

Title of Report:	Impact of COVID 19 on the Christmas Festive Fund
Committee Report Submitted To:	Leisure and Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	20th October 2020
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Promote our tourist offer locally and internationally
Outcome	Improve prosperity To provide a balanced portfolio for major events across the Borough and facilitate partnership with other event promoters
Lead Officer	Head of Tourism and Recreation Head of Funding Unit

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	£5,000
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES within 2020/21 budget
Capital/Revenue	Revenue
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	TBC	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	TBC	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	TBC	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	TBC	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	n/a	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	n/a	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to outline concerns regarding funding of community associations for the 2020 Christmas Festive Fund in light of the tightening of restrictions relating to COVID 19.

2.0 Background

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council has for a number of years supported local community associations from towns, villages and hamlets to help celebrate Christmas. This has been through a maximum £250 grant awarded under Christmas Festive Fund and administrated through Councils Funding Unit.

To be eligible, only towns, villages and settlements with a population of over 100 residents may apply. Priority is also given to projects that promote wide community involvement for events celebrating the Christmas period.

3.0 Latest Government Advice/Guidance

COVID 19 related regulations and guidance has been subject to several changes. As of 22 September 2020 further restrictions have been introduced for all households in Northern Ireland.

The Council is expecting further definitive guidance on cultural, entertainment and recreational gatherings and as it stands, advice states that the event organiser is responsible for carrying out necessary risk assessments and take all reasonable measures to limit the risk of transmission of the coronavirus.

Government guidance currently states that *'the 15 limit for both **indoor** and outdoor gathering does not apply, where 'that gathering has a **recognised person** responsible for organising or operating the gathering, and it is organised or operated for cultural, entertainment, recreational, outdoor sports, social, community, educational, work, legal, religious or political purposes'*.

The **'recognised person'** with regard to this grant would be the applicant, therefore the 'community association', and therefore they can organise events that will attract crowds in excess of 15 people.

Current legislation insists that to have more than 15 people the groups will need to carry out risk assessments which meets the requirement of the Management of the Health and Safety at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000 and take all reasonable measures to limit the risk of transmission of the coronavirus. As stated previously, no current guidance is given on how to achieve this or where it relates to a mass gathering.

Without government guidance which can be attributable to an assessment the event and the associated risk and an evidence of practical measures taken to limit transmission, Officials are not in a position to either give advice or approve risk mitigation measures. Council must also consider the corporate risk implications of facilitating such events in the midst of the pandemic (including the obvious health implications and liability).

4.0 Recommendation

Elected Members are asked to give consideration to the issues presented within the body of the report and it is recommended that Council does not continue with the Christmas Festive Fund for 2020 in the current circumstances.