



Subject:	Community Development & Capacity Building Support
Date:	9 th November 2021
Reporting Officer:	Ryan Black, Director of 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	The purpose of this report is to update members on the types of support available from within the Community Provision section of the City & Neighbourhood Services Directorate in Council which local groups can avail of, and members can promote, to groups that they are working with or who approach them for advice or assistance.
2.0	Recommendations
	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Note the contents of the report.
3.0	Main report
	<u>Background</u>
3.1	Following an amendment to the minutes of the P&C Committee meeting held in September 2021 at the full Council meeting held on 4 th October 2021. Members had asked for a report to be brought to the next P&C committee meeting which outlined ‘ <i>capacity building and potential further funding for other groups.</i> ’ In response, officers have outlined within this update the community development and capacity support services that are currently provided by Belfast City Council’s

Community Services Unit as well as several other service areas within Community Provision. It is however worth noting that staff within Community Provision can, and often do, link in with wider Council services both within City & Neighbourhood Services Directorate (e.g. Environmental Health/Open Spaces and Street Scene/Waste Collection) as well as in other Departments across Council who can also offer a range of support services to groups and individuals.

3.2 **The Community Services Unit**

Council's Community Services unit sits within the wider Community Provision team. The Unit continues to provide a range of services to support community activity and community development across the city. Many groups and organisations require support to plan and deliver programmes, particularly in the context of Covid recovery. Council has 27 community centres with dedicated staff attached to them who will support groups to access for bookings and programmes.

Staff within the CSU are able to support groups via three main areas outlined in more detail below.

1. Direct financial support through grant aid

Funding of approximately £2 million is made available annually to 100+ Belfast-based community and voluntary organisations under two main funding streams – Community Capacity and Facilities Support. Members agreed at October Council meeting that awards for 21/22 would be rolled over into the 22/23 financial year. Officers will develop a new multi annual bid that will open for applications in Autumn 2022.

During the Covid response and recovery period, a number of previous funding streams were combined to create a more accessible, less bureaucratic process to access support with smaller micro and medium grants of up £1,500 and £5,000 respectively allocated to community projects and events. Council allocated almost £1million to 350 projects in August/September 2021 for delivery until 31 March 22. Applications for both these funding streams will open again in January/February 2022.

2. Advice and information

Council officers in the Unit can provide specialist support in relation not only to funding but also in relation to issues such as safeguarding, volunteering and child/youth development. They will also act as conduit and facilitate access to other council and external services (statutory and voluntary).

3. Capacity building – training and development

Community Development Officers can provide training and mentoring in a range of development areas. There are 3 hard copy toolkits which can be accessed by groups; *Running a Community*

Organisation, Facilities Management and Collaborative Working. Community Development Officers can also provide group facilitation support to develop business and project plans. Those in need of assistance should contact their local community development officer in the first instance. Groups can be directed to community@belfastcity.gov.uk with requests for support in relation to any of the areas of work listed below.

3.3 **Community Awareness & Resource Education & Promotions Team**

The Community Awareness Team works to discourage litter, dog fouling and graffiti in the city through campaigns, school visits and programmes, and competitions. The Resource Education and Promotions Team promotes waste and resource awareness including waste reduction, reuse and recycling to the public, schools and businesses in the city.

3.4 **Community Safety Team**

Officers within the Community Safety Team work with Elected Members, Statutory Agencies and Independent Representatives to identify and take forward local and citywide priority actions within the Policing and Community Safety Partnership structure. Within the Team there are also a number Anti-Social Behaviour Officers and Safer Neighbourhood Officers. ASB Officers can engage with local communities, partner agencies and via multi-agency forums to address issues of ASB, they link in with the relevant PCSP and can host community surgeries in priority areas to allow residents to report issues directly.

Safer Neighbourhood Officers offer guidance, support and advice on community safety issues. They can challenge low-level antisocial behaviour, enforce laws relating to on-street drinking and environmental crime. They work alongside Police, Youth Workers and BCC park wardens to address low level ASB mainly in BCC parks and open spaces and hotspot areas across the city including the City centre.

3.5 **Good Relations Team**

Good Relations officers provide advice and support for groups throughout Belfast in the application process for Council grants as well as for funding from other bodies such as The Executive Office's Central Good Relations Fund, Heritage Lottery, Community Relations Council, NI Housing Executive, among others. Staff within the team can provide support to local community organisations to develop relationships, networks and partnerships on an inter-community basis in order to promote the development of Good Relations at the local level. Members can direct queries to goodrelations@belfastcity.gov.uk

3.6	<p>Open Spaces and Active Living (OSAL) Unit</p> <p>The OSAL Unit can offer advice and assistance to groups wishing to run events or programmes in our parks and open spaces – assisting them through the application process. They also organise Council-led events and activities in our outdoor spaces throughout the year as well as administering Council’s allotments allocation scheme. In addition, our Parks Outreach team works at a more area level to assist local groups and communities to make better use of, and support improvements to our local parks and public spaces and to organise, promote and deliver events, etc. The Unit can be contacted at outdoorleisure@belfastcity.gov.uk</p>
3.7	<p>Sports/Leisure Development Unit</p> <p>The Sports/Leisure Development Unit can provide information, advice and support on a range of issues and initiatives such as coach education and sports development planning for clubs. The team offers funding under the ‘Support for Sport’ theme such as development grants for small interventions as well as larger club programmes, grants for small scale international events, and financial support for talented individuals. The team also co-funds, alongside PHA, the Active Belfast Grants administered and managed by the Belfast Health Development Unit. They work with governing bodies and clubs at local/community level to take forward priorities and actions under BCC’s Boxing Strategy, the GAA Joint Management Partnership and the Stadia Community Benefits Initiative (in partnership with GAA & IFA). They work with local clubs to ensure that partner and facilities management agreements in place with Council are achieving their aims and objectives. Please contact the team at leisure@belfastcity.gov.uk</p>
3.8	<p>Belfast Health Development Unit (BHDU)</p> <p>Belfast Health Development Unit is co-located team comprising staff from BCC, BHSCT and the Public Health Agency based in Council. The focus of their work is on addressing health inequalities across a number of areas – currently drugs and alcohol and mental health, physical activity and nutrition, healthy ageing and lifelong learning. Staff work closely with the funding partners, Community Planning and key multi-agency partnerships and forums to identify and take forward key priorities and actions within these work areas. The Unit can be contacted by emailing mlbt@bhdu.org</p>
3.9	<p>Community Infrastructure Pilots</p> <p>Members will recall that Council is also developing a Community Infrastructure Pilot that will work in identified areas across the city. Recent experience shows that communities require support and resources from a range of services within Council and other organisations/agencies. The development of the community infrastructure pilot will be an opportunity to take an integrated</p>

	<p>approach to identifying and responding to area needs. Further detail will be provided the next round of Area Working Groups when areas will be selected.</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p>
3.10	<p>None.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications and Rural Needs Assessment</u></p>
3.11	<p>The majority of the support provided in relation to advice, training, capacity building and financial aid provided by the services with Community Provision is aimed at addressing inequalities, fostering good relations and promoting equal access to services (internal and external to Council).</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None