

**An Roinn Iompair
Turasóireachta agus Spóirt**

**Department of Transport,
Tourism and Sport**



Oifig an Aire
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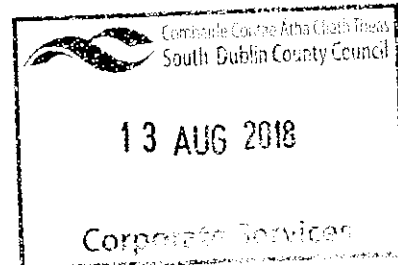
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Mr Colm Murphy
South Dublin County Council
County Hall
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Our Ref: SR/18/22739

10 August 2018

Dear Mr Murphy,

I have been asked by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, Shane Ross T.D. to refer to your recent correspondence in connection with the motion agreed at the meeting of South Dublin County Council on the 11th June.

The Sports Capital Programme (SCP) operated on an annual basis up to and including 2008. There was a Programme in 2012, 2014, 2015 and 2017. It is generally agreed that the programme has transformed the sporting landscape of Ireland with improvements in the quality and quantity of sporting facilities in virtually every village, town and city in the country.

The most recent (2017) round of the SCP attracted a record 2,320 applications. In November and December last, Minister Ross and Minister of State Griffin announced €60m in allocations to a record 1,800 projects. Subsequently 149 appeals were submitted in respect of decisions to make applications invalid under the 2017 round and of these, 35 were upheld. Appeals were upheld where the appellant demonstrated that the Department erred in its decision to make the application invalid, where it was agreed that the Department's guide to making an application was not sufficiently clear in relation to why the proposed application may be invalid, or where it was felt the original decision involved an overly strict interpretation of the SCP terms and conditions.

Following the conclusion of the allocations and appeals process, a full review of the 2017

SCP was undertaken and has been published on the Department's website at (www.dttas.gov.ie). The review highlights many positive aspects of the 2017 round of the programme including the simplified application process, the greater transparency in terms of how allocations were decided and the introduction of an appeals process for invalid applications. Areas requiring improvement are also identified however, in particular the need for greater clarity in the Department's own guide to making an application. The Review also suggests a number of measures aimed at further prioritising applications from disadvantaged areas and all suggestions will be incorporated into the terms and conditions of the next round of the programme. In this regard, an announcement in relation to the timing of the next round is expected in the coming weeks.

Separately, the Council may be interested to note that a full Value For Money Review of the Sports Capital Programme is underway which is being led by the Department's Strategic Research and Analysis unit, with oversight from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. Preliminary findings from this are expected later this year.

Finally, the Council should be aware that the recently launched National Sports Policy includes a specific focus on how Government intend to fund sports facilities, including through the SCP, in the years ahead.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Smith
Private Secretary to Minister Ross

*The Minister is a Designated Public Official under the Regulation of Lobbying Act, 2015
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