme which reflects the sentiment of the correspondence. Offer the opportunity to engage a broader range of creative practitioners, including Mr Burnside in developing same and seek funding to progress.

Councillor Holmes felt that the poetry could be accommodated within

established boards or alternative options instead of the additional cost associated with this proposal.

## **15. SWB MINOR CAPITAL WORKS AT BALLYKELLY AND BUSHMILLS**

Report, previously circulated, was presented by The Head of Sport and Well-Being

### Purpose of Report

To request Members' permission to install floodlights at two recently constructed MUGAs.

### Background

The Rural Development Plan 2014-2020 / Village Renewal Programme has been developed for a number of villages through a series of reviews of existing/previous village plans, analysis of current levels of service and consultations with local groups.

The consultations identified a particular deficit in health and wellbeing service provision, including issues of concern raised around access to (health) services, mental and emotional wellbeing, lack of provision for young people, including a need for detached youth work and work with disengaged young people.

For some villages the renewal plans included the construction of a number of MUGA projects aimed at providing outdoor space that would be used to cater for the local community, including families and inter-generational relations, in the form of all-weather recreational spaces.

The scope of the external (RDP) funding for the projects did not allow for floodlighting of the MUGAs to be included in the overall cost of the construction programme. However, Council's Infrastructure team did ensure that the utilities element of the construction would safeguard "future-proofing" through inclusion of electrical conduit /cables should there a decision be taken to enhance the schemes in the future.

### Current position

Council Officers have since identified two MUGA projects requiring enhancement which will allow local community efforts to engage with young people to be further supported by increasing access to recreational and sporting opportunities.

Due to the lack of floodlighting at Ballykelly and Bushmills MUGAs, usage opportunities are restricted to daylight hours only. The addition of floodlighting will greatly enhance the sports and youth participation opportunities in the areas.

It is also to be expected that as greater usage value is recognised locally, additional opportunities can be explored which can extend the social, environmental and health benefits for the villagers, across all generations.

#### Budget

The associated cost of the MUGA lighting schemes is circa £28,000 per site (based on previous tender prices for comparable projects).

The budget from which the cost will be allocated is the 'Estates Life Cycle Budget', which is the Estates' annual budget set aside for capital expenditure for upgrade works of Council facilities.

#### Next Steps

If approval is given for this Minor Capital Works report, Officers will seek to progress with planning permission for the lights, with a likely approval stipulation being that the lights will not operate beyond 11pm.

Officers will ensure through lighting design, that efficient low energy bulbs will be used to reduce operational costs. Some further work is required around the most effective options to manage switching the lights on and off, with timers and/or tokens being considered as potential outcomes.

Subject to Council's agreement, Sport and Wellbeing and Council's Estates department will tender the works (with results of tender process being brought back to Committee) and aim to complete the works within a 3-month period of Council's decision and relevant planning approvals.

#### Recommendation

Members are requested to approve the progression of these two projects with anticipated expenditure of £56,000 as listed in this report.

Proposed by Councillor Nicholl  
Seconded by Alderman Duddy and

**AGREED** to recommend that Council approve the progression of these two projects with anticipated expenditure of £56,000 as listed in this report.

Alderman Duddy enquired if there was a maintenance scheduled for MUGA's in other areas including The Heights. The Director of Leisure and Development agreed to look into this matter.

## **16. FESTIVE FUND GRANT AWARDS 2021**

Report, previously circulated, was presented by The Unit Funding Manager.

#### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to make decisions on grants awards for the Christmas Festive Fund 2021-22.

## Background

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council launched the Christmas Festive Fund in 2015 to offer assistance to Community and Voluntary Organisations from the smaller towns, villages and hamlets in the Borough to help celebrate Christmas. This fund is specifically designed to mark the lighting of the Christmas tree and help facilitate festive celebrations within the Borough.

To be eligible to apply, organisations had be from the smaller towns, villages or hamlets within the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area, have a population of over 100 residents or have been allocated a Christmas tree from Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

## Overview of the Fund

To help local groups and community organisations from small towns, hamlets and villages to celebrate Christmas by organising events and activities in their local communities. All activities must comply with government restrictions on events.

Projects/events must take place between 26<sup>th</sup> November and 18<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

Activities must be cross community and open for all residents offering an opportunity for all within the locality to participate.

## Level of Grant Aid

Grants of up to £250 are available for eligible projects.

## Criteria for Assessment

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>Fail</b>
1. Evidence of a developed project; with a date within the scope of the advertised fund (activity to take place between 26th November to 18th December)		
2. Outdoor Event / Open for all the community		
3. Suitable planning for events with a sufficiently completed Risk Assessment including preventative Covid-19 measures, if required as per current regulations.		

4. Full itemized breakdown of costs provided		
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### Outcome

14 applications were received by the closing date. The Funding Unit carried out the Stage 1 eligibility checks, 3 applications were deemed ineligible and 11 applications were passed for assessment. The applications were assessed against the agreed criteria.

No of applications received	14
No of ineligible applications	3
No of unsuccessful applications at assessment	0
No of successful applications	11

A summary of the outcome including applications received and grants recommended is included in Annex 1 (previously circulated)

### Recommendation

It is recommended that Council award grant-aid to projects numbered 1-11 listed in Annex 1 (previously circulated) at a total cost of £2,750.

Proposed by Councillor Nicholl  
Seconded by Alderman Duddy and

**AGREED** to recommend that Council award grant-aid to projects numbered 1-11 listed in Annex 1 at a total cost of £2,750.

## 17. PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY INVESTIGATIONS

For information report, previously circulated, was presented by The Head of Tourism and Recreation.

### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present an update to Members with respect to ongoing investigations and potential investigations regarding Public Right of Way cases.

### Background

The Access to the Countryside (NI) Order 1983, places a duty on councils to “assert, protect, and keep open and free from obstruction or encroachment, any public right of way”.

Where an access route has been blocked by a private landowner, and local people claim that a public right of way exists, Councils have a duty to investigate such a claim. Part of such an investigation involves collecting



user evidence from local people who have claimed to have used the route 'as of right' over a number of years, and also seeking the views of the landowner concerned to help determine if a public right of way exists at common law. Documentary evidence, including historic mapping and photography, is also gathered as part of the investigation process.

Once sufficient evidence is gathered, Council has to assess the weight of all such evidence and take legal advice regarding same. If the evidence shows that a public right of way does exist, then Council has a statutory duty to make the assertion. If the evidence is inconclusive, Council has no duty to assert.

#### Current investigations

At present there are seven cases which are being considered by Council staff. These are summarised in the Table 1 (previously circulated)

Alderman Hillis referred to the timescale involved in progressing the Giant's Causeway Right of Way and asked why there was such a delay. The Head of Tourism and Recreation explained that Council was awaiting opinion from a barrister which would be followed by a proposal to Chamber with determination and advice as soon as possible.

Councillor Holmes referring to a Right of Way at Castlerock enquired about status of engage with residents timescale and the associated timescale. The Head of Tourism and Recreation advised that the Coast and Countryside Officer was engaging with the National Trust and then further engagement would take place with residents. The Head of Tourism and Recreation advised that there were blockages and boulders in situ which the team were trying to resolve in order to enable access. The Head of Tourism and Recreation agreed to give Councillor Holmes an update on the timeline.

**It is recommended** that the Leisure and Development Committee Committee notes the report.

## 18. MARKET LED EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

For information report, previously circulated presented by The Director of Leisure and Development.

**It is recommended** that the Leisure and Development Committee Committee notes the report.

#### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Elected Members on opportunities sought by the Tourism and Recreation Destination Management team, to develop, enhance and support the visitor economy. £293,000 has been

secured from Tourism Northern Ireland's Market Led Product Development programme.

### Background

The Market Led Product Development Programme is a programme outlined in Tourism Northern Ireland's Tourism Recovery Action Plan aimed at supporting those businesses that have been severely impacted by the pandemic. This programme will provide local Councils with funding towards programmes to enhance the NI experience within their regions in support of the Northern Ireland "Embrace a Giant Spirit" Campaign.

The tourism experiences should offer visitors an end-to-end holistic product that meets their needs, increases dwell time and thereby drives economic growth within the Destination.

### Funding secured

Council Officers have secured maximum funding of £293,000 through the TNI Market Led Product Development Programme (100% funding).

### Project Brief

The programme aims to:

- provide more reasons to travel to and within NI
- enhance and animate the visitor experience for NI and ROI visitors while here
- encourage more opportunities to spend

### Project Outcomes/Benefits

Taking full advantage of this opportunity, Council Officers have put together a programme of new and enhanced events and experiences that will take place from October 2021 and March 2022. This schedule of activities will also provide a strong foundation and help to launch the Spring/Summer Season 2022. The programme is designed to provide additional reasons for those from within NI and ROI to travel to the Causeway Coast and Glens Destination during the months of October 2021 - March 2022. The expected outcomes will also deliver more opportunities to spend. All the events and experiences planned will include evening, midweek and weekend activities and will increase the accessibility and connectivity of experiences within the Causeway Coast and Glens through guided experiences, trails, and bookable events. In the short term it will deliver much needed activity as our tourism trade recover from the devastating effects of Covid-19, but also, longer-term, it raises the profile and the breadth of the offer from the Causeway Coast and Glens destination in terms of activities, creativity, opportunities to access the outdoors, the arts in many forms and local food and drink.

The programme submission and initiatives demonstrate a clear focus on building the strength of the NI experience brand, aligning with core segments, with the potential to maximise demand in future years. Using

food and drink, arts and crafts, the outdoors, music, culture and heritage, it comprises unique, innovative, authentic, opportunities to engage with local people through high quality tourism experiences. By connecting these businesses/ experiences together and with the addition of new collaborations and partnerships it is hoped that this programme will result in:

- Increased visitor spend
- Increased visitor numbers
- Increased dwell time and address seasonality
- Increased employment opportunities

The specific proposals are as follows

#### Slow Food in the Causeway Coast and Glens October 2021 – March 2022

In 2019 Taste Causeway was runner-up in the all-Ireland Foodie Destination Awards and its reputation for quality, local food was further enhanced in 2020 when it received accreditation as a Slow Food destination. Council partnering with the Taste Causeway Food Collaborative will organise a series of events to promote Causeway Coast and Glens as a Slow Food Destination from dining in special places, a Slow food Festival featuring a Slow Food Market in collaboration with Lacada, Slow Food Menus in participating restaurants, a trial of a permanent Slow Food Trail, foraging and wild cooking experiences.

These events will help to connect and increase accessibility to the food and drink offerings available in N.I and connect the visitor to the Landscapes in which they are set. Consumer sentiment has shown post pandemic that food and wellness are key elements and where the food comes from is important to them, the slow food movement is a perfect vehicle to take the consumer on this journey.

#### Atlantic Sessions Inside Out 19 - 21 November 2021

Atlantic Sessions is an established event that has run in November since 2008 and has served to create a reason to visit Portrush and Portstewart out of season. Since its inception it has connected the visitor to the local NI music scene and in recent years has been recognised by Tourism Ireland as having significant potential to attract the Culturally Curious market segment in normal travel circumstances. In 2020 Atlantic Sessions took place virtually and the ambition is to re-establish it as a live event in 2021 to provide a much needed injection to the local hospitality industry. At the September Leisure and Development meeting, three options were presented for Atlantic Sessions, with the preferred option being to avail of the funding from the Market Led Experience Development Programme and run two outdoor events at Flowerfield Arts Centre, Portstewart. The Tourism and Recreation team has pursued this option but unfortunately they are now unable to deliver due to being unable to secure an

Entertainments Licence for the site. Officers have now no alternative and whilst they will explore other options to utilise the funding before the March deadline, Atlantic Sessions will now need to be delivered in a reduced format, therefore as outlined in Option 2 of the September Leisure and Development report – carry out a digital and social media campaign promoting Atlantic Sessions.

#### Traditional Music Trail in Ballycastle:

Traditional music is alive and well in Ballycastle but is relatively unknown if you are a visitor. There are a number of licensed premises in the town that regularly feature sessions with local musicians including the House of McDonnell, Taisies and O'Connors Bar & Restaurant but to date visitors are likely to stumble across these sessions rather than preplan their visits. We know from consumer research that access to live music and indigenous culture are motivators for visitors. The proposal is to bring together the traditional music offering within the town of Ballycastle and create a new bookable immersive music trail experience in the company of a guide, curated and managed by a third-party supplier/coordinator. There will also be the option to make it a multi-sensory experience by adding a bespoke food element to the trail by partnering with local restaurants and cafes, some of whom are Taste Causeway members. The traditional pubs will offer a unique insight into this aspect of our culture and the experience will link to the inspirers of the Embrace a Giant Spirit brand showing links to so many of the inspirers for the Embrace a Giant Spirit brand including big-hearted, legends and stories and original. The aims are to animate and enhance the evening economy within the town of Ballycastle throughout the year, showcasing local talent and culture, appealing to both the NI and ROI markets and longer term, the Culturally Curious segment in overseas markets. This is intended as a pilot programme, offering reasons to spend more time and more money in the town of Ballycastle, while fulfilling the visitors desire to connect with locals and engage in an immersive experience. We will launch in January with one event, repeat once in February and then once a week in March. Following a review, the intention to continue it as a regular, bookable experience after the programme ends in March.

#### Craft Trail Creative designers and makers trail of the Causeway Coast and Glens

The Causeway Coast and Glens is home to a wealth of artists the increase of creatives now resident within the borough is testimony to how our spectacular landscape, coastline and cultural heritage is inspirational to artists and makers. This wealth of creative talent offers a unique profile which benefits creative arts development, economic prosperity and tourism potential to the area. We know that visitors increasingly want unique experiences specific to the cultural identity of a place, with the opportunity to meet the maker, and indulge their own passions by learning

a new skill. We see this event and experiences linking to the inspirers for the Embrace A Giant Spirit Brand and awaken the Giant Spirit in visitors by sparking creative and artistic responses, and encouraging them to add new skills. In February/March 2022, we are proposing a Meet the Makers Craft Fest where participating artists will work together to create a programme of events for the visitor to access open studios for workshops and tuition. The extended nature of the festival, spanning several weekends will provide opportunities for visitors to access the programme of events more than once. These activities may also be enhanced by partnering with local suppliers to include a food element to be and accommodation providers to offer residential packages. The legacy of this festival will be the creation of a Meet the Maker Trail for visitors to plan self-guided experiences in the future.

#### The Great Outdoors of Causeway Coast and Glens showcase month: March 2022

In March 2022, Causeway Coast & Glens will host a festival of events to showcase outdoor activities on land and sea to encourage visitors to experience the area as never before. The adventure programme on offer will provide additional reasons to visit, enhance the visitor experiences and encourage increased visitor spend. Every weekend there will be a range of events and experiences to enjoy across the Borough. These collaborative experiences will be provided by a minimum of 20 providers in the area and will allow for visitors to choose a combination of activities with a range of accommodation options available. A key feature of the programme will be highlighting the accessibility of walking routes in the Causeway Coast and Glens for walkers of all abilities. New guided walks will be hosted by recognised walking guides, helping to disperse the visitors off the beaten tracks and create memorable experiences. Food will also be interwoven into these outdoor experiences through breakfasts, brunches, picnics on the move and camp cooking, as well as another iteration of the Dining in Unusual Places with Taste Causeway and Burrenmore Nest.

The Causeway Coast and Glens Great Outdoors Showcase will be used as a season launcher, highlighting the scale of opportunities in the destination to engage with the outdoors, at a number of different levels and abilities. This festival is designed to throw a spotlight on the extent of the outdoor offering across the destination and to identify, support and include new collaborative partnerships from not just outdoor activities, but also among food, accommodation, cultural and transport providers. These new collaborative experiences and events will be designed to offer compelling reasons for visitors to stay and enjoy what the Causeway Coast and Glens throughout the year and particularly out of season.

The programme is built around the findings of Tourism NI's research and insights, noting that the key motivators to visit Northern Ireland are

escapism and getting away from it all with food and drink as key elements in the experience. The programme will be aligned to the segments identified and the visitors needs will be met through the connection with the great outdoors and natural environment, with the importance of good food and drink offerings throughout.

This programme has been carefully collated to deliver not just a recovery in the short term but to build a lasting legacy across the Destination and is a stepping stone for future growth from markets beyond Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

The programme will also address key objectives of the Destination Management plan. Day trips will become overnights with the associated increase in spend by providing compelling reasons to the visitor to extend their stay and explore more of the region. The addition of new experiences and events will encourage first time visitors to the area who are likely to become repeat visitors. The proposed programme of events will address the evening, weekend and midweek economy with many of the events, experiences taking place during this time.

Council Officers have secured maximum funding of £293,000 through the TNI Market Led Product Development Programme (100% funding). Details of estimated costs per activity

<b>Project</b>	<b>Estimated costs</b>
Slow Food in the Causeway Coast and Glens	£83,000.00
Atlantic Sessions – Inside Out	£73,000.00
Traditional Music Trail, Ballycastle	£25,000.00
Craft Trail Creative designers and makers trail of the Causeway Coast and Glens	£25,000.00
The Great Outdoors of Causeway Coast and Glens showcase	£87,000.00

Due for completion by 31 March 2022, this funding will support those businesses recover from the devastating impact of Covid.

**It is recommended** that the Leisure and Development Committee notes the report.

## 19. NI 100 WORKING GROUP

For information report, previously circulated presented by The Director of Leisure and Development .

### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a record of the agreed note from Council's NI100 Working Group meeting held on the 26th August 2021.

**It is recommended** that the Leisure and Development Committee notes the report.

## 20. COMMUNITY AND CULTURE ANNUAL REPORT

For information report, previously circulated presented by The Director of Leisure and Development .

### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present the annual report based on Outline Business Plans provided to the committee in August 2020 and subsequently approved by Council. The approach to 20/21 business plans were presented within the context of the Covid 19 Pandemic.

### Overall approach to service provision 20/21

As Council entered the 'first' recovery period, the fundamental principles regarding the continuation of existing services, opening of facilities and the initiation of projects / programmes / events were the prioritisation of key services within the context of the affordability of the 20/21 Revenue Budget.

Income loss as a direct consequence of the UK Government Guidance, applied by the NI Executive in order to inhibit the transfer of Covid 19, Cultural services income generating services and programmes had been curtailed since the later weeks of March 2020.

Cost mitigation savings to offset the lost income were therefore derived from:

- Furloughed permanent staff.
- Furloughed agency staff.
- Utilities cost reduction as a consequence of closing facilities (albeit essential maintenance continued).
- Minimal additional staff costs resulting from mileage, expenses and overtime.
- Programmes and activities.
- Supplies and services.
- NI Executive Covid 19 Support from DfC.

### The Financial Approach During Covid 19 Recovery

The Council agreed the net budget position for each directorate and service area remained as the 20/21 annual target budgetary position.

Financial analysis and planning was put in place to accurately understand the net budgetary shortfall by service area, Tier 4 Service Area and programme, project and activity. Monthly income shortfall through

management account analysis was undertaken as well as putting in place proactive cost mitigation planning and controls.

*Period 12 accounts for Community & Culture demonstrated the following end of year position for the 2020/21 period.*

Net budget £1,684,876

Net expenditure £1,131,851

+ end year variance £ 553,025 (breakdown previously circulated)

#### Business Plan Priorities at Directorate Level

The reinstatement of services, activities and programmes agreed by council were based upon prioritised recovery themes. In terms of Community and Culture, the following agreed directorate priority areas were relevant:

The Social welfare of the citizens of the Borough, particularly:

- Community Development initiatives, especially in areas of social deprivation.
- Community support activities, utilising central government statutory programmes and funding.

The health and wellbeing of the citizens of the Borough, specifically:

- Activities which contributed to the physical and mental wellbeing of the citizens of the Borough. A focus was on 'high risk' individuals / communities, working on assumptions that minimal additional costs should be incurred, and partnership projects would be prioritised.

Recovery Planning:

- The financial and practical planning necessary to allow for the considered reinstate of facilities and activities based upon affordability and the functions to allow safe public use.

#### Community & Culture Recovery and Outline Business Plan

Mindful of the consequences and impacts of COVID 19 both at a regional and local level within each component service, coupled with the direction that affordability being the overriding principle in terms of service provision in the short to medium term, the following specific priorities applied for Community & Culture:

- Combatting social isolation, promoting health & wellbeing and strengthening the social fabric through the community development, arts and museums service areas.
- Addressing increased issues of Community & Personal Safety through the Policing & Community safety Partnership.
- Supporting the economic recovery of the creative sector through cultural services activity.
- Delivery of Good Relations statutory duty and associated funded programmes.



- Completion of contracted ‘funded’ programmes and progression of Council prioritised programmes such as Peace IV, Heritage Lottery projects etc – including facilitation of Council’s Centenary NI100 programme, Recovery planning to enable the safe opening of museums and arts centre facilities and programming to the public.

### Performance Attainment

The Business Plan contains circa 130 operational key performance indicators/targets designed to measure achievement against the service level and directorate CV19 recovery priorities. Annex A provides additional detail in terms of achievement of these operational targets at year end.

The information below, however, demonstrates the overall achievement of performance indicators, which reflect the main efforts for each service areas within Community & Culture and their achievement against annual targets. Targets in most cases well exceeded those within the business plan, due in the main to:

- Service users/customers taking advantage/accessing on line/digital services including workshops, live performances, educational resources etc during the lockdown periods.
- Additional resources from government departments, specifically DfC, mobilizing cross sectoral action/responses to support vulnerable and socially isolated individuals.
- Flexible and adaptive approaches from funding departments and council in terms of reallocation of budgets to address needs of target users.
- Innovative approaches and responses from staff teams to ensure service provision remained accessible and relevant to the customer.

### Museum Services

Annual performance indicators achievement = 85%

*Comprised of participant numbers, accreditation, collections management & care, events/activities, groups & heritage practitioners supported, digital resources accessed.*

### Arts Service

Annual performance indicators achievement = 346%\*

*\* unanticipated uptake of online workshops, events, performances, both locally and internationally – adapted delivery due to Covid 19.*

*Comprised of participant numbers, volunteer numbers & hours, accreditation, events/activities, groups & arts practitioners supported, digital resources and activities accessed, subscribers.*

### Community Development

Annual performance indicators achievement = 107%

*Comprised of participant numbers, volunteer numbers & hours, events/activities, groups supported, collaborative projects, grants awarded, research, benefit enquiries, satisfaction levels re. service etc.*

Additional income secured in Borough through benefits and successful appeals (through CAC contract) = £ 16,245,796 (162% target attained).

#### Policing & Community Safety Partnership

Annual performance indicators achievement = 123%\*

*\*projects that were not able to be delivered due to the pandemic have been removed from the monitoring returns – resources were redirected to alternative, deliverable projects.*

*Comprised of participant numbers, events/activities, community safety projects delivered, consultations & engagement to contribute to local policing priorities, PR campaigns, support to the PCSP function and members.*

#### Good Relations

Annual performance indicators achievement = 110%\*

*Comprised of participant numbers, events/activities that promote good relations at a local level, groups & schools supported and engaged, digital resources developed for educational and awareness raising.*

#### Community & Culture composite 'headline' performance indicators (previously circulated)

Additional unanticipated performance attainments (COVID 19 response and recovery):

- **4 grant programmes** administered (Warm Well & Connected, Food & Essential Supplies, Covid-19 Community Support Fund (3 strands) & Foodbank Support).
- **£557,432 awarded in 227 grant awards** to C&V organisations for food, fuel and connectivity projects.
- **1 Anti-poverty Action Plan produced** following engagement with stakeholders and wider CVS. One collaborative project undertaken.
- **Wraparound Support Project Target of 122 people** who receive foodbank services to be referred to and receive other linked supports (advice services including debt advice, benefits checks etc. and social supermarket).

**It is recommended** that the Leisure and Development Committee Committee notes the report.

## **21. PROSPERITY AND PLACE ANNUAL REPORT**

For information report, previously circulated, was presented by The Director of Leisure and Development.

## Purpose of Report

This annual report reflects the main activities carried out by Prosperity and Place in the 2020/21 financial year (i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021).

As the Covid-19 pandemic continued throughout the year, the Prosperity and Place team had to react to the effect it was having on the economy in the Borough. This was done by diverting some staff and budgets to provide extra support services to businesses, as well as rolling out the DfC and DAERA Covid Recovery Grant programmes. There was also a significant increase in applications to existing grant programmes delivered by the team.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the majority of the projects within the Prosperity and Place Business Plan were delivered and their targets met; however, those that were put on hold, or targets not achieved, were due to the increased staff workload, coupled with the pandemic restrictions in place at various times during the year. This made it difficult to organise events, training and face to face meetings.

## Service Area Summaries

A summary of each Service Area is listed below with full details at Annex A.

### Business Development

- 335 FT and 56 PT jobs created to date. Includes some rolling project targets (target for year 125 jobs).
- 4,292 businesses engaged with via social media and the business support e-zine (target for year 1000).
- 136 business support e-zines issued during the financial year. Significant increase due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the need to get information to businesses about restrictions and government financial assistance. In April 2020 alone 28 e-zines were issued.
- The 3.5year Alchemy Growth programme finished 6 months ahead of schedule in December 2020. During the financial year 364 businesses were supported under the EU funded Alchemy Growth programme, 77 of which were mentored, and 287 businesses received call backs within 24 hours with 1-2 hours of advice tailored for their business about business survival and recovery during the Covid-19 pandemic. A further 56 businesses were mentored under the Council funded Alchemy Lite programme.
- Business Start – 133 jobs created via business plan approvals (target for year was 125 jobs). Numbers were dramatically hit in April and May 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic but there has been a strong recovery since then. All programme delivery during the past year was virtual.

- Exploring Enterprise – Due to the Covid-19 pandemic there was a delay in commencing the programme. Most of the programme delivery was completed in the last 6 months of the financial year. Consequently, the programme targets originally set were not met, apart from the number of participants who went onto employment or self-employment. The cost of programme delivery was reduced to reflect the actual number of courses delivered.
- Learn to Earn – This is a 4-year programme. The Covid-19 pandemic impacted on the number of starts during the year and some elements of the programme were difficult to deliver remotely. Programme targets reduced to reflect the circumstances.
- Rural Business Development Grant Scheme (DAERA monies) – 159 applications received. Significant increase on last year. This year DAERA permitted businesses to apply for Covid related materials for their business. 46 applications successful. DAERA increased budget from £62,000 to £158,021.27 to enable successful applicants to receive funding.
- Enterprise Fund – 39 applications received and scored. 12 businesses funded totalling £97,514.93, following increased allocation by Council, due to the volume of applications received. Original budget was £50,150.
- Digital Youth Programme – targets exceeded. 8 schools and 1,228 pupils participated (target was 7 schools & 350 pupils).
- Digital Causeway Programme – this is a 3-year programme and programme delivery continued throughout the year.
- Taste Causeway – Due to the pandemic it was identified that additional crisis support was required for members and the wider hospitality/tourism sector, who didn't qualify for Taste Causeway membership. Support was in the form of 1 to 1 mentoring to businesses, dissemination of information on grants etc., signposting, liaising with relevant stakeholders, increase the activity on the Taste Causeway e-shop, a dedicated What's App group for the hospitality sector with approx. 97 business including Taste Causeway members.  
Positives from the pandemic: an increase in Taste Causeway membership, businesses set up successful online and delivery services, new orders and partnerships secured, businesses seeing uplift through the Taste Causeway e-shop sales. Taste Causeway and NWRC also developed a 'Safe & Alert Accreditation' for the hospitality sector. Over 70 businesses completed the training and received a level 2 qualification.
- The Business Support Team did not hold face to face business events due to the Covid-19 restrictions, however events were moved online, and specific content and presentations were developed and presented through YouTube and other media.

- Assisted DFE carry out business checks when required on businesses in the borough who had applied for Covid-19 related grants.
- New economic development strategy complete and agreed by Council.

### Town & Village Management

- Town & Village Management staff along with the Regeneration staff rolled out tranche 1 of the DFC & DAERA Town/Village Covid-19 Recovery Revitalisation Grant Programme. Successfully completed. 548 applications were received from businesses in total, of which 487 received a letter of offer of a grant. Total letter of offers issued was £447,374.25.
- Causeway Speciality Market - Due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, coupled with poor weather conditions, only 7 markets were held during the year, however, new trader requests continued to grow.
- Coleraine BID – project continued to operate although their town events were affected by the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions.

Causeway Coast & Glens Gift Card – 631 gift cards were sold in the financial year (target was 500). 195 businesses registered on the scheme (target was 180). Covid-19 pandemic restrictions has impacted on the redemption of the gift Cards

- Retail Development Programme – delivered to 92 people (target was 40).
- Town centre promotion work to mainly support events across the borough was impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. Instead, concentrated on promoting the 'Shop, Eat & Enjoy Local' brand which was developed.
- Dungiven lamp post banner project completed. Ballymoney and Coleraine projects delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions.
- No face-to-face meetings held with stakeholders, all moved online where possible.
- All training and workshops for traders suspended due to the Covid-19 restrictions but any relevant issues and signposting communicated online.

### Strategic Projects

- Growth Deal – work ongoing. 6 Growth Deal themes and 28 projects identified. Independent prioritization exercise completed by Grant Thornton with 14 projects being carried forward to SoC stage.

- Workforce Development Forum (WDF) – The priority during the year was to specifically support DfE and DfC led Covid-19 employment support packages. Funding transferred to support additional advice services. 6 workforce related initiatives supported. WDF currently engaging with DfC to set up a new Labour Market Partnership for the Borough.
- Continuation of roll out of full fibre network implementation across NI by preferred bidder Fibrus. Council's rural and urban sites to be upgraded.
- Sale of Dunluce Centre – 6 proposals received and being considered by Council.
- Digital strategy completed in November 2020.
- Girona project at phase 2 of Invest NI's Collaborative Growth Programme and officially launched in October 2020.
- Atlantic Link Enterprise Campus – Ongoing promotion of ALEC. Due to unstable market conditions as a result of Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic, the development brief deadline for prospective tenants is now open ended.
- Foreign Direct Investment – parked in the current economic environment. Will be revisited in the next financial year.

#### Physical Regeneration

- Staff assisted Town & Village Management team with the roll out of the DFE & DAERA Town & Village Covid-19 Recovery Revitalisation Grant Programme.
- Portrush Regeneration Programme – Impact Study completed.
- Revitalise Shop Front Scheme – projects paused due to the Covid-19 pandemic and staff diverted to assist with the roll out of the DFE & DAERA town centres/villages Covid-19 funding.
- Village Renewal Projects – Ongoing. 22 village plans completed of which 20 villages progressing with capital plans. Capital projects across 17 villages completed to date.
- Bushmills Branding Project – completed. Brand/logo designed and approved. 5 branded signage points installed. 3 branded wall art installations installed. Bushmills web page launched and branded promotional materials distributed.

Councillor Callan referred felt that there could have been a more proactive approach with regards to the Enterprise Zone, suggesting there was a lack of focus given to the project. Councillor Callan suggested that there was work to do in lobbying for extended tax benefits. The Director advised that the report was for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

**It is recommended** that the Leisure and Development Committee Committee notes the report.

## 22. TOURISM AND RECREATION ANNUAL REPORT

For information report, previously circulated, was presented by the Director of Leisure and Development.

### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present on the Tourism and Recreation Business Plan, presented to the Leisure and Development Committee in August 2020. The Tourism and Recreation Business Plan was adjusted for this period to account for the unprecedented circumstances that resulted from the COVID 19 Pandemic.

### Background

Much of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council's activities were restricted after the initial lockdown period was implemented from March 2020 to July 2020. Immediate adjustments were made in the delivery of the Tourism and Recreation Business Plans to account for immediate priorities presented by issues relating to the operation of Holiday and Leisure Parks, the impact on the visitor economy, the cancellation of the Tourism Event programme and the unprecedented numbers of day visitors and staycations in the Causeway Coast and Glens area.

### Staffing

During the initial lockdown there was a significant number of staff from the Tourism and Recreation Team furloughed from front line posts in event management and visitor servicing provision. In addition, agency staff were furloughed across most service areas.

### Facilities

Facilities were 'moth-balled' in advance of relaxation of restrictions, and only minimum maintenance activities carried out.

Holiday and Leisure Parks reopened with a limited service from mid-June 2020.

There was a limited opening of Visitor Information Centres in Portrush, Bushmills and Ballycastle from June 2020.

Facilities that generated income for the visitor economy benefited from DfC COVID19 support grant.

### Budget

At the close of the financial year 2020/21, Period 12 accounts for Tourism and Recreation showed:

Net Budget                      £1,652,719

Net Expenditure £652,309

There was a positive end of year variance of £1,000,410

As detailed above the main reasons for the positive variance were due to the cancellation of the Tourism Events programme of events, staff furloughed, Destination marketing activities reduced, the impact on the visitor economy and operational remits halted.

Table 1 (previously circulated) below shows an overview of the year end position for the Tourism and Recreation services. Please note it does not take into account any audit adjustments

**It is recommended** that the Leisure and Development Committee Committee notes the report.

## 23. FUNDING UNIT ANNUAL REPORT

For information report, previously circulated presented by The Director of Leisure and Development .

### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to review the performance of Council's Funding Unit for the period 2020-2021.

### Background

The Funding Unit was established in 2015. The strategic function of the Unit is to provide funding support services.

The Service has 4 Strategic Aims as outlined in the Business Case each year:

- i. **Securing Funding:** To secure increased levels of funding to support Council's priorities, strategies and business plans.
- ii. **Business Support for EU & UK Funding Programmes:** To provide business support for EU and UK funding Programmes and Projects.
- iii. **External Engagement:** To develop and manage external working relationships and to support organisations in sourcing funding.
- iv. **Management & Administration of Council's Grant Funding:** Corporate management & administration of Council's Grant Funding programmes

### Progress against Business Plan

#### Strategic Aim 1: Securing Funding

To secure increased levels of funding to support Council's priorities, strategies and business plans.



In the 2020/21 period the Funding Unit have worked on 11 external applications; 8 projects were successful in securing a combined total of £916,929.54. (Annex 1)

- £156,252.94 match funding was required from Council.
- For every pound of funding supplied by Council £5.87 of external funding has been received.

#### Strategic Aim 2: Business Support for EU & UK Funding Programmes

To provide business support for EU and UK funding Programmes and Projects:

- Claim processing for external grant applications.
- Equality data capture.
- Business support services for EU funding programmes were not required in the 2020/21 financial period.

#### Strategic Aim 3: External Engagement

To develop and manage external working relationships and to support organisations in sourcing funding.

- In the 2020/21 period the Funding Unit worked on one external partnership projects (Ballycastle Shared Campus Project).
- 30 Community Organisations supported in funding searches.
- 3 external community organisations supported in major (over £30k) grant applications.
- 7 x Funding Roadshows held.

#### Strategic Aim 4: Corporate Management & Administration of Council's Grant Funding Programmes.

In the 2020-21 Grant Funding Period the funding Unit administered 19 Grant programmes, including the COVID-19 grant programmes which had multiple strands:

- 19 grant programmes developed and delivered (guidance notes, application forms, assessment forms, monitoring forms, claims forms developed).
- 1,355 applications totalling £3,362,609.42 were received and processed.
- 1,329 eligibility checks undertaken (compliance & governance - constitutions checked and verified; accounts checked).
- 1,247 applications assessed.
- 1,054 applications successful.
- 275 ineligible or unsuccessful applications received feedback.
- 1054 letters of Offer issued totalling £1,828,139.

- 1046 payments processed.
- £1,299,513 worth of expenditure vouched & paid.

Councillor Nicholl welcomed the grant income secured by the Funding Unit Manager and her team in bringing in such high levels of funding. The Funding Unit Manger advised that there were further monies since reporting which added to the figure achieved.

Councillor Callan concurred with Councillor Nicholl's remarks.

**It is recommended** that the Leisure and Development Committee Committee notes the report.

#### 24. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence to report.

#### 25. MATTERS REPORTING TO THE PARTNERSHIP PANEL

There are no matters to report to the Partnership Panel.

#### 26. CONSULTATIONS

There were no consultations to report.

#### **MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN COMMITTEE'**

Proposed by Alderman Duddy  
Seconded by Councillor Anderson

**AGREED** – to recommend that Council move, '*In Committee*'.

\* **Press and Public were disconnected from the meeting at 10:55pm**

***The information contained in the following item is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014***

The Chair read the following statement:

*Members, I would remind you that this session is being audio recorded in line with Council's guidance. You are reminded that there should be no other persons present who are not entitled to be - either hearing or seeing consideration of such items, and/or recording the proceedings. Failure to comply could be in breach of Code of Conduct responsibilities. You are*

*reminded that you are personally responsible for any comments that you make.*

## **27. SALE OF THE DUNLUCE CENTRE**

Confidential report, previously circulated, was presented by The Director of Leisure and Development.

### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this paper is to recommend that Council accepts (preferred bidder) financial bid of £1.21m and his proposal for the development of a Family Entertainment Centre at the Dunluce Centre.

### Background

As per the Dunluce Development Brief (see Annex A), the key objective in the sale of the Dunluce Centre is to:

*'Secure quality development that brings this vacant site into viable and Sustainable economic use, with the appropriate tourism / leisure development schemes that are in accordance with the council's vision and area plan; thus, supporting prosperity, economic development and job creation within a satisfactory time frame. In addition, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is required to ensure that it secures a sound Financial return in any asset release'.*

Full Council met on the 4th of May 2021 to discuss both the Development Brief process and the sale of the Dunluce Centre in Portrush to the 'preferred bidder'. At the Full Council meeting, the motion was passed that Council was prepared to proceed with the sale of the existing site using a development brief; however no additional lands were to be made available beyond the existing Dunluce Centre site.

### Family Entertainment Centre – Revised Offering

In light of this recommendation, and subject to no 'substantial changes' to The various elements of the original proposal, the preferred bidder was asked to reconsider their proposal without the additional lands. Council engaged professional and independent advice and guidance to assist with the revised offering.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021 Elected Members met with the preferred bidder and his team to gain further insight into the details of the proposal and to assess potential risks to delivery. The preferred bidder gave a presentation of the proposal which was followed by an in-depth Q&A session to understand the preferred bidders plans for the site.

The preferred bidder's plans for the site are to develop an all-year round superior 'Family Entertainment Centre'. See Annex B, previously circulated for further details. In summary, the preferred bidder proposes to:

- Establish a superior 'Family Entertainment Centre' – to include indoor/outdoor rides; kids amusements area; soft play area; mini-golf; food court; and amusements;
- Provide an all-year round offering with night time leisure activities;
- Create 35 FTE, 20 PTE permanent jobs, 20 additional seasonal jobs, 45 construction jobs, with £1,800,000 per annum in salaries by Year Three;
- Superior Family Entertainment Centre to be operational by Q2/Q3 2023.
- Purchase the existing site for £1,210,000 (One million, two hundred and ten thousand pounds);
- Total investment of £5m by the preferred bidder.

Key discussion points raised by Elected Members at the information session were as follows:

- *Experience of team in delivering family entertainment offerings;*
- *Clarification on 'evolving nature' of the business;*
- *Impact of the proposal on the night time economy;*
- *Clarification on the mix of family entertainment activities;*
- *Sustainability of project for the investor;*
- *Space requirements needed for the business to operate adequately;*
- *Breakdown of estimated 200k visitors and average spend per visitor; and*
- *How will the proposal cater for those families most economically deprived.*

In addition, the Evaluation Panel reconvened to consider the revised offering and were also content, in line with the legal advice, that there were no 'substantial changes' to the various elements of the original proposal.

The preferred bidder is aware that freehold title for the site will not be released until Council is satisfied all contractual obligations for sale have been met.

Council will work in collaboration with the preferred bidder to clearly establish and outline what additional contractual obligations will be introduced in relation to the Development Brief.

### Options

- *Option 1* – Preferred bidder is permitted to proceed with the purchase of the Dunluce Centre only; generating £1.21m for Council in the sale of the site.
- *Option 2* – Do not proceed with the development brief process of the site to the preferred bidder.

### Recommendation

It is recommended that Council approves:

*Option 1* and accepts financial bid of £1.21m and his proposal for the development of a Family Entertainment Centre at the Dunluce Centre subject to due legal process being completed for the transfer of title and any legal covenants concerning the development of the site.

#### Substantive Proposal

Proposed by Councillor Nicholl

Seconded by Councillor C McShane

To recommend to Council *Option 1* and accepts financial bid of £1.21m and his proposal for the development of a Family Entertainment Centre at the Dunluce Centre subject to due legal process being completed for the transfer of title and any legal covenants concerning the development of the site.

Alderman Hillis referred to the workshop facilitated for elected members which was attended by the proposed developer which he felt had been professional and was enlightening but felt that there were other options to explore, suggesting Causeway Coast and Glens do not accept the bid at time.

#### Amendment

Proposed by Alderman Hillis

Seconded by Alderman Baird

To recommend that Council do not accept bid and re-issue for tender for third time to explore more imaginative ideas if possible.

Alderman Baird referred to the huge effort of staff involved but felt that given the post pandemic economic situation Council should take to tender once more. Alderman Baird suggested that the developer did not meet all criteria in the development brief.

**\*Councillor McCaw joined the meeting during discussion of this item at 11.10 pm**

The Director of Leisure and Development confirmed that the developer did meet all aspects of the development brief.

The Director of Leisure and Development further confirmed that in terms of research Council is not investing or taking a risk – the preferred bidder is investing their own monies into the purchase entirely at their own risk and Council is completely safeguarded legally.

Councillor McCaw suggested that the site be leased as opposed to selling it and concurred with Alderman Hillis's amendment.

Alderman Baird confirmed she was referring to the presentation made by the developer which evidenced to her that there was a demonstration of lack of experience of provision of family entertainment speaking of the risk Alderman Baird suggested that if Council made the wrong decision one of the main seaside towns could be adversely impacted.

At the request of Councillor Callan the Chair declared a recess in advance of the vote.

**\*The Chair called a recess at 11.15 pm**

**\*The meeting resumed at 11.25 pm**

Alderman Hillis requested a Recorded Vote.

The Chair put the substantive proposal to the Committee to vote.  
4 Members voted for; 4 members voted against; 6 members abstained.  
The Chair used his casting vote Abstained

The Chair confirmed that the matter would go before full Council for consideration.

Recorded Vote Table

For (4)	Councillor Bateson, C McShane, Schenning, Nicholl
Against (4)	Alderman Baird, Hillis Councillor MA McKillop, McCaw
Abstain (6)	Alderman Duddy, Knight-McQuillan Councillor Callan, Anderson, McAuley, Watton

**MOTION TO PROCEED 'IN PUBLIC'**

Proposed by Alderman Duddy  
Seconded by Councillor Anderson and

**AGREED** – to recommend that Council move '*In Public*'.

There being no further business the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 11.30pm

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Chair

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UNCONFIRMED