

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

IRVINE VALLEY LOCAL COMMITTEE - 10 APRIL 2002

LOCAL COMMITTEE COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME - ALLOCATION FOR 2002/2003 AND SETTING LOCAL PRIORITIES

Report by the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is:-

- (i) to advise the Committee of the grant allocation for 2002/2003;
- (ii) to advise of the Committee grant spend for the last 2 financial years; and
- (iii) to provide the Committee with options for setting local priorities for grant funding in line with the Committee's previous decision to receive such a report.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 At the Policy and Resources Committee held on 21 February 2002, the Council agreed to maintain the percentage allocation based on the existing range of indicators detailed below:-

- population;
- elderly population;
- deprivation;
- clothing and footwear grants;
- rural population; and
- non-Coalfield/Better Neighbourhood Services Fund designation.

2.2 The Committee may wish to note that the last indicator has changed slightly to include an element of compensation to areas not benefiting from funding from the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund, (BNSF) (Kilmarnock North and Kilmarnock South currently benefit from this funding).

2.3 Accordingly, the Local Committee allocation for the Irvine Valley Local Committee for 2002/2003 is £26,065.

3. GRANT SPEND FOR THE LAST TWO YEARS

3.1 A breakdown of Community Grants spend for the last 2 years is detailed within Appendix I to this report.

4. SETTING LOCAL PRIORITIES - BACKGROUND

4.1 The Local Committee has decided to receive a report on the future distribution of Community Grant funding in this financial year.

5. SETTING LOCAL PRIORITIES

5.1 The following options are presented as a starting point for discussion of the range of possibilities open to the Local Committee and which may address its requirements. The Committee is of course at liberty to take any or none of these on board, or to use them as a basis for forming its own ideas.

5.2 Option 1

This method of prioritising grant applications for the financial year is based on 2 principles. Firstly an examination has been made of the Local Committee's grant percentage "spend" pattern by category over the last 2 financial years (Appendix I). From this it has been established that the Committee has allocated grants by Sector as follows -

Community Councils	25%;
Older People -	18%;
Leisure -	12%;
Sport -	9%;
Environment -	7%;
Young People, Disability and Heritage -	6% per category;
all other miscellaneous categories -	11%.

Using this as an **example only** a total allocation under each category for the financial year has been calculated. Secondly, these total allocations have been subdivided into equal portions representing the approximate amount available to the Local Committee to spend under each category at the 5 Local Committee meetings throughout the financial year (Appendix II).

5.3 Should the Local Committee decide to use this option then the following points should be noted:-

- Better control of the overall Community Grants budget as the Committee is budgeting on an eight weekly basis, and keeping check on the grants applications under each category rather than simply dealing with applications on a first come first served basis. The example shown uses the previous years actual spend; the Committee may wish to decide, **if it chooses this option, to give more or less weight to the various categories.** The Administrative Officer can keep a close note at each meeting of the actual grant spends by category and revise as needed the amounts available to spend at future meetings.
- Further, adjustments can be made between categories at meetings e.g. if the Committee decides to spend more in one category one month this may be offset by reduced spend in another area.

- One bonus of this system could be that where applications involve separate events or projects which are spread throughout the year the Committee could agree awards for imminent projects while asking the Group to reapply nearer the time for the later elements. This would mean (i) that valuable Local Committee Grant money would not be lost merely to sit in an organisation's bank account until a much later date; (ii) organisations which apply later in a year would not be losing out under this system as less grant money would be "tied-up"; and (iii) over time relevant organisations will come to know to apply for any such projects perhaps in 2 stages in the financial year.

5.4 Option 2

This method of prioritising grants for the financial year is based on the method adopted by the Council to allocate community grants budgets to the council's seven Local Committees which takes into consideration issues of deprivation and poverty in conjunction with a client based approach which recognises vulnerability, and in which respect the following statistical categories are used:- population, elderly population, deprivation, clothing and footwear grants, rural population and non-coalfield SIP/BSNF Designation.

In respect of using this method to allocate community grants within the Irvine Valley it has been established that it is not possible to define meaningful allocations based on settlement, as there is no complete agreement to the definition of settlement which would adequately represent the entire population of the Irvine Valley.

It would, however, be possible to carry out this exercise based on either Ward or Community Council area as both of these population definitions have been clarified on the basis of collections of postcode units.

Should the Committee wish to pursue this option for prioritising its grant allocation, research would be carried out either on a Ward or Community Council basis, with a report subsequently submitted for the Local Committee's consideration.

5.5 Option 3

This method of prioritising grant applications is broadly that which has been adopted in recent years by the Cumnock Area Local Committee and is based on the principle that all funds are disbursed at the start of the financial year.

The Cumnock Area Local Committee has approved the following arrangements for the submission of Community Grant applications, namely:-

- (i) local organisations are required to submit their applications, irrespective of when the group's proposed activity/event etc is due to take place during the year, no later than 31 March with all applications received by the due date being considered by the Committee as soon as possible following commencement of the new financial year; and

- (ii) in order to facilitate the submission of applications by local groups, the appropriate Officer arranges (a) for those organisations who have applied for Community Grant funding the previous year to be advised of the arrangements for applying for the current year and to be issued with a Community Grant application form; (b) for posters to be displayed at Council premises advising of the arrangements; and (c) for an advertisement to be placed in the local press.

It should be noted that the Cumnock Area Local Committee before reaching a decision to determine its arrangement for dealing with applications as above, has taken the undernoted matters into account, namely:-

- The Committee recognised that the main benefit of this approach is that the Committee should be in a position to consider the relative merits and priority of individual applications having regard to the other applications received and the total funding available for disbursement. In addition, from the point of view of the local organisations, each organisation is given an equal opportunity of applying for, and receiving, a grant award;
- in view of the likely volume of Community Grant applications to be received, it is anticipated that should a closing date be specified for applications, operational difficulties could arise in processing the applications both in respect of Assessing Officers and Administrative Officers time. Experience of operating such a mechanism during the last two years gave rise to a disproportionate burden being placed on staff time in processing and assessing the application over and above those applications still requiring processing from other Local Committees and Services Committees. Additionally, it is important to ensure that quality in the assessment process is maintained and is not unduly affected by time pressures;
- previous research indicated that while some local groups were in favour of a closing date being stipulated which assists in their forward planning, some other small other local groups are not in favour because they felt that a closing date puts undue pressure on them to apply for a grant too far in advance and restricts spontaneity of applying for grant assistance;
- a requirement for organisations to apply for a grant at the start of the financial year can mean that some proposals can be speculative; and
- should all funds be disbursed at the start of the financial year, the Committee would not be in a position to consider grant awards in respect of groups which might be formed during the year, emergency applications or any cross boundary applications received during the year which include the Cumnock Area.

5.6 Option 4

This option merely recognises that the Committee may wish to maintain the status quo and continue dealing with applications as existing.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1** The Local Committee in response to its request has been presented with four options for its consideration in prioritising grant applications coming before it.
- 6.2** It should be noted at this stage that Option 1 could be adopted with almost immediate effect.
- 6.3** Option 2 would also require extensive research to put together all the statistical information required and should the Committee decide to investigate further this option, a further report would need to be submitted. Bearing in mind the level of applications coming before the Committee for consideration (under item 6), it is suggested that realistically this option could not be put in place meaningfully until financial year 2003/04.
- 6.4** Option 3, should the Committee choose this, would require to be put in place for financial year 2003/04. This would be a completely new system for handling the Irvine Valley Local Committee grants budget which would require a long-lead in time in order that as many Local Committee organisations as possible could be advised of the new arrangements, and not therefore miss out on their 'chance' to apply for funding.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 It is recommended:-

- (i) to note the Committee's grant allocation for 2003/02 at £26,065;
- (ii) to note the Committee's grant spend for the last two financial years;
- (iii) that the Local Committee consider which, if any, of the options presented it would like to adopt for its use in prioritising the grant allocation for the financial year;
- (iv) that should the Committee choose either Options 2 or 3 to note that these would not be implemented until financial year 2003/04 due to the reasons stated in the report; and
- (v) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

Fiona Lees
Depute Chief Executive/
Director of Corporate Resources

4 April 2002

JM/FM

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Cumnock Area Local Committee Agenda and papers of 24 January 2001.
2. Memo dated 26 March 2002 from the External Funding Officer.

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers relative to this report should contact Jennifer Morrison, Administrative Officer on 01563 576139. Any person wishing further information on this report should contact Bill Walkinshaw, Administration Manager on 01563 576135.

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

IRVINE VALLEY LOCAL COMMITTEE

COMMUNITY GRANTS TO LOCAL ORGANISATIONS 2000/2001 AND 2001/2002

FINAL POSITIONS

	2000/2001	
ANNUAL BUDGET	£25,295.83*	
<u>CATEGORY</u>	VALUE OF GRANTS PAID	% OF BUDGET
Arts and Cultural	£1,048.00	4%
Community Association	-	-
Community Councils	£7,216.81	28%
Community Safety	-	-
Disability	£2,150.00	8.5%
Early Education & Childcare	£1,623.42	6%
Economic Development	-	-
Environmental	-	-
Ethnic Minorities	-	-
Health Issues	-	-
Heritage	£2,650.00	10%
Leisure Activities	£930.00	4%
Older People	£4,750.00	20%
Social Inclusion	£117.60	0.5%
Sport	£4,290.00	17%
Tenants/Residents' Groups	-	-
Unemployment	-	-
Women's Issues	£240.00	1%
Young People	£280.00	1%
TOTAL	£25,295.83	100%
RANGE OF GRANTS GIVEN	£300.00 - £7,500.00	

	2001/2002	
ANNUAL BUDGET	£25,217.00	
<u>CATEGORY</u>	VALUE OF GRANTS PAID	% OF BUDGET
Arts and Cultural	£725.00	3%
Community Association	-	-
Community Councils	£5,950.00	23%
Community Safety	-	-
Disability	£889.50	4%
Early Education & Childcare	£330.00	1%
Economic Development	£900.00	4%
Environmental	£3,900.00	15%
Ethnic Minorities	-	-
Health Issues	-	-
Heritage	£500.00	2%
Leisure Activities	£4,704.29	19%
Older People	£4,050.00	16%
Social Inclusion	-	-
Sport	£571.63	2%
Tenants/Residents' Groups	-	-
Unemployment	-	-
Women's Issues	-	-
Young People	£2,696.58	11%
TOTAL	£25,217.00	100%
RANGE OF GRANTS GIVEN	£165.00 - £4,750.00	

* Original allocation £24,482.00
 + £ 413.83
 (returned from Irvine Valley Activity Group)
 + £ 400.00
 (returned from Hurford & Crookedholm Millennium Committee)
TOTAL £25,295.83

APPENDIX II

<u>Category</u>	<u>Average % of total Community Grants budget for last 2 financial years</u>	<u>APRIL 2002</u>	<u>MAY 2002</u>	<u>SEPTEMBER 2002</u>	<u>NOVEMBER 2002</u>	<u>FEBRUARY 2002</u>	<u>ALLOCATION FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2002/03</u>
Community Councils	25	1,303	1,303	1,303	1,303	1,304	6,516
Older People	18	938	938	938	938	940	4,692
Leisure	12	625	625	625	625	628	3,128
Sport	9	469	469	469	469	470	2,346
Environmental	7	364	364	364	364	368	1,824
Young People	6	312	312	312	312	316	1,564
Disability	6	313	312	312	312	316	1,564
Heritage	6	313	312	312	312	316	1,564
Leaving % of Budget for all other categories including Arts/Cultural, Early Education/Childcare, Economic Development and ?women's issues	<u>11</u> Total 100	<u>573</u> 5,210	<u>573</u> 5,210	<u>573</u> 5,210	<u>573</u> 5,210	<u>575</u> 5,233	2,867
						<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>26,065</u>

JM/ST
11 March 2002

AGENDA