



TODMORDEN TOWN COUNCIL

# TODMORDEN TOWN COUNCIL

## REPORT TO RESOURCES COMMITTEE

<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	<b>Colin Hill - Town Clerk &amp; Responsible Financial Officer</b>
<b>TEL NO</b>	<b>01706 548135</b>
<b>EMAIL</b>	<b>townclerk@todmorden-tc.gov.</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>Grant Clawback and outstanding awards</b>

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To remind Members that because of the impact of Covid 19 restrictions, many events planned for 2019/20 were cancelled.
2. To remind Members that it was agreed to take a sympathetic view where expenditure had been incurred mid project, and irrecoverable losses incurred because ticket sales could then not be achieved.
3. To inform Members that in agreeing for the Town Clerk to take forward discussions with these grant beneficiaries, consideration should be given as to the impact of seeking refunds on the future viability (financial/operational/morale) and likelihood of the voluntary group wishing to continue to deliver future events for the benefit of Todmorden.
4. To advise Members that following these discussions, several grants awarded prior to April 2020 totalling £4177.04 have been repaid, plus £1000 awarded in this financial year for an event that could not take place, but was replaced with an alternative grant that has been delivered.
5. To ask Members to consider two specific requests, one by Todmorden Folk Festival in respect of their Grant awarded last year of £2,250 and one for Walsden Cricket Club awarded in April 2020 of £3,000.
6. To seek Members views at this early stage that in the event of an underspend of overall budget for this financial year, events related grant budgets for 2021/22 be increased in order to encourage more events related activity next year to help in Todmorden's economic recovery.

### BACKGROUND

7. Of those grant beneficiaries approached about repayment, one position had not been clarified until now, relating to the Todmorden Folk Festival grant of £2,250 made, which regrettably has led to irrecoverable costs of £1,514. This is a very sizeable event and perhaps not surprising that a loss of this nature has been incurred.

8. In discussing this situation with the lead representative for the Folk Festival, it is encouraging to note that there is still a willingness to continue with the Folk Festival despite the difficulties of having to deal with the cancellation of the event.
9. Whilst offering to repay the balance of £736, in discussing future options with them, to help position them better to deliver a remote/physical presence for next year, it would be helpful to them if they could retain this sum towards meeting technical equipment costs to assist in being able to deliver an event remotely on ticket selling basis – see Appendix 1 – letter of request.
10. In the Park Productions were awarded a grant of £ 981 to hold an event in Centre Vale Park but was conditional upon Calderdale MBC licencing the event. It is highly unlikely this will happen before the end of March 2021.
11. They have advised that they will be seeking to run an outdoor family event in summer 2021 event ( subject to social distancing if then required) and will be making an application to the Arts Council, for which it would be helpful to have a generic letter of support.
12. They have been advised that whilst the present grant award has been withdrawn, they should apply again once their ideas are firmed up in the next financial year, at which stage if agreed by Members, we would be able to provide a specific letter of commitment should they wish to use this as matched contribution to lever in a larger Arts Council Grant.
13. Walsden Cricket Club were awarded a Grant in April 2020 of £3,000 toward provision of disabled toilets costing £12,900, Covid 19 has not only severely impacted on their day to day operations, including meeting additional costs with making the Club Covid secure, but also the availability of approaching other grant sources and the opportunity to generate income themselves to contribute to these costs.
14. The grant was made conditional upon confirmation of other grant funds and their contribution being available and completion by March 2021. The grant has not been paid to them but held in our accounts as a commitment.
15. The Club feels that because of Covid 19 delays, it will not be possible to meet the end of March 2021 timescale and therefore request that this grant be carried over into the next financial year, thereby enabling them to also seek other grant funds, once other grant schemes are fully opened again.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

16. Repayment of grants to the extent £5,177 is a good outcome given the potential for all of this to have been non-recoverable.
17. The timing of Covid interruption on the Todmorden Folk Festival meant that elements of the overall festival cost had already been committed and work carried out. Whilst we could technically seek repayment, they do not have the funds and it is felt would place the future delivery of this festival at risk if we did so.
18. In noting that the payment of the grant of £2,250 has already been made and reflected in the Town Council's current financial position, to allow for the group to retain the amount of £736 to help position them for the future, would not place any pressure on the Council's financial position.

19. Given that the Walsden Cricket Club grant is already committed and reflected within the existing budget, an end of year carry-over of £3,000 would not present any financial concern.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

20. That the Resources Committee note the progress in repayment of grants previously awarded.
21. That the Resources Committee agree that the Todmorden Folk festival may retain the amount of £736 to be used as indicated in their letter of request – Appendix 1
22. That the Resources Committee agree that the grant award of £3,000 towards disabled toilet provision to be carried over into the next financial year subject to payment only being made once all other funds are confirmed as in place.
23. That the Town Clerk be authorised to write a generic letter of support to In the Park Productions to be used in connection with an Arts Council Grant Application.
24. That the Resources Committee give thought at this early stage as to whether additional provision for 2021/22 should be considered, should there be an underspend in the 2020/21 financial outturn.

#### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

25. Members agreement is required to agree that an amount of clawback grant can be retained by the grant beneficiary for a related additional use.
26. Members agreement is required to authorise a carry- over into the next financial year of an undrawn grant award.
27. An indication of Member views towards possible use of underspend will help end of year financial planning and should Members be wishing to stimulate such activity next year, enable a proactive approach to be made to previous events deliverers about increased funds availability for 2021/22.

#### **POLICY IMPLICATIONS:**

28. None arising from this report

#### **DETAILS OF CONSULTATION:**

29. None.

#### **SUPPORTING PAPERS:**

30. Appendix 1 – letter of request Todmorden Folk Festival

**FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT: Colin Hill**