



Title of Report:	Rural Business Development Grant Scheme
Committee Report Submitted To:	The Leisure and Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	18th October 2022
For Decision or For Information	For Information

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Local Economy
Outcome	Council contributes to increasing business start-up and survival rates
Lead Officer	Head of Service – Prosperity & Place

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	Provision of 100% grant by DAERA up to a maximum £125,000. Admin fee paid to Council by DAERA 10% of Letters of Offer Value. Grant increased to fund all eligible businesses totalling £137,403.67. Admin fee increased accordingly
Included in Current Year Estimates	100% externally funded.
Capital/Revenue	Capital
Code	31291
Staffing Costs	Within budget

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

Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to update members on the delivery of the Rural Business Development Grant Scheme funded by Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) for the financial year 2022-2023.

1.0 Context

This grant is funded under DAERA's Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation Programme (TRPSI) the primary aims of which are:

- Alleviate financial poverty by enhancing entrepreneurship and growth
- Alleviate financial poverty by supporting micro businesses in rural areas

This grant scheme is being delivered by the 11 councils concurrently, to further support recovery and sustainability post-COVID.

Across NI, the call opened on Wednesday 04 May 2022 and closed on Friday 31st May 2022.

2.0 Programme Criteria

- Micro businesses located in rural areas (*as per NISRA NINIS definition*)
- New businesses must be able to demonstrate they have commenced trading
- Must demonstrate added value of proposal both to business and impact on recovery and sustainability
- Must demonstrate ability to complete project and access grant by 11 Nov 2022
- Minimum grant awarded £500 with maximum of £4,999
- Must demonstrate they are ineligible to access similar support from elsewhere

3.0 Funding Level

- Grants providing capital support up to a maximum of £4,999 or 50% of total costs
- Match funding must be in the form of a 'cash' contribution. Labour or 'in-kind' contributions will not be accepted
- The total cost of a project should not exceed £20,000

4.0 Pre-Application Support

The grant was widely advertised in local press, DAERA website and on Council's website and social media channels.

Guidance Notes were made available to all interested businesses and included full details in respect of level of award, exclusions and assessment and scoring processes. Named contact was also provided to potential applicants wishing to discuss their idea pre-application. Interested businesses were required to attend a mandatory pre-application workshop to be eligible to apply to the scheme.

There was a high level of interest in the fund, totalling 128 telephone and email enquiries, by businesses wishing to discuss criteria and eligibility. Full support was given to all potential applicants during the funding call.

5.0 Assessment and Scoring

- 60 applications were received:
- 13 applications were ineligible.
- 47 applications progressed to assessment and scoring.

- 42 applications scored above the 65% threshold for funding and were recommended to DAERA for funding (**See Annex One**)
- 5 applications did not score above the 65% grant threshold and were therefore unsuccessful (**See Annex Two**)
- Random sampling of the assessments was undertaken by DAERA before approval to proceed to Letter of Offer Stage.
- All successful applicants attended a mandatory Letter of Offer workshop prior to commencing their projects.

Annex One – Recommended to DAERA for Funding

Business Name	Business Location	Percentage Score	Award
Downhill Beach House	Castlerock	68%	£2,165.49
Drumagosker Rural Retreats	Limavady	70%	£1,199.50
Stephanie O’Kane	Feeny	80%	£1,211.40
Chestnutt’s Farm	Portrush	76%	£2,068.99
Property Restore Ltd.	Ballymoney	86%	£4,475
OJQ Architecture	Garvagh	94%	£1,901.68
Magheraboy Developments Ltd.	Dungiven	86%	£4,999
JL Contracts	Limavady	72%	£4,999
Run Mucker Run	Ballymoney	76%	£4,999
Jam at the Doorstep	Armo y	74%	£4,860
The Lamb Van	Ballymoney	94%	£2,941.20
Alan McAleese	Limavady	74%	£1,654.98
BT47 Digital	Dungiven	82%	£974.95
LD Property Maintenance	Ballymoney	90%	£4,999
Derry G.A.A.	Dungiven	66%	£927.80
Elements Studio Arts	Castlerock	78%	£2,015.82
Gorse Lane Studios	Coleraine	66%	£624.50
Irwin Mortgage & Financial Services	Limavady	88%	£1,498.43
Euro Autospares Ltd.	Ballymoney	96%	£3,450.02
Hyperfresh Raw Ltd.	Coleraine	66%	£2,190
K F Contracts	Feeny	66%	£1,490
Kevin Bradley	Kilrea	70%	£4,999
Sports Ground Specialists	Ballymoney	68%	£4,999
Oran McAtanmey’s Family Butchers	Kilrea	76%	£4,999
R&D McFadden	Ballycastle	82%	£3,276
Hilltop Landscapes Ltd.	Greysteel	78%	£4,999
North Coast Steel	Ballymoney	70%	£4,999
Dress My Bump	Cloughmills	94%	£597.20
B. Feetham Sheep Shearing	Armo y	90%	£4,707
Andrea Spencer Glass	Ballintoy	76%	£2,465.88
Andrew Bellingham	Ballymoney	74%	£4,999
Shaun Mclvor	Ballykelly	68%	£4,996
S.G. Construction	Greysteel	74%	£4,999
SOL Property Maintenance	Limavady	78%	£2,424.32

St. Canice's G.A.C	Dungiven	78%	£2,295
Causeway Boats	Coleraine	88%	£2,130
E.L. Climbing Frames	Ballymoney	78%	£2,850
Russell Smyth	Coleraine	84%	£4,772.49
Crindle Stables	Limavady	88%	£3,093.41
Customized Prints	Limavady	70%	£4,999
GBS Scaffolding	Claudy	74%	£4,959
Glenshane Community Development Ltd.	Dungiven	72%	£3,199.61
			£137,403.67

Annex Two - Unsuccessful Applicants

Business Name	Business Location	Percentage Score
SC Tarmac	Limavady	56%
Broughgammon Ltd.	Ballycastle	50%
Your Physio N.I. Ltd.	Greysteel	56%
Forestsides House	Ballycastle	60%
Alpha 1 Dog Hotel	Coleraine	56%