



Subject:	Framework for supporting sports clubs and individuals traveling for events outside NI
Date:	9 June 2026
Reporting Officer:	Jim Girvan Director of Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Claire Moraghan, Leisure Development Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.	
Insert number <input type="checkbox"/>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Information relating to any individual2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime	
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	This paper provides a framework funding proposal to support Belfast sports teams and individuals traveling outside Northern Ireland to compete in recognised sporting events where qualification or Governing Body selection has taken place.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approve the eligibility criteria for funding traveling teams outside NI - Approve maximum funding allocation per team under delegated authority to £5,000 - Approve increasing funding calls for Individual athletes to four times per year under delegated authority - Authorise officers to work up an application process in line with council funding procedures
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Background Information <p>During the rate setting process in 2026, Members agreed to allocate funds of £100,000 to support Belfast sports teams/clubs traveling to competitive events outside of Belfast. Members instructed officers to draw up a framework for a funding allocation model which would open 4 times per year. This would be a standalone funding stream in addition to the current Support for Sport grant process managed under CGU that allocates Small (£1500), Large (£5000) and Hospitality (up to £3000).</p>
3.2	Members will be aware that since a review of Support for Sport in 2012 an allocation of £15,000 is awarded to talented athletes annually under delegated authority. An individual can apply for a maximum of £1000 for costs associated with travel to Governing Body approved competitions and representative squad training outside NI. Currently Individual grants are applied for on behalf of the athlete by the Sport's Governing Body (GB) and managed by CGU. The annual fund is usually allocated fully at Tranche One. This results in many athletes missing out on support due to smaller GB's not having the capacity to apply and/or the notification of selection is late, and application deadlines are missed. Opening the application process to four times per year would increase funding for athletes from minority sports and allow officers to support more applications from women and girls and disability athletes. It is anticipated the funding would be split equally between the 4 financial quarters with an option to roll over any underspend into the next quarter.
3.3	Team Travel

More recently officers have received regular requests for support towards sports teams travelling in a representative capacity outside NI. Council does not have a currently fund travel for sports clubs.

Research conducted with neighbouring council's demonstrates a lack of a consistent approach with only four council's offering specific club travel grants however the majority offer individual grants where members of team sports can apply as an individual.

Table 1. Council areas providing team travel support

Council area	Max Amount	Criteria
Antrim & N'Abbey	£1500	Exceptional Team Competitions
ABC Council	£2000	Representative events -must Cost £4K+ to receive max amount
Derry & Strabane	£1600	Must qualify for event
Ards & North Down	£500	Must be representative competitions

3.4 The fund will open four times per year for both individual and team travel which will maximise both the range of sports and competitions throughout the seasons.

4.0

4.1 **Financial and Resource Implications**

The Leisure Development Unit would manage the application and verification process in line with good practise and procedures. Leisure Development Unit has the financial resources to cover the cost of the initiative.

5.0

5.1

Equality or Good Relations Implications /Rural Needs Assessment

There are no Equality or Good Relations Implications /Rural Needs Assessments associated with this report.

6.0 **Appendices - Documents Attached or None**

Appendix 1- Travel for Sports Events Framework