



Subject:	Social Supermarket Fund - Update
Date:	6 th December 2022
Reporting Officer:	David Sales, Director Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Kelly Gilliland, Neighbourhood Services Manager Margaret Higgins, Lead Officer – Community Provision

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

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

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	<p>Following P&C and Council approval in August/September 2022 to take forward the design and delivery of the Social Supermarket Fund (DfC allocation) in-year, officers have spent the intervening months liaising with area-based Strategic and Thematic partners to identify and then liaise with potential delivery partners, assessing capacity to deliver and to what level of resource and to seek their views on how the additional funding could best be used within their service delivery models whilst ensuring that the high level social supermarket principles set by DfC are met.</p> <p>The paper outlines officer recommendations following these meetings/ discussions and seeks member agreement for the proposed approach outlined for 22/23 allocation and delivery.</p>
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the outcomes of engagement and co-design processes undertaken with strategic and thematic partners in support of implementing the Social Supermarket Fund (SSF) 2022-23. • Note and agree the allocations to nominated area-based delivery partners (outlined in Appendix 1) following discussions with Strategic Partners. • Note and agree the allocations to nominated city centre and thematic-based delivery partners (also outlined in Appendix 1) following discussions with Thematic Partners. • Grant delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to enhance awards to delivery partners in-year (dependent on budget and capacity) in order to ensure in-year spend.
3.0	Main report
	<p>Background</p> <p><u>Social Supermarket Fund</u></p> <p>3.1 In September Council approved acceptance of £228,342.42 for delivery of a social supermarket fund (SSF) for 22/23 in the Belfast area. The social supermarket model aims to offer a sustainable response to food insecurity by seeking to help address the root causes of poverty rather than simply provide food. This is achieved through the provision of a referral network for wraparound support.</p> <p>3.2 The objective of administering this fund is to support the co-design of a social supermarket model in Belfast council area and in-year implementation of same. The Department for Communities have stated that they will also consider requests to support projects that meet the high-level social supermarket principles to enable actions to address food insecurity to be delivered in 2022/23.</p> <p>3.3 Members gave approval for officers to engage with existing Strategic and Thematic Partners to agree participating partners ensuring coverage for all areas. It was agreed that 60% of the overall allocation (£137,005) was to be made to area partners based on population and deprivation figures. A summary of the area allocations is provided in Appendix 1.</p> <p>3.4 The overall aim of the co-design process has been to support delivery by organisations who have the capacity to deliver a social supermarket model through enhancement of their existing service provision. In a small number of cases, for example where the area/partner financial allocation is relatively low, partners have stated that they wish to provide food vouchers to those in extreme need that they identify through other wrap around services they are already providing (as noted in 3.1 second paragraph DfC have confirmed they would be content with this).</p>

£91,336.97 was then allocated to support organisations who work with key communities across the city, on a thematic basis. However, follow up engagement with thematic partners has identified that most individuals who are members of communities of interest/Section 75 groups should be able to access provision on an area basis as part of the community in which they live.

3.5 Nonetheless, there was recognition that some people experience barriers in accessing services at an area level and that, for these individuals, ability to access a form of city centre-based provision might be beneficial. It was also noted that there are currently particular pressures meeting the needs of refugees and asylum seekers, and those with complex needs, in accessing food alongside wrap around service provision.

3.6 Two organisations have been identified as having a model that could be adapted to meet the Social Supermarket approach on a city centre basis to meet the needs of those identified above, namely:

- Storehouse – City centre based – long established foodbank (15 years) with a wide range of relevant partners who refer into their services including for example the Welcome Organisation, Extern, Womens Aid.
- Homeplus – University area – already provide support to refugees and asylum seekers and are seeking to extend their operations to enable weekend provision.

3.7 Making an equal allocation to each of these organisations would equate to an award of £45,668.48 which may prove challenging to spend within the financial year 22/23 (3 months remaining). It is therefore recommended that a maximum allocation of £21,000 is made to each of these two organisations.

3.8 Whilst other thematic partners have indicated they are not in a position to establish a social supermarket type model some have expressed an interest in using a smaller allocation to provide food vouchers to those in extreme need that they identify through other wrap around services. As noted previously, as long as this food is provided within the high-level social supermarket principles, then this would be considered eligible spend. Appendix 1 outlines recommended allocations to thematic partners made on this basis.

3.9 Some of the area-based partners have also indicated that they could accept a higher level of funding to deliver activity in support of the SSM fund; members therefore may wish to consider making additional allocations available to area partners, based on identified slippage and their capacity to spend in year. However, members should note that many of these area-based organisations have since been recommended by committee as delivery partners for the recently

	<p>approved Council Fuel Hardship Fund. The additional work associated with administration of this fund may have an impact on their capacity to deliver enhanced activity supported by the Social Supermarket Fund.</p>
3.10	<p>Members are asked to grant delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to consider and approve any allocation of identified slippage so that timely allocations can be made, and external funding can be maximised. NB Delegated authority for the Director was approved in 21/22 to ensure that external funding was maximised.</p>
3.11	<p>All organisations identified in this report will be required to submit a project proposal, which will be assessed by officers through an agreed process, to ensure that activity meets the aims of the funding programme, is eligible, presents value for money, and can be delivered within timescales. The same process will be used for the allocation of any identified slippage.</p>
	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p>
3.12	<p>All activity outlined in this report can be delivered within existing resources – via the allocation from DfC.</p>
	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications and Rural Needs Assessment</u></p>
3.13	<p>This will be considered throughout and any appropriate issues highlighted to Members.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Social Supermarket Fund Update – proposed area and thematic allocations