

Title of Report:	DfC Social Supermarket Support Fund
Committee Report Submitted To:	Leisure & Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	17 September 2024
For Decision or For Information	For Decision
To be discussed In Committee	NO

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Healthy, Active & Engaged Communities
Outcome	The Borough comprises cohesive and stable communities which work collaboratively with a range of stakeholders to address issues and deliver on opportunities
Lead Officer	Head of Community & Culture; Community Development Manager

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	n/a 100% external funding
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES/NO
Capital/Revenue	
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Legal Considerations	
Input of Legal Services Required	NO
Legal Opinion Obtained	NO

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	<u>Yes/No</u>	Date: 6/11/23
	EQIA Required and Completed:	<u>Yes/No</u>	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	<u>Yes/No</u>	Date: 10/11/23
	RNA Required and Completed:	<u>Yes/No</u>	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	<u>Yes/No</u>	Date: 10/11/23
	DPIA Required and Completed:	<u>Yes/No</u>	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for spend of Social Supermarket Support Fund monies received from the Department for Communities (DfC) for 2024-25.

2.0 Background

The Department for Communities has operated a Social Supermarket (SSM) Pilot Programme since October 2017, directly funding 5 pilot social supermarkets, one of which is operated by Vineyard Compassion in Coleraine. A second social supermarket was established by Limavady Community Development Initiative during the early stages of the Covid pandemic, which did not receive the DfC pilot funding.

The aim of the social supermarket model is to offer a longer term and sustainable response to food insecurity rather than the short-term crisis food provision that foodbanks provide. It is a membership programme where members who are struggling financially and meet certain criteria, pay a weekly membership subscription to shop a reduced cost food shop for a set period of time (usually 3-6 months) alongside engaging in wraparound support including advice on debt, budgeting, benefits advice, healthy eating, training and employability skills. A tailored support plan is put in place for each member following an initial assessment of their needs.

Following a positive evaluation of the pilot programme DfC has extended the Social Supermarket Support Fund (SSMSF) programme to all of NI, to be delivered through Councils. Councils have been tasked to identify appropriate social supermarket models for their areas. The programme is funded through the Departments Welfare Reform mitigations budget and there is no assurance of the continued availability of this funding, particularly in the absence of a N Ireland Anti-Poverty Strategy that could provide a framework for this support.

Council contracted Ulster University to undertake a Scoping Study to look at how to extend the existing social supermarket provision in Causeway Coast and Glens. Completed in September 2022, the report highlighted the challenges of service provision in terms of accessibility and transport for an expansive geography that includes large rural areas. The report also emphasised that while the food aid is important, the wraparound advice offered is at least equally as important as the original food aid. Hence the challenge of extending social supermarket provision across the borough is not just about food collection or delivery, but also the crucial face to face wraparound support.

Demand has increased greatly since the pilot scheme started and the costs of delivery have increased accordingly, although the allocation from DfC for the pilot has not increased since 2017. For the past 2 years, Council provided funding from the DfC SSMSF to Vineyard Compassion, as the DfC recognised provider, to work with the other Social Supermarket provider LCDI, to help sustain and develop the Social Supermarket services within the Borough.

The demand for the services of both the current providers exceeds their current capacity and both operate waiting lists, meaning that they are unable to meet the cost and time involved in providing one to one support on an outreach basis across the whole of Causeway Coast and Glens, without significant additional long term funding, and as a result this has created gaps where there isn't coverage due to the distance to travel to access either of the existing services.

In September 2023 Council agreed to invite expressions of interest from organisations that might be interested in exploring and setting up a social supermarket model to cover the areas where gaps were identified i.e. The Glens DEA and lower Ballymoney DEA (Rasharkin, Cloughmills and Dunloy). Responses were received from 3 organisations in The Glens DEA -

St Vincent DePaul Cushendall/ Glenariff/ Cushendun, Ballycastle Community Hub and Ballycastle Foodbank. No responses were received for the areas in the Ballymoney DEA.

3.0 Current Position

Council has received an offer of funding of **£97,028** for 2024-25 from DfC for the Social Supermarket Support Programme provided through the annual District Councils Community Support Programme. This is a 64.25% increase in funding from the award of £57,073 received in 2023-24.

Council officers have reviewed the catchment area of the 2 current providers on a DEA basis. Vineyard Compassion's current catchment is the DEAs of Coleraine, Bann, Causeway and Ballymoney. Residents from the lower Ballymoney DEA have availed of the Reset social supermarket operated by Vineyard although travel distance, time and cost need to be factored into the individual support plans that are put in place for these members. LCDI has a catchment of Limavady and Benbradagh DEAs.

Officers have supported St Vincent DePaul Cushendall to explore the social supermarket model and they are currently establishing a social supermarket to be based in Cushendall that will cover the lower half of The Glens DEA.

Initial discussions took place with the 2 organisations that expressed an interest in Ballycastle but these have not progressed further, due to various issues, although Ballycastle Community Hub has been offering a reduced cost food shop. Discussions will continue about what one social supermarket that fulfils the DfC criteria might look like for the Ballycastle area and who might be involved in delivering both the food element and the wraparound support elements.

It is proposed that the DfC SSMSF monies provided to Council this year are allocated on a DEA basis to the current providers with weighting given to income-based deprivation. A breakdown of the proposed allocations is attached in **Annex A**. It is proposed that the funding is awarded as Direct Award Contracts for the following reasons:

- Vineyard Compassion currently has a funding arrangement with DfC for the SSMSF initial pilot funding; the award through Council would cover the additional costs of delivery (DfC funding has not increased since 2017) and additional households to accommodate the increased demand for the service. In addition, they are the only provider in the areas that they cover.
- LCDI is the only provider of a social supermarket service that fulfils the DfC criteria which covers the Limavady and Benbradagh DEAs.
- St Vincent DePaul Cushendall/ Glenariff/ Cushendun were the only organisation that submitted an Expression of Interest to cover these areas. They currently deliver emergency food support and have a plan in place to develop this into a social supermarket programme linking with other delivery partners in the area including Community Advice Causeway and Inspire.

Targets: based on the current demand for Vineyard SSM it is estimated that they will support 120 households this year (an increase of 30 from DfC initial target) The amount of DfC funding has remained at the same level since 2017 while the demand and need has increased as have the energy costs of operating the storage facility with fridges and freezers. The provider needs additional funding to deal with this demand. The equivalent number of households participating in the LCDI social supermarket project is 60 and LCDI do not receive any of the pilot funding directly from DfC for the SSM. An initial target of 30 households has been agreed with SVP Cushendall and the potential provision in Ballycastle will be kept under review.

Timescale: it is proposed that Council proceeds with this approach for 2024-25, with the possibility of extending the approach for a further 48 months dependent on funding availability. There is no requirement from DfC for Council to match the funding.

4.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that approval is sought for the following:

Allocate the DfC Social Supermarket Support Programme funding of £97,028 to Vineyard Compassion, Limavady Community Development Initiative and St Vincent DePaul Cushendall as outlined in **Annex A** and hold a portion of the allocation for the Ballycastle area pending the outcome of the discussions with the organisations that submitted an Expression of Interest.

Annex A: Proposed allocation of DfC Social Supermarket Support Programme funding

Organisation	DEAs in catchment	% of CCG covered based on number of households weighted by Income deprivation	£ based on number of households weighted by Income deprivation
Limavady Community Development Initiative (LCDI)	Limavady, Benbradagh	26.29%	<u>£40,844</u>
Vineyard Compassion (Reset Social Supermarket) minus £58,331 DfC direct pilot funding	Coleraine, Causeway, Bann, Ballymoney	60.01%	£93,231 -£58,331 = <u>£34,900</u>
Organisations that submitted an EOI for The Glens - SVP Cushendall - Allocation for Ballycastle pending outcome of discussions with organisations that submitted an EOI	The Glens	13.70%	(£21,284) <u>£10,642</u> <u>£10,642</u>

Annex B: Weighting per DEA based on Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures (NIMDM) 2017 Income Domain Rank

District Electoral Area (DEA)	2015 Default Urban/Rural	Ward2014 name	Multiple Deprivation Measure Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	Income Domain Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	1-10%	11-25%	number of households in DEA (2021 Census)	% of households in CCG	no of wards in DEA	average no of households in one ward	average hoho in one ward x3 for every ward in 10%	average hoho in one ward x 2 for every ward in 11-25%	average hoho in one ward x 1 for every ward in 26%+	adjusted households weighted by Income deprivation (Total of M,N,O)	% of households in CCG after adjustment
					0-46	47-115									
Bann	Rural	Garvagh	159	39	1										
	Rural	Kilrea	250	131											
	Rural	Aghadowey	238	129											
	Rural	Macosquin	211	99		1									
	Mixed urban/ru	Castlerock	270	118											
							6,740	11.71%	5	1,348	4,044	2,696	4,044	10,784	11.91%
Causeway	Rural	Giant's Causeway	88	23	1										
	Rural	Dervock	193	132											
	Mixed urban/ru	Dundooan	307	197											
	Mixed urban/ru	Portrush and Dun	97	62		1									
	Urban	Hopefield	330	192											
	Urban	Atlantic	227	214											
	Urban	Portstewart	357	319											
							10,712	18.60%	7	1,530	4,591	3,061	7,651	15,303	16.90%
Ballymoney	Urban	Ballymoney East	89	89		1									
	Urban	Ballymoney North	246	185											
	Urban	Ballymoney South	164	202											
	Mixed urban/ru	Route	296	262											
	Rural	Dunloy	320	335											
	Rural	Clogh Mills	279	211											
	Rural	Rasharkin	278	233											
							9,756	16.94%	7	1,394		2,787	8,362	11,150	12.31%
The Glens	Rural	Lurigethan	304	240											
	Rural	Torr Head and Ra	174	96		1									
	Rural	Loughguile and St	268	241											
	Urban	Ballycastle	119	56		1									
	Mixed urban/ru	Kinbane	92	45		1									
							6,891	11.97%	5	1,378	4,135	5,513	2,756	12,404	13.70%
Benbradagh	Rural	Dungiven	95	43	1										
	Rural	Feeny	112	37	1										
	Mixed urban/ru	Altahullion	161	73		1									
	Rural	Ballykelly	171	150											
	Rural	Greysteel	162	124											
							6,639	11.53%	5	1,328	7,967	2,656	2,656	13,278	14.66%
Limavady	Rural	Magilligan	212	280											
	Mixed urban/ru	Drumsurn	217	109		1									
	Urban	Roeside	104	175											
	Urban	Coolessan	10	21		1									
	Urban	Greystone	234	239											
							6,582	11.43%	5	1,316	3,949	2,633	3,949	10,531	11.63%
Coleraine	Urban	University	121	102		1									
	Urban	Waterside	182	157											
	Urban	Quarry	27	22		1									
	Urban	Churchland	313	247											
	Urban	Mountsandel	85	84		1									
	Urban	Windy Hall	332	206											
							10,257	17.81%	6	1,710	5,129	6,838	5,129	17,095	18.88%
							57,577	100.00%						90,545	100.00%

