

Title of Report: Rural Community Development Support Funding	Officer Presenting: Director of Health and Community Author: Head of Community Development and Leisure
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1 **Purpose of Report/Recommendations**

- 1.1 To seek Members' approval for the allocation of £30k of additional funds received from the Department for Communities, Voluntary and Community Unit to provide support for the rural community development service following the reduction of funding from DAERA.
- 1.2 To seek Members' approval to write to DAERA to request that the allocations of funding for the DAERA Rural Community Development Support Programme be based on a formula which includes deprivation as well as population.

2 **Background**

- 2.1 Members will be aware of the background paper presented at Health and Community Committee on 15 March 2018 regarding the RAPID and Villages Together partnership delivery programme which provides support services to the PUL community which outlined the following issues in relation to support services in the rural area. Members requested a further report to full Council. Min Ref (HC47/18)

The rural community development support service (RCDSS) is funded by DAERA under the Tackling Rural Poverty and Rural Isolation programme. RAPID Ltd have been delivering the tender under this programme over the last 6 years and have subcontracted the PUL element to The Villages Together network and Londonderry YMCA, with Villages Together delivering on 66% of the contract. This contract will finish on 31 March 2018, with a new 3 year contract currently out to tender by DAERA. The PUL element of the contract is not included in the new tender which is a reduction in £36k to the current contract value. This will result in a reduction in much needed support to the PUL community across the rural area.

In addition to this reduction in support to the Rural Area, the total funding allocations across the other elements of the Rural Community Development Support Service for the Derry City and Strabane District Council area have also been reduced. DAERA have made the allocations to each Council area based only on population statistics. However in relation to the Rural Development Programme (LAGs), currently being delivered by Councils the allocations have been made based not only on population statistics but have included deprivation measures as well. If the same allocation measure had been utilized the allocation to the Derry City and Strabane District Council area would have been in the region of £82k instead of the current allocation of £61k. Again this will result in a reduction in the support which can be provided to community groups across the rural area.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The work undertaken by The Villages Together group under the Rural Community Development Support Service programme will finish on 31 March 2018. This will have a detrimental effect on the support that can be provided to the PUL community in the rural area.
- 3.2 The resources provided by DAERA under the Rural Community Development Support Service Programme to Derry City and Strabane District Council area have been reduced as a result of an allocation formula which does not take into account deprivation measures. However deprivation measures are included within the formula for allocation of resources to the Rural Development Programme delivered through the Local Action Groups and administered by Councils across Northern Ireland. This will result in a decrease in the community development support which can be provided across the rural area over the next 3 years.

4 Financial, Equality, Legal, HR, Improvement and other Implications

- 4.1 The Department for Communities have provided Council with an additional £30k for community support within the current financial year which enables a previous shortfall of £30k in venues fund support to be covered by this VCU funding. This shortfall had already been allocated through Rates and can now be rolled over for allocation to the next financial year.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 That Members approve the allocation of £30k to provide additional support for a rural community support programme across the rural area including a PUL element.

- 5.2 That Members endorse a letter to be sent to DAERA to request that the allocations of funding for the DAERA Rural Community Development Support Programme be based on a formula which includes deprivation as well as population.

Background Papers