

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 13th May, 2022

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC
POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Groogan (Chairperson);
The Lord Mayor (Councillor Long);
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Alderman Haire);
Aldermen Dorrian and Sandford; and
Councillors Bunting, Carson, Garrett,
Heading, Lyons, McLaughlin, Murphy,
Pankhurst, Walsh and Spratt.

In attendance: Mr. J. Walsh, Chief Executive;
Mrs. R. Crozier, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Mr. T. Wallace, Head of Finance and Resources;
Mr. S. Lavery, Programme Manager;
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported from Councillor Black.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Bunting declared an interest in relation to item <> in that <>

Restricted Items

The information contained in the reports associated with the following two items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the Press and public from the meeting during discussion of the following items as, due to the nature of the items, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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Summer Community Diversionary Festivals Programme

The Committee was reminded that, at the Council meeting in January 2022, it had been agreed to allocate £500k to the Summer Community Diversionary and Festival programme for 2022. At the request of the Members, the scheme was reviewed to ensure that it was widely advertised and groups who received funding in 2022 were supported to have the capacity to deliver events in line with the relevant guidelines that the Council had in place for organising events on its land. Following that approval, the programme was advertised as an open call and officers had completed the preliminary assessment process.

Accordingly, the Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted for the Committee's consideration a report which provided details of the assessments and seeking approval to award funding. The report provided details also of the eligibility criteria, the two-stage eligibility assessment and the process.

July Programme

For the July programme, six applications had been received, with a total funding request of £323,301 (total amount available £250,000), which was an oversubscription of £73,301.

The Director provided the Committee with a possible option on the amount of funding that groups might receive based on the following rationale:

- The proposed allocation would allow all groups which had applied to receive funding, including two new applicants;
- As far as possible, groups would receive similar amounts to what they had received in 2021; and
- To support new applicants within the constraints of available funding, a minimum amount of £25,000 could be awarded to the groups which applied to the programme for the first time, Charter NI and Ballymac Friendship Trust.

August Programme

Four applications had been received the August programme, however, one application had been withdrawn resulting in a total funding request of £250,000.

For both programmes, groups were awarded scores based on their capacity to run events and how their projects met the aims and objectives of the programme. To support all successful applicants and, in particular, those who required additional capacity support to meet the aims of the programme, an external Event Management Company, Island Events, had been appointed. This company would work with groups to plan, manage and deliver events and ensure they complied with relevant Health and Safety and Licensing regulations. This would be a mandatory requirement; no funding would be allocated to groups unless they agree to availing of this support.

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Accordingly, the Committee agreed to award funding for 2022 as follows:

July

Group	Overview of Project	Amount of Award £
Twaddell and Woodvale Residents Association	Events in Woodvale park and other local venues from 27th June – 11th July. These will include a community cultural activity programme, diversionary youth work and two large scale events on 8th and 9th July.	84,386
Eastside Partnership (Eastival)	Programme of music and community events 7th – 9th July. Including 'Fifes and Fusion' event, and large scale community event CS Lewis and Ballymacarrett walkway. This project will work with youth practitioners to identify relevant young people.	41,060
Ballymac Friendship Trust	Urban/ Street Festival 7th – 11th July, including outreach work, community events live music performances and animation between CS Lewis Square and Pitt Park.	25,000
Charter NI	Youth work, community, cultural, creative art and sporting events 4th – 12th July promoting heritage, educating on broader cultural contexts, and showcasing local artists.	25,000
The Hubb Community Resource Centre	Diversionary and cultural workshops from 27th June – 12th July, which will include music and community festival events in the local area.	40,663
Greater Village Regeneration Trust (GVRT)	Coordinated programme of cultural, community and diversionary events and trips across South Belfast, with a range of community partners over July and August.	33,891
	Total	250,000

August

Group	Overview of Project	Amount of Award £
Feile (Feile August Diversionary Dance Night)	Delivery of a free Dance music event as part of Feile on the 8 August and ongoing targeted outreach work in partnership with local community groups across Belfast. A community event will also take place in Distillery Street.	100,000

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Feile (South and East Summer Diversionary Intervention Programme)	Delivery of outreach and diversionary work during the summer, in the lead up to 8th August. Headline two day community festival on the Lagan walkway and river 6th – 7th August and music event St Georges Market.	75,000
Feile (North Belfast Summer Diversionary Intervention Programme)	Delivery of a number of diversionary outreach activities and community and sporting events (including boxing event) in the lead up to 8th August.	75,000
	Total	250,000

Her Majesty The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee – Funding Programme

The Committee was reminded that Her Majesty The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee weekend would take place from Thursday 2nd till Sunday 5th June, inclusive. At February’s meeting, the Committee had agreed to provide funding of £100,000 for events to take place in local communities across the city over the Platinum Jubilee weekend. It had also agreed to engage the services of the Community Foundation Northern Ireland (CFNI) to administer the fund, which would allocate a maximum of £2,000 for any group/event to take place.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reported that officers had been engaging with the Community Foundation over the past number of weeks to implement the programme and the following was delivered:

- The programme was advertised via an open call, advertised via Social media channels and has been published on the Council’s and CFNI websites;
- During the open application process, CFNI officers were available to advise groups on the necessary due diligence requirements that must be met to enable groups to be considered suitable for funding;
- CFNI held 5 Information sessions for groups who were interested in applying, these included in person and online;
- Approval was obtained for Umbrella’ organisations to support applications from community groups who do not have a constitution;
- All applicants submitted an application form by an agreed date;
- An additional £5,302 was secured (via the CFNI) for the programme;
- Letters of Offer have now been issued, with 100% payments being issued on acceptance of terms and conditions.

A total of 105 applications had been received (requesting an amount of £181,730), with the total amount awarded £105,302. A list of those groups which had been awarded funding had been appended to the report.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and list of groups which had received funding.

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Update on Provision of Beacons in 2022

The Committee was reminded that beacons were a key element of the Council's Bonfire and Cultural Expression Programme and that the Council had provided groups across the city with the opportunity to replace a traditional bonfire with a beacon (subject to availability, given the limited number and site suitability).

At the Council meeting in April 2022, it had been agreed that the 14 groups which availed of a beacon in 2019 and 2021 should be written to and asked if they wished to avail of a beacon this year, subject to availability and a site report. This number had been arrived at based on the responses to the same request in 2021 and with the addition of Grove Street East.

Officers had contacted the 14 groups by email on 15th April 2022 asking that they confirm their wish to a beacon this year by 26th April 2022. For those that did not respond, officers then followed up with phone calls to ensure groups were given a further opportunity to engage. Officers had direct contact with 13 groups and were advised that the 14th group was no longer in existence.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised the Members that 7 groups had responded positively, and those had been listed in the appendix the report. Officers were still waiting confirmation from the 8th group on the site where it wished to place the beacon, as the previous site was no longer suitable. In relation to the sites which had been confirmed, 4 of the sites were on land belonging to the Department of Infrastructure, with the remaining three belonging to the Council, the NIHE and private owners.

In the interim, an inspection of the beacons had been carried out all 16 beacons were in varying states of repair. Officers were seeking costs towards the filling, delivery and installation of 10 beacons for this year, given the current response.

An assessment of each site would now be arranged and would be undertaken by a fire engineer. Based on the findings of that report, groups would then be asked to sign an agreement regarding the use of the beacon and agreement from the landowners would also be sought.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and that the Director would follow up on the potential of a further group wishing to avail of the use of a beacon.

Glór na Móna - Funding

A Member referred to a previous decision of the Committee of 25th March to allocate funding of £86,000 to Glór na Móna for the continuation of the employment of five youth worker posts and the continuation also of Irish medium youth services in the Upper Springfield area and had granted approval for Elected Members to engage with Glór na Móna and the Education Authority to discuss the funding.

He pointed out that the award of the funding had been subject to that meeting taking place but to date it had not happened.

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Accordingly, he requested that the Committee reconsider its decision and that the stipulation that a meeting take place be removed so that the funding could be provided.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to adhere to its previous decision to award funding of £86,000 to Glór na Móna but to remove the requirement for a meeting with the Education Authority to be held and accordingly that arrangements be made to have the money released.

Chairperson