
Report To:	Education and Communities Committee	Date:	1 September 2020
Report By:	Ruth Binks Corporate Director Education, Communities and Educational Resources	Report No:	EDUCOM/48/20/TM
Contact Officer:	Tony McEwan Head of Culture, Communities & Educational Resources	Contact No:	01475 712828
Subject:	Update on Community Halls and Proposals for interim arrangements for Grants to Voluntary Organisations		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Education and Communities Committee on the financial position of self-managed community centres and to set out proposals for interim arrangements for Grants to Voluntary Organisations for 2020/2021 to assist in community recovery during COVID-19.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 It was agreed at Policy and Resources Executive Sub-Committee in April 2020 that the Council would continue to pay self-managed community halls until June 2020 to allow them to continue to operate during COVID-19. Following a review of these organisations' finances and although some concerns remain around long-term loss of income, this paper proposes continuing to pay self-managed community halls until March 2021 in order that they can continue to operate and support community recovery.
- 2.2 A number of grants to voluntary organisations have been made to clubs outwith the Grants Sub-Committee cycle and as clubs and organisations continue to face challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is proposed to ask for committee approval for interim measures to be put in place for 2020/21 for the awarding of grants specifically to assist in recovery.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Education and Communities Committee:
- notes the content of this report;
 - agrees to continue payments for self-managed community halls at current levels during 2020/21;
 - agrees to the interim changes to the GTVO application and decision-making process for 2020/2021 as detailed in Section 5 of the report, in light of the ongoing impact of COVID-19; and
 - notes that any applications for GTVO assistance in excess of £10,000 will be referred to the Grants Sub-Committee for determination.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 There are seven self-managed community centres which receive financial support from the Community Based Services funding stream. Three of these centres receive funding on a monthly basis with the remaining four receiving funding on a quarterly basis. All centres submit invoices monthly/quarterly in arrears.
- 4.2 It was agreed at a meeting of the Policy and Resources Executive Sub-Committee on 21 April 2020 to continue to pay community centres in the short-term so that we could carry out a review on the financial position of each.
- 4.3 This review is now complete and officers are satisfied that there is no immediate threat to the financial viability of each of the centres, due to the levels of current reserves and grants received. There remains however, concerns around the impact that the long term loss of income will have.
- 4.4 The purpose of the Grants to Voluntary Organisations (GTVO) is to support small community and voluntary organisations who contribute to the quality of life of the people of Inverclyde.
- 4.5 Currently, GTVO allocations are made through the Grants Sub-Committee on recommendations from officers. The Sub-Committee meets twice a year to consider applications and award grants.
- 4.6 In March 2020, recognising that many clubs would be facing significant financial difficulties, a decision was made at the same meeting of the Policy and Resources Executive Sub-Committee to bring forward emergency payments to some organisations outwith the scope of the Grants Sub-Committee. The award of GTVO was dependent on organisations not being able to access the Business Grant fund. Subsequently, a few organisations were able to access Business Grants and officers have asked for the GTVO money to be refunded to the Council. Details of the awards are provided below (successful business grant applications are highlighted):

AWARDS APPROVED APRIL 2020			
Category	Applicant	Amount Requested	Amount Awarded
Bowling Club	Fort Matilda Bowling Club		£1,500.00
Bowling Club	Gourock Park Bowling Club	£3,000.00	£2,000.00
Bowling Club	Hillend Bowling Club	£5,000.00	£1,500.00
Bowling Club	Lady Alice Bowling Club	£2,000.00	£2,000.00
Bowling Club	Rankin Park Bowling Club	£9,382.28	£1,500.00
Bowling Club	Wellington Park Bowling Club	£2,800.00	£1,500.00
Community Group	Auchmountain Glen Project	£1,500.00	£1,000.00
Uniformed Group	Greenock and District Scout Council	£4,750.00	£4,750.00
summer playscheme	Youth connections	£5,000.00	£5,000.00
		£33,432.28	£19,250.00
Budget available		£252,000.00	
Awards approved		£19,250.00 – (returning £5k)	
less virement of Summer Playscheme funds		£25,000.00	
Third sector rent/rates		£18,500.00	
Balance		£194,250	

- 4.7 Many clubs and organisations will continue to face significant financial issues in the coming months due to a fall in participation rates and the impact that COVID-19 restrictions continue to have on income.

5.0 PROPOSALS

5.1 Self-managed community halls

It is proposed to continue to fund self-managed community halls until the end of March 2021 at current levels.

5.2 GTVO

Recognising the need for the Council to support both our community groups and wider community recovery following Covid, it is proposed that changes are made to the GTVO process for 2020/2021.

5.3 Officers will continue to consider applications from:

- Registered charities, constituted community and voluntary groups; and
- Social enterprises including community interest companies

5.4 It is proposed that officers will consider applications from existing organisations which are:-

- providing vital and ongoing community services to Inverclyde
- have lost crucial funding or income due to Covid-19
- need additional funding to meet the enhanced expectations for hygiene and social distancing measures due to COVID-19

It will be necessary, therefore, to ensure GTVO funding in the short term goes towards supporting these aims. Prior to any award being made, organisations will still be subject to the existing conditions of grant.

5.5 To facilitate this, officers wish to seek agreement of the Education and Communities Committee to delegate responsibility to the Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer, to make decisions on applications for GTVO in 2020/2021 and in line with the existing awarding criteria set out at 5.3 and 5.4 above. To ensure that the Council is able to provide assistance to as many organisations as possible, grants will be capped at £10,000. Any awards over this amount will be referred to the Grants Sub- Committee for approval.

5.6 If approved, the first round of applications will be accepted between Monday 7 September and Monday 5 October 2020. Applications received after this date will be considered at stage 2 in January / February 2021.

5.7 Towards the end of 2020, officers will begin a consultation process on proposals for longer-term changes to the GTVO process for 2021/2022 and beyond.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Finance

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
GtVO	PtOB	20/21	£194,250		

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (if Applicable)	Other Comments

6.2 **Legal**

The proposal in this report does not affect the remit of the Grants Sub-Committee but does affect the application and award processes which are administered by that Sub-Committee. The Education and Communities Committee has the explicit power and responsibility to determine the policy for the giving of grants to voluntary organisations. The Grants Sub-Committee considers and distributes awards from the budget that is allocated to it. This report proposes that the Education and Communities Committee adjusts its policy for the period of recovery for the COVID-19 pandemic and it is within the competence of this Committee to determine its policy. The Grants Sub-Committee, it is proposed from this report, would consider and may award those grants for GTVO assistance in excess of £10,000 for the duration of the recovery.

6.3 **Human Resources**

None

6.4 **Equalities**

Equalities

(a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

<input type="checkbox"/>	YES
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

<input type="checkbox"/>	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO

(c) Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES
X	NO

6.5 **Repopulation**

None

7.0 **CONSULTATIONS**

7.1 The report has been endorsed by the Corporate Management Team

8.0 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

8.1 None