

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Delegated Officer Decision – 03 February 2025

Report Title

Town Centre Events Grants Programme – Spring 2025

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Andrew Bramidge, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

Amy Lilley, Creative Programming & Events Manager
01709 916071 or amy.lilley@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Boston Castle

Report Summary

The Council's Event Team has received a grant via the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme. The grant is specifically to support events taking place in Rotherham Town Centre, encouraging increased footfall, dwell time and perception of safety.

The programme includes large scale outdoor events alongside smaller weekly programming to test and evaluate the impact of regular programming. The third grants programme was promoted as an open call to Rotherham-based creative groups and businesses to programme activity across Saturdays throughout March which fills a gap within the Town Centre programme between major events throughout the Spring season, and acting as lead-up events to the major event Roots: Rotherham Street Carnival on 29th March.

The open call for this round of applicants received 7 applications, of which 6 met the criteria and 4 are recommended for approval.

Recommendations

1. To award 4 Event Grants of £2,000 to support community event organisers to undertake activities in the Town Centre over a four-week period.

2. It is proposed that the charges associated with the Event Application pack for events taking place on Council land are waived for any events supported through the grants programme, however a completed pack will still be required for due diligence.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Equalities Impact Screening
Appendix 2 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Rotherham Cultural Strategy 2019-2026

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

N/A

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Town Centre Events Grants Programme – Summer 2024

1. Background

- 1.1 On Monday 10th June 2019 the Council endorsed the new Cultural Strategy for Rotherham which was co-produced by the Cultural Partnership Board with stakeholders from across the borough. The new Cultural Strategy set out seven game-changing ideas which included 'Amazing Events' and 'Vibrant Heart' on strengthening the expertise in delivering high-quality, high-profile events and building a high-quality cultural offer as part of the town centre attraction.
- 1.2 The Council's Event Team has received a grant via the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme. The grant is specifically to support events taking place in Rotherham Town Centre, encouraging increased footfall, dwell time and perception of safety.

2. Key Issues

2.1 Grants Programme Criteria

2.1.1 The programme includes large scale outdoor events alongside smaller weekly programming to test and evaluate the impact of regular programming. The third grants programme was promoted as an open call to Rotherham-based creative groups and businesses to programme activity across Saturday's in March which fills a gap within the Town Centre programme between major events throughout the Spring season.

2.1.2 The criteria for the grants programme included:

- Take place within All Saints Square or Forge Island in Rotherham Town centre.
- Be a family-friendly event
- Take place on one of the following Saturdays: 1st, 8th, 15th or 22nd March 2025
- Not exceed an overall audience number of 1000 people, in line with the crowd capacities within the square
- Be safely staffed with the event organiser taking full responsibility for staffing (i.e., not requiring staff from the RMBC events team)
- Adhere to health & safety standards. If successful you will be required to provide a risk assessment for the set-up and delivery of your event
- Not be a protest

2.1.3

Eligible applicants must meet the following criteria to be eligible:

- The lead applicant and Event Organiser must be a constituted group or an individual registered with companies house, and must be based in Rotherham.
- Successful applicants must agree to take part in an evaluation programme

- Successful applicants must display all relevant partner logos on all promotional material Event Organisers may be asked if photography and filming can take place at their events, please notify us on your application form if you would be happy to host the programme photographer/filmmaker.
- Successful applicants must promote the event through their own marketing channels

2.2 Round 1: Winter Town Centre Events

2.2.1 The first iteration of Town Centre Event Grants funded through the UKSPF funding took place in March 2024. As the time of year presented challenges around weather the grants funded activities that could take place at indoor Town Centre or outdoor at All Saints' Square.

2.2.2 The following events were funded:

- ArtWorks, Drawing Together: 9th March in All Saints Square – Drawing Together was a collaborative mark making session for the general public and ArtWorks members. Throughout the day through audience interaction sculptural cubes took shape and transformed in All Saints Square. 70+ people interacted with ArtWorks during the event between 10am – 3pm.
- Khula Arts, Ubuntu Togetherness: 16th March in All Saints Square – Khula Arts brought traditional African drumming and dance performances to Rotherham Town Centre, as well as two drop-in South African Dancing workshops. Approx 80 people.
- 10th Anniversary Celebration of Makers Emporium: 23rd March at Makers Emporium on High Street - free family friendly craft workshops, makers demonstrations and performances throughout the day in the shop. Approx 50 people.
- South Yorkshire Performance Academy: 23rd March at George Wright Hotel - Open Mic Day' style event celebrating the talent of Rotherham people. With young people organising the entire day to develop their essential life and teamwork skills. The event was sold out, with approximately 100 people.

2.2.3 The four events attracted a total of approximately 300 people. Though numbers were quite low compared to our council led Town Centre Events, those that did attend were deeply engaged participants and interacted with the offers. Given the tight timescale the Council and the event organisers had to promote the events (due to agreement of funding allocation from UK Shared Prosperity Fund), the partners were happy with the public response and the service has used the learning to create a marketing plan to promote all the Summer events together through banners, A1 boards and social media.

2.2.4 As the locations for the first round of funding was not specified, there was a mixture of public space in All Saints' Square, inside a shop and a ticketed private event in George Wright Hotel. Out of the four events, the two in All Saints' Square received really positive feedback from the public and the artists, attracting passersby and engaging with a wide age group. These two

events animated the space and were more prominent in the Town Centre. The feedback received influenced the decision to specify that the next round of events should all take place in All Saints Square, to ensure they are attended by a wide range of people and animate the Town Centre over the Summer Holidays.

2.2.5 Attempts were made to capture demographic and equalities data relating to audience which would help to inform targeting of future community support programmes. Unfortunately, due to limited events staff capacity because of sickness, the team weren't able to capture data during the events. To capture data in the Summer, a rota will be created for data collection across the events team and volunteers.

2.3. Round 2: Summer Town Centre Events Grants

2.3.1 The second iteration of Town Centre Event Grants funded through UKSPF funding took place in August and September 2024. As the time of year reduced challenges around weather and based on feedback from the Spring 2024 grant round, the grants funded activities had to take place within All Saints' Square to increase public awareness of them and widen engagement opportunities with shoppers and passersby. The events also had to be family-friendly.

The following events were funded:

- Rotherham BMX Freestyle Summer Coaching, 3rd August – A day of free BMX activities in All Saints Square, where participants aged 8-14 years old received 1-2-1 training, were able to borrow all the equipment needed to have a go for the first time, or just enjoy the ramps at their leisure.
- Khula Arts Rhythms of the Street, 17th August – Khula Arts brought African drumming and dance performances to the square once again, as well as inviting the audiences to have a go at drumming themselves during workshops throughout the day.
- Chef's Counter Community Picnic, 31st August – Local business Chef's Counter provided a picnic style family feast, alongside a range of cooking demos from different cuisines throughout the day and interactive food preparation areas for families to prepare their own snacks together with the support of their chefs.
- Rotherham Open, 28th September - A pilot event for the creative community in Rotherham, Rotherham Open offered exhibiting and performance opportunities to emerging artists. The event saw artists takeover stalls in All Saints' Square, as well as exhibiting their artwork in windows and walls across independent businesses.

2.3.2 The four events attracted a total of approximately 750 people. Though visitor figures did increase from the previous round due to being in an outdoor public location, they were still quite low compared to our council led Town Centre Events but those that did attend were deeply engaged participants and interacted with the offers. The events were promoted as part of a Summer marketing campaign around events every Saturday in Rotherham Town Centre, and footfall in the town centre has been known to decrease

over the School Summer Holiday period. Partners were happy with the public response and the service has used the learning to create a marketing plan which includes further promotion from the RMBC comms team including a press release that will include all March events.

2.3.3 Attempts were made to work with casual events staff to capture demographic and equalities data relating to audience which would help to inform targeting of future community support programmes. Unfortunately, due to limited availability of the casual events team and limited capacity of the core events team to support over every Saturday in August between major event delivery, audience surveys weren't able to be completed. This has informed our decision to commission external evaluation company Kada Research who the team work with to collate audience data at all the major events to undertake the audience research for the Spring 2025 Town Centre Event Grants, to ensure this data is collated.

2.4 Round 3: Spring Town Centre Events Grants

Applications have been invited from communities, groups and businesses across the borough to create activities for the Town Centre.

2.4.1 The open call for this round of applicants received seven applications, of which six met the criteria and four are recommended for approval. The application that did not meet the criteria was received from an internal council service who were not eligible to apply for this particular grant opportunity as explained in the guidance document.

2.4.2 Of the six eligible applications four are recommended for approval including:

Organisation	Activity	Justification	Value
Rotherham District Civic Society	Rotherham Historical Scavenger Hunt from All Saints' Square – a new historical scavenger hunt for families to complete together, with a token prize at the end once completed. Participants will follow a newly designed map that highlights some of Rotherham Town centre's most interesting historical buildings and heritage sites, starting at All Saints' Square. The route will be	Meets all criteria and responds to the CCoC theme - Who We Are, Where We Come From. It is not an organisation we've worked with in the last few years for our cultural offer in the town centre, this provides us with a good opportunity to engage with them and support new heritage based activities. The event and activity will help build pride of place, is engaging and participatory, and	£2,000

	pedestrian/wheelchair /pushchair/mobility scooter friendly.	encourages people to move and explore the town centre.	
Rock Out Music	Rock Out Music at Forge Island or All Saints' Square – a showcase of talented local young bands and opportunities for the public to try an instrument. The performances will showcase an interesting blend of British pop and rock and Gypsy Jazz musical styles, demonstrating the musical diversity and talent of the musicians in Rotherham.	Meets all criteria and responds to the CCoC theme - Who We Are, Where We Come From and You're Not From New York City, You're From Rotherham. Rock Out Music is a new music provision in the Town Centre, and the selection group are keen to work with them for the first time to develop the music offer at events. Live music performances have proved very popular with the public and the event is ambitious and achievable for the budget.	£2,000
South Yorkshire Performance Academy	Young Peoples Steering Committee present a music and vocal celebration of Rotherhams Youth. The event will be a performance of music and singing from their young people. SYPA currently works with sixty young people aged 10-25; including lyricists, songwriters, drummers, vocalists, singers. The group is formed of young people with additional support needs whose creativity achieves positive outcomes to their wellbeing. The event will be an opportunity for the	Meets all criteria. Successfully delivered an event as part of the March grants for events, which received positive feedback from the attendees and the young group who led the event. The event responds to the CCoC theme – Plug In & Play and Who We Are and Where We Come From. The events team will work with the group to find a suitable location either All Saints Square or Forge Island where their group will feel comfortable, exploring a potential indoor venue as well.	£2,000

	group to share their talents with the public, as well as offering them event management experience and a social space for networking.		
Rotherham BMX	<p>Rov'Rum BMX Jam at Forge Island.</p> <p>A high-energy, action-packed event that brings BMX culture to life in the heart of Rotherham. The event will showcase the creativity, talent, and athleticism of young riders, featuring freestyle BMX demonstrations, beginner workshops, and competitions designed to engage both participants and spectators.</p>	<p>Meets all criteria and responds to CCoC themes Plug In & Play and You're Not From New York City, You're From Rov-rum. Rotherham BMX successfully delivered an event as part of the Summer grants programme which received positive feedback.</p> <p>The event will be engaging for families and offers an opportunity for free physical activity outside of our flagship events.</p>	£2,000
Sub Total			£8,000
Marketing & Evaluation			£1,500
Total			£9,500

2.5 Event Application Packs

2.5.1 A completed Event Application Pack is required for all events taking place on Council land before permission is granted for the event to go ahead, in order to ensure that the proposed activities are appropriate to the location and the necessary insurance and risk assessments have been undertaken. An administration charge applies for the packs which is published in the Council's Fees & Charges and set at £25.50 for event organisers and £20.50 for registered charities. It is proposed that these fees are waived for any events in receipt of Town Centre Events Grant, however a completed pack will still be required for due diligence.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 Do Nothing – Event organisation carries a range of costs such as venue hire, marketing, equipment hire, catering and paying performers. In addition, costs associated with Council fees and charges related event application packs for

events taking place on Council land can make the cost of hosting event prohibitive. Without support from the Council organisers may not have the means to organise events which stifles talent development in the community and places additional pressure on the available resources within the Council's events team.

- 3.2 Offer Town Centre Event Grants – The package of support outlined in this report will allow community event organisers to develop their knowledge and experience of event organisation, supported by the Council's Events Team. The activities supported will bring a programme of regular activities to Rotherham Town Centre throughout March delivering against the objectives of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund grant.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 The Leader and Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion & Neighbourhood Working, and the Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs & Local Economy (including the remit for Town Centre Events) have been consulted on the proposals and are supportive of the recommendations.
- 4.2 The Town Centre Events Grants programme was advertised as a borough-wide opportunity allowing all communities the opportunity to participate.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The Town Centre Events Grants programme has now closed for applications and successful applicants will be notified (subject to approval) w/c 3rd February. This programme will be managed and administered by the Council's Events Team.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications (to be written by the relevant Head of Finance and the Head of Procurement on behalf of s151 Officer)

- 6.1 As grant arrangements fall outside the procurement legislation, there are no direct procurement implications associated with the community grants programme with the exception of the costs associated for marketing and evaluation which must be procured in accordance with the Council's Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules.
- 6.2 A programme of Town Centre Events Grants, funding for events and supporting costs, has been drawn up estimating to cost £9,500. The funding for the programme has been secured via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Grant. Grant agreements will be in place to ensure funding is utilised as intended.

7. Legal Advice and Implications (to be written by Legal Officer on behalf of Assistant Director Legal Services)

- 7.1 The allocation of grants to the four organisations for the Town Centre Activities are outside the scope of the Public Contract Regulations 2015, and

the open call for interest and subsequent evaluation comply with Rule 12 of the Council's Financial, Procurement and Procedure Rules. Legal Services should be consulted on the form of grants to be used.

Any grants awarded will need to comply with the terms of the SYMCA grant to the Council.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no direct HR implications as a result of this proposal.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 All events recommended for support via the Town Centre Event Grants programme are family-friendly events aimed at enabling all members of the community to feel welcome and supported to participate.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 An Equalities Impact Screening has been completed and can be found at Appendix 1.

10.2 The Events Team has taken measures to ensure that the programme of community support is inclusive and accessible to all. Attempts have been made to capture demographic and equalities data relating to audience which will help to inform targeting of future community support programmes.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 A Carbon Impact Assessment has been completed and can be found at Appendix 2.

11.2 The events and activities supported by the grants are relatively small in scale and therefore their impact is considered to be low.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1. The proposed events are delivered by community groups and organisation with support facilitated by the Council. The recommended proposals in this report are of benefit to community partners across the borough.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Insurance and risk assessments – The responsibility for the safe management and delivery of all events lies with the event organiser. Although the Council is facilitating support to community event organisers, each organiser is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate levels of insurance and risk assessment are in place. For events taking place on Council land this will be checked and assessed by the Events Team via the Event Application Pack process.

14. Accountable Officers

Leanne Buchan, Head of Creative Programming & Engagement
Amy Lilley, Creative Programming & Events Manager

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Named officer	Click here to enter a date.
Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Named officer	Click here to enter a date.

Report Author: Amy Lilley, Creative Programming & Events Manager
01709 916071 or amy.lilley@rotherham.gov.uk

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01709 916071 or

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