

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

IRVINE VALLEY LOCAL COMMITTEE - 5 FEBRUARY 2003

LOCAL COMMITTEE COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME - SETTING LOCAL PRIORITIES FOR 2003/04

Report by the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an interim monitoring report on the current method of prioritising the grant allocation for the current financial year 2003/03, as adopted by the Local Committee at its meeting on 10 April 2002.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Local Committee, during the financial year 2001/02 asked to receive a report outlining options which it might wish to adopt for its future use in prioritising the Local Committee's grant allocation for the then forthcoming financial year 2002/03.
- 2.2 The Committee, having considered the several options presented at the meeting on 10 April 2002 agreed to adopt Option 1 which was based on a grant percentage "spend" by category, and the Committee also took the decision at this point to rationalise the grant categories which had been used previously.

3. CURRENT METHOD OF PRIORITISING GRANT ALLOCATION

- 3.1 The Local Committee on 10 April 2002, reduced the number of categories under which grants could be allocated, from 19 to 6 (new categories detailed under paragraph 3.2).
- 3.2 Secondly, the Local Committee, having examined its grant percentage "spend" pattern by category over previous financial years, agreed various weightings for each new category, viz:-

Leisure and Sport - 18% of the Local Committee budget

Older People - 18%

Environmental and Heritage - 18%

Disability - 18%

Young People - 18%

Miscellaneous - 10%

- 3.3 Using the above categories and weightings a total allocation under each category for the financial year is calculated. Thereafter, these total allocations are sub-divided into equal portions representing the amount available to spend

under each category at the five Local Committee meetings throughout the financial year.

3.4 The Committee, in choosing this method of prioritising grants, noted that this option was presented as giving it better control of the overall Community Grants budget as the Committee was in effect budgeting on an eight weekly basis and keeping a check on the grant applications under each category rather than simply dealing, as it had done previously, with applications on a "first come, first served" basis.

3.5 It was also noted that there was flexibility in this option in that adjustments could be made between categories at meetings, eg if the Committee decided to spend more in one category, it could be offset by a reduced spend in another area.

4. SPEND BY CATEGORY IN FINANCIAL YEAR 2002/03

4.1 As outlined above, the Committee decided to reduce the number of categories from 19 to 6 and to apply weightings to these categories.

4.2 An analysis has been made of the grant spend by category this financial year, which is attached as Appendix 1.

4.3 The Local Committee may wish to consider at this point whether it wishes to keep the existing categories and weightings.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The current method of grant prioritisation has now been in place for four meetings cycles, viz:- May, September and November 2002 and February 2003.

5.2 It is suggested that as the current system has not yet been in place for a full financial year, it is too early to take a decision on the merits of this option.

5.3 A full picture for this financial year cannot be obtained as the Local Committee started the financial year 2002/03 with a "backlog" of applications due to the previous year's budget being fully expended by November 2001. This meant that the amount allocated to the four remaining meetings in the year was less than that which could have been expected when starting the year with a "clean slate".

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 It is recommended:-

- (i) that the Local Committee continue with the current method of grant prioritisation for the next financial year 2003/04 in order that a fuller picture of this method can be achieved;

- (ii) thereafter the Local Committee receive a report on the merits of the system, at the last meeting of the next financial year, ie February 2004;
- (iii) meanwhile, the Local Committee take a decision on whether it wishes to continue with the existing grant categories and weightings previously applied; and
- (iv) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

Fiona Lees
Depute Chief Executive/
Director of Corporate Resources

20 January 2002

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Any person wishing further information should contact Bill Walkinshaw, Administration Manager on (01563) 576135.

Implementation Officer: Jennifer Morrison

**ANALYSIS OF GRANT SPEND BY CATEGORY
FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2002/03
AS AT JANUARY 2003**

CATEGORY	% ALLOCATION FINANCIAL YEAR 2002/03	ACTUAL % SPEND TO DATE THIS FINANCIAL YEAR
Disability	18	19
Environmental & Heritage	18	28
Leisure & Sport	18	19
Older People	18	8
Young People	18	3
Miscellaneous	10	2
Remaining Budget		21
TOTAL	100	100