

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

KILMARNOCK CENTRAL LOCAL COMMITTEE - 10 MAY 2005

LOCAL COMMITTEE COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME - DISBURSEMENT OF GRANTS BUDGET

Report by the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to review the current method the Committee uses to prioritise its annual grants allocation. The current method was adopted by the Committee following increasing pressures on its budget, on 16 March 2004. The Local Committee also agreed to receive a report at the end of the financial year reviewing the operation of the new method of disbursement of grants.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The financial allocation made available for Community Grant awards by the Local Committee for the 2003/2004 period was fully committed by September 2003. It was identified that this level of early demand reflected a pattern which had become increasingly problematic over the last two or three financial years.
- 2.2** At its meeting on 2 September 2003, the Local Committee agreed that options for the future disbursement of the Local Committee's Community Grants budget be presented, including consideration of the mechanisms used by other Local Committees.
- 2.3** At its meeting on 29 October 2003, the Local Committee agreed to adopt the method currently used by the Irvine Valley Local Committee and further agreed the categories/weightings to be applied in respect of the implementation of the new arrangements.

3. NEW METHOD OF PRIORITISING THE GRANT ALLOCATION

- 3.1** The Local Committee adopted its current method of budgeting based on a percentage "spend" by category. Under the new system the annual grants is equally divided on a meeting to meeting basis using the following categories and weightings:-

Older People - 32%;
Sport and Leisure - 32%;
Young People - 15%;
Disability - 5%;
Arts and Cultural - 5%; and
Miscellaneous - 11%

3.2 The flexibility of the new system provides scope for adjustments to be made between categories at meetings, e.g. if the Committee decided to spend more in one category, it could off-set this by a reduced spend in another area. Furthermore, should the Committee over or under spend at one meeting, the amounts available at subsequent meetings would simply be re-calculated.

3.3 The new system also provides the Committee greater control of their budget as the Committee now focuses their spending on a meeting by meeting basis rather than simply dealing with applications, as they had been, on a first come first served basis as the new system ensures that funding will be available throughout the financial year for disbursement.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The Local Committee was able to deal with all of the applications coming before it during 2004/05 under the new system.

4.2 Furthermore, there was no large carry forward of applications to financial year 2005/06.

4.3 Accordingly, it can be confirmed that the aims of the new grant disbursement process had been achieved primarily in the avoidance of large carry forwards of applications which has always put pressure on future budgets at the start of the year and perpetuated funding problems throughout the year thereafter.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 It is recommended that the Local Committee:-

- (i) note that the aims of the new budgeting process had been achieved;
- (ii) consider whether they wish to continue with the current method of budgeting; and
- (iii) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

Elizabeth Morton
Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

29 April 2005

GH/SR

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL

Any person wishing further information on this report should contact Bill Walkinshaw, Administration Manager, on telephone number 01563 576135.

Implementation Officer: Gillian Hamilton, Administrative Officer.