

Title of Report:	DfC Additional Covid Community Support Programme Funding 21-22
Committee Report Submitted To:	The Leisure & Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	19 October 2021
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Resilient, Healthy & Engaged Communities
Outcome	Council will work to develop and promote stable and cohesive communities across the Borough
Lead Officer	Head of Community & Culture Community Development Manager

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	£0
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES/NO
Capital/Revenue	
Code	33201
Staffing Costs	n/a

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on Covid recovery Community Support Programme funding from DfC and seek approval for the proposed re-profiled expenditure.

2.0 Background

In August 2021 a report was presented to the Leisure & Development Committee with proposals for additional Covid recovery funding expected from DfC through the Community Support Programme for community development and advice services for the period Sept 2021 to March 2022.

Proposals for this spend were developed in line with the Anti-Poverty Action Plan and Council's Community Development Action Plan for 21-22 and based on ongoing engagement with the community and voluntary sector.

These proposals, based on an assumed estimated budget of £150,000, were approved by Committee and ratified by full Council, subject to DfC funding.

3.0 Update

The Department has now confirmed that the amount to be allocated for Causeway Coast and Glens is £158,267.24. While at the time of writing this report a Letter of Offer has not been received, it is expected by mid-October.

Since confirmation of the funding was received later than expected, it is not possible to complete one of the four proposals in full within the reduced timeframe in this financial year.

Initial proposals included a Participatory Budgeting (PB) project that would allow 3 or 4 community-based organisations to host a Participatory Budgeting initiative, where local individuals and groups come up with ideas to improve their community and bid for part of a 'community pot'. The community then votes on what ideas receive funding from the 'pot'.

Participatory Budgeting initiatives need sufficient lead in and delivery time to complete effectively and it is not possible to roll out full PB initiatives in 3 areas in the reduced timeframe. Officers have scoped out what can be done within the timeframe and the following are the amended proposals:

- a) Undertake Phase1 of a PB 'Community Pot' project in one area. This will involve encouraging and supporting the community to come up with small project ideas that will encourage connections and community cohesion. Phase 2 of the project (community voting process and delivery of the winning projects) will be undertaken in 2022-23 with Community Development and Good Relations core programme budgets. The area that has been selected is Bushmills because it is an area where there is existing community activity but where there is potential to enhance intra community relationships. In addition, the initiative will energise and empower the local community in readiness to engage in development of the Growth Deal projects identified for Bushmills.
- b) Develop and deliver a Participatory Budgeting (PB) foundation learning programme. This will be open to members of communities that are interested in participating in PB in order that a skills and knowledge base is built up to allow the delivery of PB in the council area moving forward.

The budget allocation for the Participatory Budgeting strand will be reduced by £15,000 and the budget for the Well-being Resource Allocations will be increased accordingly. A further £8,267 will be added to the Well-being Resource Allocations budget to reflect the increase in the total confirmed budget from what had been estimated.

Project title	Budget approved by Council in August 2021 (subject to DfC funding)	Update
i. Extension to Generalist Advice Service contract to provide increased availability and extended hours of provision.	£60,000	£60,000 Will be delivered as planned and within approved budget (as per August report).
ii. Community Centres Creative Activity Programme to support a return to community centres as hubs for community activity. This will take the form of a menu of arts, creative and recreational activities that will be delivered directly in Council Community Centres and which community operated centres can also avail of, delivered in partnership with Arts and Cultural Services.	£30,000	£30,000 Will be delivered as planned and with approved budget (as per August report).
iii. Well-being Resource Allocations (in effect grant aid) for small community and voluntary organisations. A programme that will provide resource allocations to smaller community and voluntary organisations (that don't operate community premises) to deliver activities that reduce social isolation and loneliness and improve well-being. – this approach has previously been used to attract participation from smaller groups which do not traditionally avail of council grants.	£30,000	Increase budget to £53,267.24 to allow for increase of 23 additional groups that can benefit (original proposal beneficiary target was 25) – up to 48 groups can now be supported at up to £1,000 each.
iv. Participatory Budgeting (PB) projects.	£30,000	Reduce budget to £15,000 Adjust project to carry out Stage 1 Participatory Budgeting initiative in one area and roll out a Participatory Budgeting foundation learning programme open to members of communities that are interested in participating in PB.

4.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that council approve the proposed amendments to the report provided to committee in August 2021 to reflect the reduced timeframe for delivery of the DfC Covid Recovery Programme, provided to council through additional DfC Community Support Programme funding.