



REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, PLACE & COMMUNITIES

LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME: TALENTED ATHLETES 2020-2021

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Local Improvement Scheme (LIS) Talented Athletes awards for 2020-21.

Information

2. At the Communities and Place Committee on 03 September 2020, Elected Members agreed to launch the Talented Athletes Fund 2020-21 in November 2020.
3. The Talented Athletes Fund is part of the three-year Local Improvement Scheme 2018-21 which helps to deliver the Nottinghamshire County Council strategic priorities. The Talented Athletes Fund runs on an annual basis (this is due to the unpredictable nature of the Athletes; for example, Athletes may not be selected for their squad in subsequent years, they may change sport categories, or be unable to compete due to injury).
4. This is the third and final round of the Talented Athletes Fund under the current Local Improvement Scheme 2018-21.
5. As with previous rounds, the Talented Athletes budget for 2020-21 is £21,000 and the maximum award per Athlete is £400 towards costs associated with the Athletes' sport, such as purchasing equipment, training and when appropriate, coaching, competition fees and travel. Consideration has been given to the impact of Covid-19 restrictions at any given time.
6. Applications were invited during a 4-week window from 10 November 2020 to 07 December 2020. The Communities team worked with colleagues in Communications and Marketing to agree the Communications Plan to promote the Talented Athletes Fund throughout the County. A range of communication channels were used encourage applications from across all districts, including social media, Email Me, the local press and Active Notts. All the information relating to the Fund, including the online application form, was published on the County Council website. Case studies showcasing achievements from previous Talented

Athletes were used as part of the promotional campaign to encourage applications from across all districts.

7. The Communities Team received 86 applications for this round, which is a slight reduction from the 90 applications received for the previous round in 2019. 75 applications were from Athletes living in Nottinghamshire districts and 11 applications were submitted by Athletes not residing in the county boundary of Nottinghamshire. These were not eligible for funding.
8. In previous Talented Athletes rounds, in support of their application, applicants were required to provide information about their achievements from the previous 12-months. However, to comply with the COVID-19 restrictions, many sports competitions were suspended / cancelled and consequently, most athletes would not be able to provide such 'achievement' information. Therefore, to ensure that athletes were not disadvantaged by the pandemic, applicants were asked to provide information from the past 24-months in support of their application.
9. Assessment criteria was designed to correspond to the questions in the application form and an endorsement from the National Governing Body (NGB) was also requested in support of the application from each Athlete. The full eligibility and assessment criteria are listed in **Appendix 1** to this report.
10. All applications were assessed by Officers in the Communities team and almost 80% of all applications were moderated to provide assurance regarding the consistency of the assessment process. Active Notts also supported the process by providing independent advice with regards to specific sports-related queries.
11. Out of the 86 applications received, 75 (87%) meet the full criteria and therefore, have been recommended for Talented Athletes funding for 2020-21, totalling £21,000.
12. The recommended applications include representation from all Nottinghamshire districts and cover 20 sport disciplines.
13. The recommendations assume that all Athletes will receive a satisfactory endorsement from their NGB, which are in progress. **Appendix 1** to this report includes:
 - **Table 1:** The number of recommended Talented Athlete applications by district;
 - **Table 2:** The number of Talented Athlete recommendations by sport / discipline.
14. Due to the high volume of applications and limited budget, applications were grouped by the assessment score and the funding allocations were adjusted according to the assessment score. The maximum grant award of £400 is recommended for the top 17 highest scoring Athletes residing in Nottinghamshire. The number of Athletes recommended for each level of funding award (£400, £300, £200 and £150), is provided in **Appendix 1, Table 3** to this report.

15. As part of the Terms and Conditions of the funding award, Talented Athletes agree to:

- Act as 'Sporting Ambassadors' for Nottinghamshire, which includes providing information about their sporting performance and achievements throughout the year. The Council's Communications and Marketing team will use the Athlete achievements to help promote any future Talented Athletes Fund and relevant sporting events / promotional campaigns.
- Complete an 'End of Year Monitoring Report', which includes providing information about their sporting performance and achievements and confirmation that the grant has been spent in accordance with the Talented Athletes agreement.

16. Talented Athletes are also encouraged to post their own success stories on social media and to follow and tag Nottinghamshire County Council with **#NottsLIS** and **#NottsTalentedAthletes** .

17. All applicants will be signposted to other possible sources of funding and support via Active Notts.

Other Options Considered

18. All the applications received have undergone the Council's rigorous assessment and moderation process.

Reasons for Recommendations

19. The applications recommended for funding in **Appendix 1** to this report meet the published criteria and therefore, the Athletes contribute to the Local Improvement Scheme and the wider strategic priorities of the County Council. It is noted that the Athletes have demonstrated:

- A high level of sporting achievements locally, nationally, and internationally - and some have overcome significant adversity to succeed;
- Positive contributions to the wider community as sports ambassadors, volunteer coaches for younger, aspiring athletes and charitable fundraising and support.

Statutory and Policy Implications

20. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Data Protection and Information Governance

21. The Talented Athletes Fund had been administered in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The Nottinghamshire County Council Privacy Notice (as published on the Council's website), explains how the Council uses information about grant applicants and how we protect their privacy. As part of the application form, applicants were asked to confirm that they have read and accept the Privacy Notice.

Financial Implications

22. These are contained within this report.

Public Sector Equality Duty implications

23. The Council has taken steps to advance equality of opportunity, for example by updating the application questions to ensure that restrictions as a result of pandemic would not be a barrier and by encouraging Countywide participation through a wide-reaching Communications and Marketing campaign. Consequently, the Council received a similar number of applications to last year, including applications from all districts, applications from Para-Athletes and applications from Athletes with disadvantaged backgrounds.

Safeguarding of Children Implications

24. As part of the application process, a parent / legal guardian was required to give their consent for Athletes under the age of 16. The Council received applications from 35 Athletes who are 15 years old or under (i.e. approximately 40% of the total number of applications received).

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

- 1) Members approve the 75 recommended awards as stated in **Appendix 1** to this report, totalling £21,000. This recommendation is proposed due to:
 - Meeting the criteria for the Talented Athletes Fund 2020-21;
 - Demonstrating a high level of sporting achievements locally, nationally, and internationally – and overcoming significant adversity to succeed;
 - Making positive contributions to the wider community as sports ambassadors, volunteer coaches for younger, aspiring athletes and for their charitable fundraising and support.

Derek Higton
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Constitutional Comments (LW 19/01/2021)

25. Community and Place Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of the report.

Financial Comments (SES 19/01/2021)

26. The financial implications are set out in the report. Budgetary provision of £21,000 for Talented Athletes is available as part of the Local Improvement Scheme.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All