

Document Pack

**Committee and Members' Services Section
Chief Executive's Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**



5th November, 2009

MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Dear Councillor

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room (Room G05), City Hall on Wednesday, 11th November, 2009 at 4.30 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully

PETER McNANEY

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Routine Matters
 - (a) Apologies
 - (b) Minutes
2. Gasworks Northern Fringe Presentation (Pages 1 - 4)
3. Independent Review of Economic Policy (Pages 5 - 48)
4. Economic Development Unit Update (Pages 49 - 54)
5. Markets Unit Update (Pages 55 - 58)
6. Tourism Unit Update (Pages 59 - 66)
7. Tourism Monitor and Research Services (Pages 67 - 68)
8. Broadway Junction Public Art (Pages 69 - 70)

9. Department for Social Development's Area Advice Centre Locations Consultation (Pages 71 - 228)
10. Support for Sport - Event Funding (Pages 229 - 234)
11. Cycling Tour Series (Pages 235 - 238)
12. Departmental Plan Quarterly Update (Pages 239 - 286)
13. Proposed Council Strategy to Tackle Poverty and Inequalities (Pages 287 - 290)

**Belfast City Council**

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Gasworks Northern Fringe Presentation
Date:	11 November 2009
Reporting Officer:	Shirley McCay/Tim Husbands, Interim Co-Directors of Development
Contact Officer:	Pamela Davison, Estates Surveyor, ext 3506

Relevant Background Information

An integrated design team led by Consarc Design Group has been working since May 2008 on the preparation of an outline planning application for the Northern Fringe site which covers 6.7 acres of gross developable land, the last phase of the Gasworks Estate. Members agreed at the meeting of 16 September 2009 to receive a presentation from Consarc Design Group on the development proposals for this significant regeneration site.

Key IssuesLand Uses

Through discussions between the design team, the Council, the statutory consultees, and the neighbouring community, a Masterplan has evolved developed in cognisance of planning, transport, environment and contextual considerations. Five development sub-plot parcels have emerged to be identified in the presentation as sites A, B, C, D and E. A key objective of the plan is to ensure each parcel made a significant and individual contribution to the overall Gasworks complex.

Sites A and B bounded by Cromac Street and Raphael Street are designated as Gateway sites in the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan, occupying a pivotal landmark site and focal point on an arterial route into the city centre. Urban design guidance and discussions at the Dbmap (draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan) Inquiry indicated acceptable height ranges of between six and nine storeys. The buildings on site will accommodate offices and a carefully designed setback along Raphael Street addresses the relationship with the three existing dwellings.

Site C is at the rear of the existing hotel and will accommodate an extension to the

Radisson Hotel. Members agreed at Committee of 16 January 2008 to officers entering into negotiations with Inislyn, the developers of the Radisson SAS Hotel, in a one to one deal in order to maximise the potential of sites C and D. It is envisaged that this development block will evolve in a similar design to the existing hotel. It will accommodate bedrooms, meeting/function rooms and conference facilities. Site D accommodates an office development and multi-storey car-park for 300 plus relocated spaces.

The Estates Management Unit in the Core Improvement Team are leading negotiations with Inislyn. Land and Property Services (LP&S) have confirmed that Inislyn are best placed to realise the fullest potential of sites C and D through greater density of development by building adjacent to the existing hotel. Heads of terms are under negotiation between BCC and Inislyn and LP&S are instructed to confirm that any agreement between the parties brought before Members provides best value to Council.

Site E is located adjacent to the River Lagan and the Halifax building and has a distinct context. The development opportunity inspired the creation of an iconic river-front building with office use in two distinct structures interlinked into a high quality design. This layout and siting has been carefully designed to respect the existing residential properties on McAuley Street.

The Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE) site adjoining the Northern Fringe lands remains on the market. However, in the current economic climate NIE are in no rush to sell. The Northern Fringe lands have been designed to ensure that in the future BCC may be in a position to influence the development on this site. Contamination-Part III of the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, the enactment of which is impending, outlines the regulatory regime under which land and water contamination issues in Northern Ireland are assessed and managed. Discussions with the Northern Ireland Environment Agency have triggered a series of actions as a result of the proposed planning submission.

- A preliminary risk assessment of the site's historic usage to highlight potential contaminant sources and potential human health and environmental risks.
- Intrusive site investigation works.
- A quantitative contamination assessment.

Current emerging issues show that the subsoils are heavily impacted with contaminants throughout the soil profile with the most concentrated contaminants located within the top 6.0metres below ground level. Whilst a detailed risk assessment and detailed remedial strategy will be required, direct engagement with NIEA by BCC has begun to ascertain our statutory responsibility under legislation as yet enacted and also any retrospective liability for the existing Gasworks Estate.

Community Gain

The Asset Management Group are considering what options, if any, are available to BCC to provide" payback" to the local community from completion of the Gasworks Estate. Until the costs and liabilities of BCC are fully known in relation to the contamination issue no decision can yet be reached. However, if Members are satisfied with the development proposals as outlined by Consarc Design Group in their presentation, further engagement with the adjoining residents and the Markets Development Association will take place.

Resource Implications

Financial

A provisional asset valuation for the Gasworks Northern Fringe Lands of £6 million per acre at 1 April 2009.

Recommendations

1. Members are asked to approve the development proposals for the Gasworks Northern Fringe lands as presented by Consarc Design Group.
2. Members are asked to approve further engagement with the Markets Community Association and adjoining residents on the development proposals.
3. Members are also asked to note the contamination issue and that a further report will be brought back to Committee. Legal Services will be meeting with NIE to discuss the impacts of the yet to be enacted Part III of the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 on the development of the Gasworks Northern Fringe lands.

Decision Tracking

Following approval by Committee of the development proposals and resolution of the contaminated land and community issues, an outline planning application will be submitted to Planning Service for the Gasworks Northern Fringe lands.

Timeline: April 2010

Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay

Key to Abbreviations

Dbmap - draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan
BCC - Belfast City Council
MDA - Markets Development Association
LP&S – Land & Property Services

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Independent Review of Economic Policy – Consultation Response
Date:	11 November 2009
Reporting Officer:	Shirley McCay/Tim Husbands Interim Co-Directors of Development
Contact Officer:	Lisa Martin, Economic Development Manager, ext 3427

Relevant Background Information

The purpose of this report is to bring to the attention of the Development Committee details of a consultation on the Independent Review of Economic Policy (Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment and Invest NI).

Members will be aware the Review was commissioned by the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Arlene Foster MLA, in December 2008 and was undertaken by an independent panel, chaired by Professor Richard Barnett, Vice Chancellor of the University of Ulster. Other members of the panel included Professor Brian Ashcroft, University of Strathclyde and Board member of the Economic Research Institute of NI; Dr Graham Gudgin, Centre for Business Research, University of Cambridge, and Oxford Economics; Professor Michael Moore, Queen's University and Harvard University; Mr John Wright, former international banking director and current Chairman and non-executive director of a number of companies in the UK and overseas.

The Review Panel was asked to determine whether existing DETI and Invest NI policies, programmes and resources will sufficiently contribute to the economic goals of the Programme for Government and to make recommendations designed to strengthen the NI economy.

Key recommendations put forward by the report include:

- Core economic functions (covering DETI and Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) areas of responsibility) should be brought under a single 'Department of the Economy'
- The Executive should establish a permanent sub-committee, chaired by the ETI Minister, to prioritise action on the economy. The sub-committee should oversee the development and implementation of an economic strategy, building on the

- findings of the Independent Review of Economic Policy, as a matter of urgency
- More emphasis needs to be placed on developing a portfolio of policies to promote Innovation and Research and Development (R&D), and there are a number of specific recommendations in this regard
 - Invest NI should have a more focused, dedicated and professional approach to strengthening export performance in both manufacturing and tradable services
 - Invest NI should be allowed more freedom to operate, enabling the organisation to be more responsive to business needs
 - A small business unit to be created within Invest NI and the approach of working only with 'clients' should cease

The IREP Executive Summary is attached in Appendix 1.

The Council's proposed consultation response is attached in Appendix 2.

The closing date for responses is 16 November, 2009.

Key Issues

The Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to the recent IREP as this seminal report and its recommendations will make an effective contribution to the future of the Northern Ireland economy and the future of economic development activity.

The Council supports many of the recommendations set out within the review however there are a number of specific comments and issues that have been outlined within our response document which it would like to see reflected in the final document.

Key issues include:

- The Council is deeply dissatisfied at the lack of recognition of the role of local authorities as bodies that are capable of making a unique and complementary contribution to the social and economic prosperity of the City and the NI region.
- Despite recent commitments by the Northern Ireland Assembly to give increasing responsibility for this work to local authorities with the Review of Public Administration, this review makes inadequate reference to the RPA and the subsequent increase in economic functions to be devolved to local authorities. As a report that seeks to consider the period to 2015, these represent significant weaknesses.
- This review and its key recommendations has significant implications for the Council's existing support for business start up and development activities and our sectoral development work.
- The role of local authorities in supporting SMEs and the social economy sector is not highlighted in this review, which we feel is an omission given the important role we play as a partner on leading business development programmes and promotional activities.
- Concerns exist around the recommendation to develop a small business support unit, the purpose of which is to develop and co-ordinate relevant support to SMEs throughout NI. Given the current activities of local authorities, and their increasing remit through RPA, the relationship between the small business support unit and local government LED teams needs close attention.
- The recommendation to remove the concept/definition of Invest NI 'clients' raises significant questions which need addressed in terms of the interface between support offered by councils and that of Invest NI. Local authorities

have, by default over recent years, played a key role in supporting the SME sector and have subsequently built up a great deal of expertise in this area and filled a gap in the enterprise pipeline.

- The concept of innovation within the private sector needs to be communicated particularly in those sectors traditionally low in the adoption of innovation and the successful implementation of the innovation policies recommended is highly dependant upon the ability to engage the wider private sector.
- Concerns exist as to the proposed changes to Invest NI's export assistance. Although the recommendation to make it more dedicated and professional is welcome, the proposed fee charging model may act as a barrier from companies seeking advice on exporting or beginning to export entirely.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members note the proposed consultation response (attached).

Decision Tracking

No decision tracking as the report is for notation only.

Key to Abbreviations

IREP– Independent Review of Economic Policy
 LED – Local Economic Development
 RPA – Review of Public Administration
 SME – Small to medium sized enterprises
 R&D – Research and Development
 DETI – Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment
 DEL – Department for Employment and Learning
 ETI – Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – IREP Executive Summary
 Appendix 2 - Council's Proposed Consultation Response

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APPENDIX 1



**Independent
Review of
Economic Policy**
(DETI and Invest NI)

Independent Review of Economic Policy

(DETI and Invest NI)

Chairman: Professor Richard Barnett

September 2009

Foreword

September 2009

Dear Minister

Thank you for the invitation to undertake the Independent Review into Economic Policy (DETI / Invest NI). The report is published at an important time for the local economy, particularly as you and other colleagues in the Northern Ireland Executive continue to work toward placing the economy on a recovery path to address the ongoing impact of the global recession. As you indicated in your Ministerial statement that launched the Review, the aim of the exercise was to provide recommendations to help position the local economy for the medium to longer term. It is in that context that the report and its recommendations are submitted.

As indicated in the report, the recent achievements in the Northern Ireland economy provide some cause for optimism. For example, the region has achieved a rapid rate of economic growth relative to other parts of the UK, both in terms of output and employment. There are welcome increases in the level of R&D undertaken by SMEs and, within the UK, NI continues to have a strong value proposition to attract investors to the region. Nevertheless, significant challenges lie ahead, some of which are outside the control of the Executive. For example, throughout the report it is recognised that reductions in public expenditure growth and state aid ceilings will inevitably change the way businesses are supported in Northern Ireland. However, as outlined later in the introduction, such challenges are often found to be the necessary catalysts for improving economic performance.

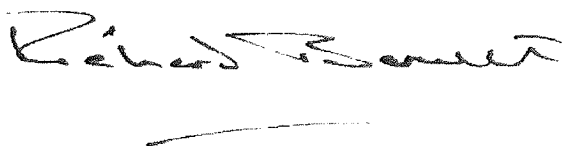
The Executive has already taken the important step of making the economy the top priority in its Programme for Government (PfG), with productivity improvements an overarching policy goal. This has also been reflected in both DETI and Invest NI's Corporate Plans. This is welcomed, although the recession will inevitably raise the importance of creating and maintaining employment in the region. The correct balance will not be easy to achieve and I recognise it will involve a number of hard choices to be made by you and other Executive colleagues. However, it is important not to lose sight of the need for further development of the economy and improvements in productivity. Ultimately it is living standards that matter and it is through productivity improvements that higher wages can be paid and higher living standards can be achieved. Therefore, if Northern Ireland is to make the convergence in productivity and living standards with other parts of the UK (as outlined in the PfG), then there needs to be a much greater emphasis on value added investments, both for indigenous businesses and also as a means of attracting and retaining foreign investors. That is why the report places such a particular emphasis on prioritising Innovation and R&D.

In the report, recommendations are made with regard to both policy development and changes to governance structures. I recognise that the latter can be time consuming and it is because of this that we have kept our recommendations in this regard to a minimum. Also it is important that I recognise that the recommendations for structural change should not be taken as a criticism of individuals who operate within those structures. It is simply that aspects of the current governance structures are serving to inhibit performance.

I am grateful to other members of the Review Panel who have each brought their own areas of expertise to the discussions and analysis that have been invaluable in the production of the report. Further details on the Review Panel are outlined in the introduction. As might be expected, discussions have, at times, been robust, but I am pleased that we have produced a unanimous report. I am also grateful to Dr Graeme Hutchinson, Secretary to the Panel, who has greatly assisted us throughout the Review. I also wish to thank other members of the Secretariat team including Tony Simpson, Thomas Byrne, Karen Wilson, Karen Hastings and Neil McCullough. I am indebted to them all.

I trust that the report and its recommendations will make an effective contribution to the future direction of the Northern Ireland economy.

Yours

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Barnett', with a horizontal line drawn underneath it.

Richard Barnett

Vice Chancellor of the University of Ulster and Chairman of the Review Panel

Executive Summary

BACKGROUND

- E.1 The Independent Review of Economic Policy (IREP) was commissioned by the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Arlene Foster MLA, in December 2008. The Review reflects her desire to achieve the Executive's priorities for the economy and the Panel were asked to advise on the need to realign existing policies, or to devise new policies, in order to meet the Executive's goal of halving the private sector productivity gap between Northern Ireland (NI) and the UK excluding the Greater South East of England by 2015.
- E.2 Given NI's favourable record in job creation, the widening productivity gap had been identified by DETI as NI's main economic challenge. It was recognised that up to 2008 existing policies did not appear to be leading to convergence in productivity. On the contrary, the gap had been widening for a number of years. The aim of the Review has thus been to consider the extent to which DETI / Invest NI policy should change in order to stimulate convergence in productivity and ultimately living standards between NI and the rest of the UK. In addition, the Review was asked to identify issues falling to other departments that might compromise delivery of the productivity goal. A more detailed outline of the Terms of Reference can be accessed in Chapter 1 and on the dedicated IREP website (www.irep.org.uk).
- E.3 We recognise that the NI Executive has made a significant step in making the economy the top priority in the Programme for Government (PfG). The Review Panel welcomes this move and our recommendations are designed at enabling the Executive to make more rapid progress in meeting their economic goals. However, we need to note three important caveats. The first is that achieving the productivity target would require productivity gains in a wide range of sectors, including those outside of DETI's remit. Productivity is, for instance, relatively low in areas such as agriculture, transport, construction and distribution (among other sectors). This Review focuses primarily on the main export sectors within DETI / Invest NI's remit, and must therefore be considered only as a start in addressing the wider productivity gap. Many other important issues remain to be addressed in other sectors. However, an emphasis on exporting sectors is the logical place to begin a process of reforming economic policy in NI.
- E.4 The second caveat is that the economic context has deteriorated sharply in the period since the Review was commissioned. The global recession has led to the loss of thousands of jobs and a doubling in the number of unemployed people. The issue of job creation will undoubtedly raise its importance in the economic policy agenda. Although the Review has been tasked with addressing the productivity gap, and not job creation, we believe that many of our recommendations for increasing economic competitiveness will assist job creation in the longer term. In particular, we consider measures that might be adopted to continue attracting inward investment, as well as growing indigenous firms. We have not, however, addressed the short-term issues of preventing job losses in the recession, or of assisting the rising number of unemployed. These are pressing concerns but are outside the scope of this Review and its Terms of Reference. In addition, we recognise that the NI Executive has already taken steps to address the recession.

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- E.5 Finally, it is important to acknowledge that a number of external factors will influence the degree to which businesses can be supported in NI. For example, public finances will be much more constrained than in the past, and we anticipate that there will be very limited cash terms growth in public expenditure and a decline in capital budgets. While this will be a feature throughout the UK, it is our view that the impact may be disproportionately larger on the NI economy given its over-reliance on public expenditure as a driver of growth. It is therefore inevitable that DETI and Invest NI will face increasing competition from other important public services. The other factor is the changing nature of EU state aid rules which determine the scope to provide financial assistance to industry. As we outline later in the report, the limits for regional aid will be significantly reduced from as early as January 2011. Furthermore, the enlargement of the EU – which has brought in much less prosperous regions than NI – could see these limits reduce further (potentially to zero) when the existing arrangements come to an end in 2013. The recommendations in this report have therefore been framed with these significant challenges in mind.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- E.6 The IREP was commissioned in December 2008 and the Panel were asked to make evidence-based recommendations to strengthen the NI economy. The Terms of Reference focus on DETI and Invest NI and the effectiveness of their policies / programmes to deliver on the overarching productivity goal in the Programme for Government (PfG).
- E.7 The Panel have endeavoured to address the detailed Terms of Reference for the Review, however, given the nature of the exercise some areas have received more treatment than others. It is therefore important that the report and the recommendations are considered in their entirety, rather than individual sections / chapters in isolation.
- E.8 As we outline in the introduction, the department advised the Panel that Tourism should be considered but only as part of Invest NI's engagement in the sector. This direction was expected, particularly as other parts of DETI have operational responsibility for this area outside of Invest NI. However, in accepting this direction from the department, we would stress our belief that increased prosperity for NI, particularly its rural areas, could be significantly addressed by building a more vibrant tourism sector, given the region is endowed with large areas of scenic and natural beauty. We anticipate that this will be recognised and outlined in the forthcoming tourism strategy for NI.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

- E.9 The report has been structured into three sections. In **Section I** the Panel outline the key challenges facing the NI economy, in particular its comparatively low standard of living compared with the UK average. As we outline in Chapter 2, this is mostly due to the region's poor performance in terms of raising relative productivity levels and employment rates. This sets the context for DETI and Invest NI which, on behalf of the NI Executive, lead on the policy initiatives aimed at halving the private sector productivity gap with the UK excluding the Greater South East of England by 2015 (as outlined in the PfG). This section therefore reviews the mission of DETI and Invest NI and the various policies and programmes aimed at improving manufacturing and tradable services productivity. The section concludes with our assessment of Invest

NI's performance in delivering, on behalf of DETI and the NI Executive, the value added investments and productivity growth in the NI private sector.

- E.10 In recognition of the challenges to improve productivity growth in the NI economy, **Section II** provides recommendations on how a new economic policy for NI could be developed and delivered by DETI / Invest NI. We believe that a reduced rate of Corporation Tax would improve NI's value proposition, but the Terms of Reference asked for recommendations that are consistent with the existing legislative powers of the NI Executive. Therefore, the Panel have considered alternative policies to increase growth and productivity. The central thrust of the report is the need to prioritise Innovation and R&D investments more aggressively, both for existing businesses in NI and also as a means of attracting potential new investors to the region. We provide definitions on our interpretation of Innovation and R&D, stressing the importance of encouraging Innovation via imitations, adaptations and improvements to existing products and processes, as well as the more traditional forms of R&D. As outlined in Section II of the report, the recommendations have been influenced by a thorough review of the drivers of regional economic growth, and what we consider to be the important elements of global best practice in economic development. This is an important aspect of the Review and one that we believe has received less attention in previous reports on the NI economy.
- E.11 In light of the proposed emphasis on Innovation and R&D, which typically represent riskier investments, **Section III** of the report outlines how the right balance can be made between accountability, risk taking and speed in decision making. Aside from presenting some proposals on strengthening the formulation of economic policy in the NI Civil Service, the Panel consider how the autonomy of Invest NI could be improved to increase the entrepreneurship of the organisation. In addition, given the importance attached to the economy, we consider how the Minister can receive advice from as wide a range of stakeholders as possible. This section concludes with views on those issues falling to other departments that might compromise delivery of the PFG productivity goal.

KEY FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- E.12 The aim of this Review is to realign existing policies and propose alternative approaches to improve productivity and living standards in the NI economy. To this end, the Panel make recommendations to improve productivity, both for indigenous businesses and also to attract new investors to the region. We recognise that Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is important if the Executive is to realise its ambition of building a more dynamic and innovative private sector, and one which helps address its wider spatial and social challenges. We also outline recommendations to support local businesses, which will remain the bed-rock of the NI economy. Furthermore, we emphasise the importance of integrating local SMEs into the supply chain of larger companies. In our view, this represents a win-win for the economy: it helps attract larger / value added companies to the region, which typically offer higher wages and productivity levels, but it also makes them more embedded in the region as they locate for access to support and resources that are aligned to the needs of their business, which will include not only assistance for Innovation / R&D, but also access to appropriate facilities, skilled labour and other companies.
- E.13 The paragraphs that follow outline, in summary format, the key findings and recommendations from the individual sections / chapters of the report (a full list of the recommendations is included at the end of the Executive Summary). As many of the

Executive Summary

proposals are budget neutral, with some even offering potential for savings, we believe they also reflect the reality of the current fiscal environment, which, as we indicate later, is going to be much more constrained than in recent years.

SECTION I: ANALYSIS OF EXISTING POLICIES

E.14 In our review of the economic challenges facing the NI economy (Chapter 2), we highlight the following:

- The economy has achieved a rapid rate of economic growth relative to other parts of the UK, in both output and employment terms. However, NI has been unable to make progress on a convergence of living standards towards the UK average, with relatively poor labour productivity the main factor behind this;
- Invest NI has a relatively attractive value proposition for investors, particularly given the competitive wages, skilled labour and generous incentives on offer;
- Competitive wage levels mean that NI is particularly attractive to labour intensive service sectors. However, the type of firm which chooses locations based on cost tend to be in lower value sectors, vulnerable to cost pressures, and are mobile to relocate internationally; and
- A stronger emphasis needs to be placed on developing Innovation and R&D in NI to attract, develop and retain high value investments, both indigenous and foreign-owned. There also needs to be much greater integration between indigenous SMEs and the supply chains of larger companies.

E.15 In our review of the current policies and programmes operated by DETI / Invest NI (Chapter 3), we outline the following:

- Despite the recent rationalisation of programmes, Invest NI continues to offer a very large and complex number of programmes to businesses in NI;
- Selective Financial Assistance (SFA) is the most significant single programme Invest NI uses to support businesses. However, changes to EU regional aid rules from as early as January 2011 mean that NI will have considerably less scope to support firms using SFA, with aid ceilings expected to reduce further, potentially to zero, post 2013;
- Taken together, the total value of offers to companies for enterprise, Innovation / R&D and trade promotion (the stated aims in Invest NI Corporate Plans) amounted to only one quarter of all offers of financial support over the Review period (2002/03 - 2007/08). In addition, the assistance to attract companies new to NI added a further 10%; and
- Just over 40% of the budget was allocated to business expansion projects already operating in NI, with only 15% directed toward the support of new jobs.

E.16 In our review of the impact of the current policies and programmes (Chapter 4), we observe the following:

- Invest NI has contributed significantly to NI's economic performance in terms of employment growth. Offers of assistance through SFA were associated with 28,000 new jobs, 15,000 safeguarded jobs and £2.4bn of investment over the period 2002/03 - 2007/08;

- When compared to other UK regions, NI has attracted a higher number of new foreign-owned investment projects and promoted a higher number of jobs per head of population. However, many of these jobs, particularly those in the service sector, offered wages below the private sector average (e.g. contact centres). Furthermore, a significant proportion of support was associated with safeguarding jobs in the manufacturing sector;
- Invest NI has been particularly successful in promoting higher value investments in ICT, although most of these were in expansion projects in firms already located in NI rather than in new firms;
- The projects assisted by Invest NI have been successful in job creation, however, their impact on productivity has been limited;
- The additionality¹ of Invest NI assistance varies by the nature of support offered. Whereas the additionality of SFA supported projects is estimated to be 50% (similar to other UK regions), additionality in projects involving Innovation and R&D is generally higher. Furthermore, the Panel believe that the additionality of SFA supported projects is lowest in those that are associated with the expansion of existing firms (aside from those that involve increased Innovation or R&D); and
- The cost of additional jobs created is high.

SECTION II: TOWARDS A NEW ECONOMIC POLICY

- E.17 In our proposals to realign economic policy in NI, we base our recommendations following an in-depth assessment of what drives economic growth in a region such as NI, and also what the key elements are in terms of global best practice in economic development. With regard to the drivers of regional economic growth (Chapter 5), we note:
- HM Treasury's drivers of productivity are a necessary, but insufficient, framework for regional economic growth. They fail to sufficiently prioritise exports and inward investment as the key drivers at the regional level to grow the economy;
 - The promotion of Innovation and R&D – including business sophistication and, at the regional level, technology transfer – is the most important long term driver of productivity. This is essential for NI to move up the value chain; and
 - Competitiveness varies between places in a region, with cities often offering higher growth and productivity. It is therefore important to allow companies the scope to locate where they can operate most profitably.
- E.18 In terms of global best practice in economic development (Chapter 6), we observe the following:
- Leadership comes from the top to promote a shared vision and drive alignment in economic policy;
 - Productivity transformation for the economy is recognised as a long term commitment;
 - Successful regions place intense focus on attracting, retaining and embedding anchor institutions;

¹ This refers to how much of the reported benefits from Invest NI support occurred directly as a result of the assistance and how much would have happened regardless.

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- High performing investment agencies have cultures that are responsive, fast-moving and work to overcome bureaucracy. They are outcome, rather than process focused, and they recruit staff that are proactive, solutions-based and are themselves entrepreneurial in outlook; and
- Improved economic performance often has an economic crisis as its catalyst. This is particularly relevant to NI which faces its own 'crisis' in terms of tightening public finances and reducing state aid limits.

E.19 The recommendations designed to realign economic policy in NI are outlined in **Chapter 7** and some of the key proposals are as follows:

- In light of the reducing regional aid ceilings, grants for business expansion – which tend to have low levels of additionality – should be phased out towards 2013. The resources should be redirected to provide greater levels of support to Innovation and R&D in indigenous and foreign owned companies, and also to attract companies new to NI;
- A new institution for commercially-orientated research should be explored in NI, along the lines pioneered by the successful VTT institute in Finland;
- Given the importance of exports to regional growth, Invest NI should establish a more dedicated and professional approach to supporting and stimulating exports, adopting a similar model to the fee-charging export agencies outlined in the review of global best practice;
- In terms of supporting value added business expansions not involving Innovation and R&D, Invest NI should, where necessary, provide co-financing in the form of equity and / or debt to those companies that have been successful in securing funding from the private sector; and
- DETI should ensure they have a better resourced unit which is dedicated to economic policy development and monitoring / reporting on Invest NI performance.

SECTION III: WIDER ISSUES

E.20 An important aspect of this Review has been to consider not only the nature of the policies and programmes designed to support businesses in NI, but also the governance structures that inevitably influence how they are delivered. This issue is explored in **Chapter 8** and some of the key recommendations are as follows:

- The core economic functions (covering existing DETI and DEL areas of responsibility) should be brought under a single 'Department of the Economy';
- The FM / dFM and the Executive should establish a permanent sub-committee, chaired by the ETI Minister and comprising Ministers from other relevant departments involved in economic development, to prioritise action on the economy;
- This committee should oversee the development and implementation of an economic strategy, building on the findings of the IREP, as a matter of urgency;

- Invest NI should be allowed more freedom to operate, with DETI having less involvement in operational matters, to enable the organisation to be more entrepreneurial and responsive to business needs. To assist in this, their delegated authority limits should be simplified and increased; and
 - A small business unit should be created within Invest NI to develop supply chain capabilities throughout the NI business base and also co-ordinate policy when the agreed economic development functions are devolved to local authorities.
- E.21 In the final part of the Report (**Chapter 9**), the Panel outline what is required from other areas of government to raise productivity and living standards in NI. The recommendations relate to the important areas of skills, infrastructure and planning and key proposals are outlined below:
- The local education system should prepare now to meet the anticipated increased demand for higher level skills in STEM and other Innovation relevant subjects, arising from the increased prioritisation of Innovation and R&D;
 - The Executive should ensure that the third ISNI plan takes a much greater economic focus by committing more investment into projects that will maximise NI's future economic performance; and
 - As part of the reform programme, Planning Service should have processing time targets which are competitive and comparable with those countries and regions against which NI is competing for mobile international investment.

CONCLUSIONS

- E.22 The current recession highlights the extent to which economic performance is determined by a range of factors which lie outside the control of the NI Executive. The recommendations contained in this report are therefore designed to maximise the competitiveness of the economy and help build a larger export base, and one that promotes and supports the importance of Innovation and R&D.
- E.23 The Review Panel believe that the recommendations, particularly the major areas identified previously, should help improve NI's living standards relative to other parts of the UK. In terms of the impact, it is difficult to be definitive on the overall outcome but we believe that the implementation of the IREP recommendations should lead to:
- Greater clarity on the roles and responsibilities of economic policy within the NI public sector, with DETI and Invest NI taking lead responsibility;
 - Better co-ordination in the delivery of the key factors influencing economic policy in NI, including more tailored support for businesses in NI;
 - Invest NI developing into a more responsive and less compliance-driven business development agency;
 - A much greater emphasis on supporting Innovation / R&D and exports for companies throughout NI (indigenous and foreign owned); and
 - A smaller and more focused mix of policies and programmes, to help attract and retain a greater level of value added inward investment, with increased integration of SMEs into relevant supply chains.

FULL LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS***Policy Development***

- As part of the review of structures within DETI (proposed in Chapter 8), the department should ensure that more resources are dedicated to policy development and monitoring
- DETI should appoint an independent economic advisor (with extensive experience as an economist) to strengthen capacity in economic policy making

Policy Delivery (Invest NI)

- The concept of Invest NI 'clients' should be removed to allow Invest NI to work throughout the entire business base to raise awareness and provide support for businesses undertaking Innovation, R&D and exports
- Invest NI should work to significantly reduce the number of its support programmes
- Most assistance delivered via SFA should be redirected between now and 2013 to provide greater levels of support to Innovation and R&D
- Grants for business expansions should be phased out towards 2013, after which such grants are unlikely to be available under EU state aid rules
- Business expansion not involving Innovation and R&D should, where necessary, be supported in the form of co-investment in companies that have already been successful in securing funding from the private sector. Invest NI assistance should be in the form of sub-ordinate debt or equity
- Invest NI should further reduce its support for company training, and concentrate support mainly to small firms and to projects with a high Innovative content, where retraining is necessary to realise a substantial rise in productivity
- Invest NI should transfer its budgets relating to tourism accommodation back to DETI to be redistributed to a more appropriate body

Portfolio of Innovation policies

- A portfolio of new Innovation policies should be developed over time, but should initially include four elements:
 - A new institution for commercially-oriented research should be explored in NI, along the lines pioneered by the successful VTT institute in Finland. The institution should be outside the University system and not subject to the constraints of the Research Excellence Framework (REF). It is envisaged that this would incorporate a number of existing near market research organisations in NI and would be charged with reviewing and taking forward the MATRIX agenda
 - Additional research in Universities and public sector bodies should be aligned closely with the needs of industry in NI and potential inward investors to NI. Furthermore, the development of specific new research capabilities should be used as an incentive to attract potential investors
 - Industry-led Innovation communities, as suggested in the MATRIX report, should be developed as a pilot to bring together business, academia and Government and exploit available market opportunities

FULL LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS (CONTINUED)

- More should be done to support Innovation in service sector firms beyond software, which we believe is well served. The concept of Innovation in the service sector should include the broad range of areas outlined in the definition of Innovation (presented in Chapter 5)
- Additional support for Innovation and R&D should not involve new public expenditure but instead be financed from savings in grant support for investment by existing firms and in property development
- Invest NI's export assistance should become more dedicated and professional, adopting a similar model to the fee-charging export agencies identified in Chapter 6, with two tiers of charges depending on whether the company is an SME or large firm

Policy Delivery (DETI)

- As soon as practicable, DETI and other relevant departments should commence work on preparing a case for retaining state aid limits that support the changes outlined in this Review
- Promoting greater energy efficiency / conservation in the private sector should be accorded a higher priority in the 2009 Strategic Energy Framework (reflecting, where appropriate, the current and ongoing work of the Green New Deal for NI)
- DETI and Invest NI should undertake an immediate and focused review of its overall strategic and sectoral approach to capitalise on the benefits of new telecommunications connectivity in NI

Policy Performance

- DETI, as the funding department, should report on the strategic performance of Invest NI, with the co-operation of Invest NI statistical staff
- Relevant policies and accompanying resources should be updated annually to quantifiably demonstrate how individual policies/organisations contribute to the PfG productivity goal
- Wherever data availability / quality allows, 'impact' targets for economic development should be expressed in relative terms (to the UK average or appropriate subsection of UK regions) rather than in absolute terms
- When reporting on performance, DETI / Invest NI should include targets specifically for investments new to NI (expressed as a share of equivalent jobs coming into the UK)
- The Invest NI data collection system needs to be developed as a single database, to be maintained by DETI. The IREP database, constructed specifically for the Review, will be transferred to DETI to help facilitate this process

Finance

- Aside from those funds designed to support seed stage projects, Invest NI should disengage its direct involvement with venture capital (VC) funds. Rather than direct participation in the market, Invest NI should act as a facilitator between companies and VCs. In the case of seed stage VC funds, Invest NI should avoid placing restrictions on the market as outlined in Chapter 3

FULL LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS (CONTINUED)***Project Appraisal***

- Project appraisal rules should be re-assessed to ensure that projects involving investment in Innovation and R&D, which generally present uncertain and wider outcomes, are not placed at an unreasonable disadvantage

Further Research

- A study should be undertaken to determine how NI can more rapidly shift the pattern of inward investment towards higher value sectors
- A study of industrial land provision should be commissioned to determine why there is a perceived need for Invest NI to purchase large amounts of land over the next few years
- DETI and other relevant departments should undertake a study to establish how the social economy might be further helped to reduce deprivation and increase labour force participation in disadvantaged areas within NI

Co-ordination of Economic Policy

- If Northern Ireland is to achieve a step change in economic performance, the economy should remain the top priority of the Executive for many years to come
- DETI, DEL and Invest NI should work together to more effectively implement their existing liaison arrangements
- As part of the review of strand one institutions, the core economic functions (covering existing DETI and DEL areas of responsibility) should be brought together under a single 'Department of the Economy'
- The FM / dFM and the Executive should establish a permanent sub-committee to prioritise action on the economy, to be chaired by the Minister for the Economy (in the interim, the Enterprise, Trade and Investment (ETI) Minister)
- The Executive sub-committee should agree an economic strategy, building on the findings of the IREP, as a matter of urgency

Governance Arrangements

- DETI should undertake an internal review of its structures to ensure that the allocation of staff is more fully aligned with its policy objectives
- The core functions of strategic policy development and performance monitoring should be brought together within any revised DETI structures. The department should also provide the necessary support, professional and otherwise, to the Executive sub-committee on the economy
- Invest NI should consider an internal reorganisation that reflects the differing skill sets required to support FDI, exports, Innovation / R&D and small business support
- A small business unit should be created within Invest NI, with responsibility for the development and co-ordination of relevant support to SMEs throughout NI

FULL LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS (CONTINUED)

- World class training in sales and marketing should be provided for relevant Invest NI staff (particularly those working in international offices). In addition, staff should be recruited with relevant experience to meet the demands of investment decisions that are increasingly based on Innovation and R&D
- Invest NI should be allowed more freedom to operate, with DETI having less involvement in operational matters, to enable the organisation to be more entrepreneurial and responsive to business needs
- To help achieve greater autonomy for Invest NI, their delegated authority limits should be both simplified and increased significantly. The current DFP delegated limits for mobile SFA (currently £10m) should also apply to Innovation and R&D projects
- An NI version of the Central Project Review Group (CPRG) should be established, incorporating Invest NI, DETI and DFP, in order to speed up the decision making process for major industrial assistance cases
- Given the non-executive composition of the Invest NI Board, it should cease to perform executive functions and focus on providing strategic direction and oversight
- A senior member of the DETI Departmental Board should be represented on the Invest NI Board
- High level experience in international business and expertise in economic development should be sought when the Invest NI board is reconstituted
- Invest NI should be given greater autonomy and flexibility in managing its budgets, including End Year Flexibility (EYF) where required
- For projects involving financial assistance to industry, ex-post assessments of value for money should be taken on a portfolio basis
- The DETI / Invest NI Accounting Officer Memorandum should be reviewed in light of the revised governance arrangements implemented as part of the IREP
- The Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM) should be reviewed and revised, where appropriate, in light of the recommendations contained in this report

Advisory Bodies

- The ETI Minister should stand down the Economic Development Forum and establish a small advisory body, comprising expertise on regional economic development (drawn from business and economics) to provide independent advice on the economy
- Stakeholders involved in economic development should continue to engage with the ETI Minister on a bilateral basis

Skills

- The local education system should prepare now to meet the anticipated increased demand for higher level skills in STEM and other Innovation relevant subjects arising from the increased prioritisation of Innovation and R&D

FULL LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS (CONTINUED)

- The current focus on technical and professional qualifications, including apprenticeships and vocational training, should be extended to emphasise higher level qualifications at levels 4 and 5
- DEL, DETI and Invest NI should work to significantly develop management and leadership skills in NI and support the proposal for government to sponsor a 'Management Masterclass' to identify and develop the best managers from local industry and the public sector

Infrastructure

- The Executive should ensure that the third ISNI plan takes a much greater economic focus by committing more investment into projects that will maximise NI's future economic performance

Planning

- In the context of reform, the Planning Service should be given processing time targets which are comparable and competitive with those countries and regions against which NI is competing for mobile international investment
- Planning Service should work to ensure that the legislative timetable for reform is met
- The Strategic Projects Team should deal with all applications relating to investment new to NI. In addition, in terms of what constitutes a 'regionally significant development', a clear definition and qualifying criteria should be developed and agreed between DoE, DRD, DETI and Invest NI
- The Pre-Application Discussion (PAD) process must be as efficient as possible and the time allocated for PAD should be included when reporting on timings for all applications

APPENDIX 2



Response on behalf of

Belfast City Council
to the
Independent Review of Economic Policy
(DETI and Invest NI)

October 2009

Proposed response on behalf of Belfast City Council

Overarching Message

- Belfast City Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to the recent Independent Review into Economic Policy (DETI/Invest NI) as this seminal report and its recommendations will make an effective contribution to the future of the Northern Ireland economy and the future of economic development activity.
- Council is deeply dissatisfied at the lack of recognition of the role of local authorities as bodies that are capable of making a unique and complementary contribution to the social and economic prosperity of the city and the NI region.
- Local authorities are strategic leaders in place-shaping, responding to residents' ambitions and aspirations and working with partners to deliver necessary services at the local level.
- The expansion of LED activities undertaken is highlighted by an almost zero base in the early 1990s, through to a commitment of around £30million per annum in 2008/09 (Belfast City Council - £12,433,255) two-thirds of which is made up from rates contributions with the remaining third coming from other sources, mainly EU funds.
- Despite recent commitments by the Northern Ireland Assembly to give increasing responsibility for this work to local authorities with the Review of Public Administration (RPA), this review makes inadequate reference to the RPA and the subsequent increase in economic functions to be devolved to local authorities. As a report that seeks to consider the period to 2015, this represents a significant weakness.
- Council acknowledges the need for an integrated and coherent approach to economic development within the region and the role of partners in delivering a shared economic agenda, with an emphasis on the need to reform, modernise and improve service delivery.
- However a strong institutional and financial framework is a pre-requisite if councils are to play a lead role in local economic development within their district. Equally, it is clear that the concept of joint planning and prioritisation of activity with partners at all levels of government – as well as in the community and private sectors – is essential.

Barnett Review

Belfast City Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to the recent Independent Review into Economic Policy (DETI / Invest NI).

In advance of providing comments on the specific recommendations and issues as detailed in the review, there are a number of general points we would like to raise with the Review Panel including:

- the definition of economic development and local economic development activities
- the role of local authorities in supporting economic development activity
- the powers of local economic development since 1972
- the central purpose of local government and its place-shaping agenda

- the impact of the Review of Public Administration.

General Comments

Belfast City Council is the elected voice of the people – the channel through which the views and best interests of its citizens are represented. Our role as a Council is to improve quality of life across Belfast. We do this by providing strong leadership and direction and by providing the most efficient and effective customer-focused services. Our **Corporate Plan** for 2008-2011 sets out six main objectives that aim to realise the vision for a better Belfast. The themes are:

- City leadership - strong, fair, together;
- Better opportunities for success across the city;
- Better care for Belfast's environment - a clean, green city now and for the future;
- Better support for people and communities;
- Better services - listening and delivering;
- Better value for money - a can-do, accountable, efficient council.

Our Development strategy, '**Belfast Capital City 2006-2010**', has been built upon the Council's unique bank of knowledge on how to deliver city development using a wide range of expertise, from support for cultural and the arts, through to planning, economic development, project management, tourism development and through the Belfast: State of the City initiative. Under the 'Belfast: Capital City Strategy', the Council works to drive a competitive Belfast forward as the economic driver of the region.

The Council's role in supporting and promoting economic development within the city is a key priority identified within the Belfast: Capital City development agenda and described in detail by the associated **Local Economic Development (LED) Plan – 'Staying Competitive'**. The LED plan, covering the period 2006 – 2010, exemplifies the Council's efforts to make Belfast a better place in which to live, work and do business. It represents a commitment on behalf of the Council to drive economic competitiveness and prosperity while consolidating economic and social cohesion.

Definition of Economic Development

Local economic development (LED) is a "set of activities aimed at improving the economic well-being of an area... in most cases it is governments that are the major supporters...in partnership with other funders."¹ The specific activities undertaken vary from area to area, depending on local priorities which complement the wider offering at regional and national level in Northern Ireland. They can include:

- **Business start up and development activities** to support the creation and growth of new small to medium enterprises.
- **Sectoral development** of strategically important sectors which create high value added products and new employment opportunities.
- **Employability & skills development** by ensuring citizens are adequately equipped for the labour market.
- **Urban regeneration** to improve the social sustainability, economic stability and the infrastructure of the urban landscape.

¹ Beer, A. & Haughton, G. and Maude, A. (eds) 2003a, Developing locally: an international comparison of local and regional economic development.

- **Rural development** through rural business development, diversification and rural tourism.
- **Physical regeneration** to create and maintain an environment conducive to attracting and retaining businesses as well as encouraging visitors.
- **Tourism** promotion through the development and marketing of local attractions and tourism accommodation.
- **Community regeneration** to enable local communities to access information, knowledge, skills and resources to improve their lives.

This review and its key recommendations has significant implications for Council's existing support for business start up and development activities, and our sectoral development work. Our key issues and concerns are noted within this document.

The Powers of Local Economic Development

Council wishes to remind the Review Panel that legislative funding for LED activity began through the **1972 Local Government Act (Section 115)**, which permitted councils to spend up to ½ pence in the pound of the rate for any purpose which was in the interest of its district or inhabitants. However legislative authority to undertake and promote LED specifically was not awarded until 1992 when councils were given the opportunity to allocate up to 2p (later increased to 5p) in the pound from rates monies towards "promoting the economic development of its district"².

A decade later the **Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill for 2002** awarded enhanced powers to local authorities to "hold, acquire, and develop land for economic development purposes" to support the wider regeneration activity within their area. The enactment of this bill was accompanied by the repeal of the 1992 bill and the removal of the 5p limit on economic development spend.

However local economic development remains a discretionary function in Northern Ireland with no sustained source of direct funding from central government. As such, it is principally resourced from council budgets, with some match funding coming from external sources (particularly EU funding).

Currently, English councils are required to produce three year local area agreements (LAAs) for the economic development and regeneration of their area. These allow for more collaborative action and service delivery by bringing together partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors. As part of the development of LAAs, a growing proportion of government funding streams is now combined in a single Area Based Grant (ABG). This funding is used alongside mainstream budgets to support the achievement of specific 'improvement targets' identified in the LAAs.

However local economic development is soon to become a mandatory function for top tier councils (i.e. county, metropolitan district, shire unitary and London borough councils) under the **Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill**³. This Bill places on local government a range of additional duties including the preparation of an assessment of the economic conditions in their area. Councils will also be asked to work together with their neighbouring districts in the development of

² http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/legislation/primary/2001/niabill7_01.htm

³ <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2008-09/localdemocracyeconomicdevelopmentandconstruction.html>

multi-area agreements (MAAs) – widening out the local area agreement referred to above. These statutory groupings bring together partners at regional and sub-regional level to tackle issues such as economic development, transport and infrastructure and skills issues. “Economic Prosperity Boards” can be established to oversee these agreements. These will consist of council members from at least two council areas who will agree to pool resources to work on economic development issues. Council recommends the potential for applying for similar agreements in NI should be explored, particularly in the context of developing and implementing an economic strategy for the region.

One of the most important new imminent functions for local government as a result of the Review of Public Administration will be community planning. Community planning can be defined as “anything which it considers is likely to promote or improve the well-being of its area and persons within that area...”⁴.

Issues for Local Government in Northern Ireland

Council requests that a strong institutional and financial framework in NI is a pre-requisite if councils are to play a lead role in local economic development within their district. Equally, it is clear that the concept of joint planning and prioritisation of activity with partners at all levels of government – as well as in the community and private sectors – is essential.

Resources for local economic development – as part of the wider development of a council area – are drawn in directly from central government and the dependence on council funding or other external funding is much less than is the case for Northern Ireland.

Central Purpose of Local Government

Council would like to draw the attention of the Review Panel to the central purpose of local government which is to develop vibrant and cohesive local communities, in which all citizens have a voice and opportunities to shape the service which contribute to their quality of life. This means creating and sustaining the social, environmental and economic conditions which enable communities to thrive.

The Local Government White Paper for England (**Strong and Prosperous Communities, October 2006**) supports the role for councils to lead their communities, shape neighbourhoods and bring local public services together.’

Operating at the heart of communities Local Government is best placed to respond flexibly to local need and opportunity. Councils are ideally placed to tackle complex issues in a joined up way. Through community planning, functions including economic development can be integrated and delivered to address local need. This method of delivery was endorsed by The Northern Ireland Sustainable Development Strategy which outlined the role of local authorities’ community planning work under the proposals of the then RPA decisions as follows:

“To achieve this we will introduce a new power of community planning with a statutory duty on councils to initiate, maintain and facilitate a community planning process which aims to draw together all service providers within the council boundary to address community needs in a strategic and sustainable way”.

⁴ http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2003/asp_20030001_en_1

Council would also highlight that 'place-shaping' is now widely understood to describe the ways in which local players collectively use their influence, powers, creativity and abilities to create attractive, prosperous and safe communities, places where people want to live, work and do business.

Local authorities are strategic leaders in place-shaping, responding to residents' ambitions and aspirations and working with partners to deliver necessary services at the local level.

Within the Council's new Corporate Plan for the period 2008-2011, there is a clear commitment to supporting the place shaping agenda within the city under the auspices of the City Leadership theme.

Within the context of the emerging Community Planning framework, the Council, working with key partners, will seek to reshape public services around the needs of citizens and communities, accelerate delivery and achieve value for money outcomes.

Local Economic Development Activities

Council is deeply dissatisfied at the lack of recognition as to the role of local authorities in supporting economic development within the report.

Delivered as a core function of local government, LED has contributed to the achievement of Northern Ireland economic goals through a programme of council-led locally driven business support and regeneration activities that compliment the wider offering at regional and national level in Northern Ireland.

Around 70% of businesses in the Belfast City Council area employ less than 10 people and those businesses are largely supported by Council (rather than Invest NI) – local authorities should therefore be recognised for their role in economic development.

The expansion of LED activities undertaken is highlighted by an almost zero base in the early 1990s, through to a commitment of around £30million per annum in 2008/09 (Belfast City Council - £12,433,255), two-thirds of which is made up from rates contributions with the remaining third coming from other sources, mainly EU funds⁵. Prior to the early 1990's councils were able to use other powers in order to carry out economic development functions, including physical and community regeneration based projects.

Between 2000 and 2006 the Northern Ireland Programme for Building Sustainable Prosperity (BSP) was one of two Operational Programmes which implemented the Community Support Framework (CSF) and assisted a range of projects to develop economic growth, employment, urban and social revitalisation, agriculture, rural development, forestry, fisheries and the environment. BSP was delivered mainly through the NI Government departments.

Throughout the duration of BSP Belfast City Council committed around £3.3million to business development activities and £0.5million to business start activities, half of which is made up from rates contributions. Local Councils have committed 353 employees to the delivery of local economic development activities of which 73 undertook those functions specifically related to business development and creation.

The current period of Structural Funds Programmes is defined by the European Sustainable Competitiveness Programme 2007-2013 and is co-financed by the

⁵ Source: Survey carried out by NI LED Forum, July 2009

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The programme supports regional strategy by promoting investment in research and technological development and by encouraging enterprise and entrepreneurship in an overall context of sustainable development. Approximately £211m of ERDF funding has been allocated to the Programme and the Managing Authority for the Programme is DETI.

In the first two rounds of Structural Funds, councils were originally required to submit an action plan for funding for the duration of the individual programmes. However, in the current programme, applications are made on a project-by-project basis, in line with the priority themes of the Structural Funds programme and complementary to wider economic development activity being undertaken by other statutory partners.

The piecemeal nature of the current round of Structural Funds Programme places greater difficulties upon local councils to deliver integrated and co-ordinated approach to their local economic development challenges.

We affirm that local councils firstly be recognised as being best placed to deliver local economic development initiatives as supported by the current delivery of the NI Rural Development Programme, and that council must be able to apply for Structural Funds based upon an integrated action plan approach.

Review of Public Administration

The review makes limited reference to role of local authorities in the delivery of economic development activity across the region, despite recent commitments by the Northern Ireland Assembly to give increasing responsibility for this work to local authorities with the Review of Public Administration (RPA).

Council is deeply distressed by the absence of consideration in relation to the RPA and the wider implications of this for the development and delivery of economic development policy and activities in the region.

Whilst Council appreciates this is a review of DETI and Invest NI, the impact of RPA and the transfer of functions which are being considered as part of the RPA have not been addressed sufficiently as to inform the recommendations outlined in the review document.

The current and increasing role local authorities' play in local economic development is firmly embedded into the economic development of the NI economy. The absence of due consideration of local authorities current and future economic development activities pending RPA has implications on many of the reviews recommendations and subsequent delivery.

To support the transfer of functions, legislative responsibility for Local Economic Development should be considered to reflect the changing role of Local Government.

Background:

The background section to the review makes reference to a number of specific recommendations including an integrated approach to economic development, SME development and improving the productivity gap. Council's comments are as follows:

Integrated Approach to Economic Development

It is important to ensure that economic development activity creates a legacy for future generations and addresses the entrenched inter-generational problems facing deprived communities across the region. The Council acknowledges the current fragmented nature of service delivery within the region with numerous agencies and departments pursuing economic development agendas with little shared coherence or strategic vision. Council agrees with the recommendation that there is need for a real and sustainable change within the region through an agreed, coherent vision to which all partners are willing and committed to deliver.

Council would stress however that local government is ideally placed to co-ordinate and deliver an integrated approach to local economic development based upon the needs of our communities.

Although it is recognised the key role DETI and Invest NI play in the economy, Council would stress that these two organisations are only part of the wider range of stakeholders involved in developing the NI wide economy and addressing those issues such as the NI productivity gap. Other stakeholders include universities, colleges, sector skills councils, trade and sectoral bodies and others involved in enterprise and social economy networks.

Whilst it is appreciated the review identifies recommendations based upon a medium to longer timescale and that current market conditions such as the recession have not been considered, it is believed that the current difficulties in the economy caused by the recession will require a more medium term approach that needs to be reflected in the development of a future economic policy.

Micro-Enterprise and SME Development

A key priority for local government is to stimulate and strengthen the local business base and to promote competitiveness within the SME and micro-enterprise sectors through the locally based activities that meet the needs of the indigenous private sector. Our LED plan for the period 2002 – 2006 delivered resoundingly positive results for Belfast including:

- £11million investment in the city
- support for the creation/retention of 1911 jobs
- creation of 914 new businesses
- support for 873 businesses through its programmes
- delivery of 42 business development programmes

During the period 2006 - 2009 Council, through its economic development agenda, has also delivered:

- £8million investment in the city
- support for the creation of 500 jobs
- support for 1,012 businesses through its programmes
- delivery of 66 business development programmes
- delivery of Council led events and seminars for 3,436 individuals

These outputs represent sound investments and real jobs that would not have been created without Council's support and they clearly underpin the vital role that we play in supporting local economic development.

The role of local authorities in supporting SMEs, micro-enterprises and the social economy sector is not highlighted in this review which we feel is an omission given the important role we play as a partner on leading business development programmes and promotional activities.

In order to maximise the impact of our work in this area and to avoid duplication of services, consideration should be given to collaborative development in programme preparation and design as well as greater information sharing between Invest NI and local councils and other support agencies. Council would welcome the formalisation of the relationship between Invest NI and local councils in supporting businesses so that there is a clear focus identified for each partner.

Council is in agreement that the NI economy needs a larger and more dynamic private sector to grow in the upturn. This finding is also the verdict of a recent report published for Council, by the Centre for Cities – a London based think tank that works with a range of cities in Britain to help them improve their economic performance.

Implementation of European Programmes such as NI Rural Development Programme and Interreg IV demonstrates the ability of local councils as being best positioned to respond to local need. In recognition of this, the needs of the indigenous business community must be recognised as being best served by local councils. We therefore recommend that responsibility for small business support should take Council's expertise and experience into account.

Throughout, the report recommends greater integration between indigenous SME's and the supply chains of larger companies. This is a welcome recommendation, particularly in the context of the current economic climate when enhanced local opportunities offer a financial lifeline for SME's.

As a funder of local capital build projects Council is already investigating options to enhance the opportunity for local sub-contractors to gain work on local projects. Council is currently developing a Construction Supply Model based around the Titanic Quarter build. This project will provide an opportunity for suitably skilled and experienced sub-contractors from the local area to gain work on the build, maximising the benefit to the local community in terms of job creation and wealth.

To support SME integration into the supply chains of larger companies Council also held local sourcing events in 2004, 2006 and 2009 aimed at enhancing SME prospects for securing contracts to supply both the public and private sectors. These projects have consisted of pre-event tailored mentoring support, a meet the buyer event with speed networking sessions between buyers and suppliers and post event mentoring designed to support the SMEs to follow up on contacts made on the day. A wide range of sectors have been catered for over the course of these programmes including hospitality, print, design and marketing, manufacturing, environmental and creative industries. Preparations are currently being made for a specific Creative Industries Sector programme for 2010.

Council recommends that Invest NI should engage with local councils on new FDI companies to the region to facilitate private sector engagement in their supply chains.

A recent survey of 500 Belfast businesses revealed that only 45% of the companies interviewed were selling into the public sector. Given the disproportionately large size of the public sector in NI, this could be construed as a missed opportunity.

A further surprising result highlighted that almost 80% of the companies participating in the survey were not accessing any government support at present. There is clearly a

job to make companies aware of the support on offer and to help them access that support. Council would like to see the IREP pointing to the need for better coordination between enterprise support partners in order to make it easier for businesses to access the help that they need to grow their company.

Improving the Productivity Gap

Council endorses the recommendation as outlined within the consultation document to propose alternative approaches to improve productivity and living standards in Northern Ireland and welcomes the importance placed on the role of cities in driving growth and productivity.

Belfast, as the region's capital city, is the engine for regional growth. Success or failure in Belfast has deep resonating implications not just for its suburbs and metropolitan area, but for the entire economy of Northern Ireland.

Our role as a capital city and regional driver will be further enhanced post RPA. Our new economic development plan (2011) provides an opportunity to demonstrate our continued commitment to the cities growth and development.

Council is supportive of a single integrated regional strategy and proposes that all 11 councils should be instrumental in shaping the priorities and actions of this essential strategic document. Council would also propose an integrated economic strategy for Belfast to support the regional strategy. This strategy would act as a focus for economic development within the capital city, with Council and all local stakeholders working together to achieve the agreed outcomes.

The review recognises that there will be competition between places within a region and there will be a role for the councils in defining and articulating their individual strategic advantages in terms of their unique social, economic and environmental characteristics. This identification of differentiated locations should be recognised in the strategy in support of an enhanced regional offer.

Council concur with the view that NI must improve investment in R&D and innovation if it is to close the gap with other international competitors. It should be noted, however, that NI universities have lower research budgets than their UK counterparts – an issue that should be addressed. There is a need for greater levels of investment from the private sector – something which could prove difficult to cultivate in NI's (and particularly Belfast's) predominantly SME environment.

Council would like to draw attention to the issue of incubation which appears to be absent from the document, other than references in the Annex. Incubation, a key remit of Invest NI, should be an important element of the regional development strategy that targets the higher value sectors and R&D. It is therefore important for Invest NI to clearly define its strategy for the development of business incubator facilities as this is an area proven to deliver results to start up businesses in high value sectors.

Council has recently undertaken business incubation research and is willing to share key findings with DETI/Invest NI. Our research has highlighted that the great majority of business incubators in the UK are publicly funded and focus on public policy objectives. Further, it outlined incubation best practice in the UK and the USA and their applicability in the Belfast context. The majority of these facilities are sector specific and deal with the very sectors Invest NI target (technology, knowledge based, and environmental).

The review also states that in order to address the productivity gap, productivity gains are required in sectors some of which are outside DETI's remit e.g. agriculture, transport, distribution etc. Belfast City Council is already engaged in many of these sectors through existing initiatives therefore recognising the importance of involving these sectors to achieving the productivity gain this further enhances the need to engage with local authorities when developing economic policies.

The report also recommends measures that might be adopted to continue attracting inward investment, as well as growing indigenous firms. Council would highlight that Belfast City Council acquired the licence to develop a World Trade Centre (WTC) for Belfast in 2002 and since this time has been actively developing and managing a wide range of services available through the workings of this centre.

WTC Belfast provides local companies with an effective global gateway to new business opportunities, business contacts and market intelligence and should be seen as an additional conduit for achieving greater levels of inward investment for the region. It supports companies in all aspects of international trade including global sourcing, finding international business partners and identifying new customers and offers a range of services including:

- hosting local networking events for companies involved in international trade the aim of which will be to inform companies on relevant global trade issues and to facilitate networking.
- managing group trade missions which are differentiated from other trade missions available and are coordinated with other World Trade Centres.
- offering trade education workshops to develop the business skills of local companies focusing upon practical export topics including global supply chain management, export documentation and legislation.
- delivering Business development programmes for small Belfast based companies to assist them in developing and improving their global supply chain management.
- offering a Global Gateway service to companies unable to access Invest NI's in-market assistance. It offers local companies the ability to access global market information, make new business contacts and avail of consultancy services carried out by other World Trade Centres.
- offering a free Investor Gateway service to companies considering establishing a business base in Belfast. Through the Investor Gateway Service potential investors can access useful information on Belfast, be supported in inward fact finding visits as well as property search service.

WTC Belfast is part of a network of over 300 WTC's which have 750,000 associated organisations and is therefore well placed to raise the profile of Belfast/NI as an ideal inward investment location and as a place to do business and visit. The existence of WTC Belfast should be noted and taken into account when considering measures to adopt to attract inward investment to the region. For more information on WTC Belfast please visit www.wtcbelfast.com

Council agrees that NI has substantial assets – a comparatively highly skilled population and low cost office space – and would propose that this message needs to be promoted more widely in order to attract business investment to the region.

Full List of Recommendations:

The review contains a full list of recommendations designed to maximise the competitiveness of the economy and help build a larger export base and one that

promotes and supports the importance of innovation and R&D. Council's comments are as follows:

1. Policy Development

Recommendation:

As part of the review of structures with DETI (proposed in Chapter 8), the department should ensure that more resources are dedicated to policy development and monitoring.

Council: We would welcome that as part of the recommended review of structures within DETI, that additional resources are dedicated to policy development however linkages should be made with current structures currently involved with economic policy. We believe there should be a single economic policy for Northern Ireland with underlined specific action plans. Any economic policy should be thoroughly equality screened to ensure that social considerations are being met. Resources devoted to policy development and monitoring should not be at the expense of actual policy implementation.

Recommendation:

DETI should appoint an independent economic advisor to strengthen capacity in economic policy making.

Council: Council agree with this recommendation. However it is important that the advisor is someone with international experience and has successfully assisted developed economies in achieving and increasing levels of productivity.

2. Policy Delivery (Invest NI)

Recommendation:

The concept of Invest NI 'clients' should be removed to allow Invest NI to work throughout the entire business base to raise awareness and provide support for businesses undertaking Innovation, R&D and exports.

Council: Council understands the definition that Invest NI currently uses in order to determine its clients focus but recommends that the term 'client' be revisited to suggest a more inclusive 'partnership'.

We feel that the services that we – and other local authorities offer - can complement the Invest NI offering and we consider there is sufficient market for both parties to work together.

Belfast City Council and all other councils have taken cognisance of Invest NI's client approach to date and have subsequently built their past and current business development support portfolios on the development of the micro-enterprise and SME sector, which are not primarily export focused. Almost three quarters of companies located in Belfast employ fewer than 10 people (73.5%) and 87.3% employ fewer than 20 – clearly demonstrating the importance of the SME sector in the city.

The recommendation to remove this concept/definition of Invest NI 'clients' therefore raises significant questions which need addressed in terms of the interface between support offered by Councils and that of Invest NI. Local authorities have by default over recent years played a key role in supporting the SME sector and have subsequently

built up a great deal of expertise in this area and filled a gap in the enterprise pipeline. We recognise that SME support needs attention but would ask for clarification in terms of the implications the removal of this definition will have for local government. Council wishes to see a clear definition of the roles and responsibilities of both Invest NI and local authorities in terms of supporting the SME sector.

Council wishes to see a more formalised relationship being implemented between Belfast City Council and Invest NI in the future, and particularly at a political level.

Council is looking forward to the creation of the new enterprise strategy. However recognition of the integral role of local councils in developing enterprise and wider local economic development initiatives must be identified. As such we are eager to play a full role in the future development of an Enterprise Strategy for Northern Ireland.

Recommendation:

Invest NI should work to significantly reduce the number of its support programmes.

Council: Council agree with this recommendation, however not at the expense of smaller companies that need support.

Recommendation:

Grants for business expansions should be phased out towards 2013, after which such grants are unlikely to be available under EU state aid rules.

Council: Although it is recognised that business expansion grants will be affected by changing EU State Aid rules concerns exist as to the ability of the private sector to raise finances to undertake business expansion projects post 2013. In many areas of Northern Ireland, a combination of inward investors and indigenous large businesses provide the backbone to the local economies, providing employment opportunities as well as sub-contracting opportunities to local small businesses. Caution must be given to the removal of business expansion grants to ensure private sector funding is available so as to not impede the growth of the private sector.

Recommendation:

Business expansion not involving innovation and R&D should, where necessary, be based supportive in the form of co-investment in companies that have already been successful in securing funding from the private sector. Invest NI assistance should only be in the form of sub-ordinate debt or equity.

Council: Council agree there has been an over reliance from the private sector on Government grants and this has stagnated the development of the co-investment type organisations. Implementation of this recommendation would go some way to enabling this support structure to grow. However, the willingness of banks and lending institutions to lend monies to business especially over the past twelve months would give cause for concern. The process and structures need to be in place with the various lending organisations prior to this even being considered as an option.

Recommendation:

Invest NI should further reduce its support for company training, and concentrate support mainly to small firms and to projects with a high Innovative content, where retraining is necessary to realise a substantial rise in productivity.

Council: Council agree with this recommendation.

Recommendation:

Invest NI should transfer its budgets relating to tourism accommodation back to DETI to be redistributed to a more appropriate body

Council: Council agree with this recommendation; however we understand there is currently a moratorium on grants for hotel accommodation in Belfast and would like this to be reviewed. Belfast City Council would also like councils to be considered as a potential body to distribute tourism accommodation grants under the RPA.

3. Portfolio of Innovation Policies

Recommendation:

A new institution for commercially-oriented research should be explored in NI, along the lines pioneered by the successful VTT institute in Finland. The institution should be outside the University system and not subject to the constraints of the Research Excellence Framework (REF). It is envisaged that this would incorporate a number of existing near market research organisations in NI and would be charged with reviewing and taking forward the MATRIX agenda.

Council: Council is encouraged by the recommendations regarding a portfolio of new innovation policies being developed over time. However the concept of innovation within the private sector needs to be communicated particularly in those sectors traditionally low in the adoption of innovation. The recommendations identified to develop a more commercially orientated research institution is welcome however the successful adoption of the innovation policies recommended is highly dependant upon the ability to engage the wider private sector.

Council would stress that the review should take account of the Northern Ireland Science Park when considering its proposal for a new institution for commercially – orientated research in NI. NISP was established in 1999 as a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee to be:-

- An internationally recognised centre for the commercialisation of scientific and technological developments which is founded on a targeted range of academic and private sector research activity.
- An entity which can demonstrate the successful commercial application of the research and development activities in Northern Ireland.
- A viable asset providing real and growing value to the local economy with demonstrable benefits shared socially and geographically.
- An organisation founded on a strong mutually supportive partnership between business, higher education and the public sector.

CONNECT (formerly University California San Diego CONNECT) has assisted in the formation and development of over 1,200 companies and is widely regarded as the United States' most successful regional economic development program. CONNECT supported companies have been twice as likely as other entrepreneurial companies to be successful and in business after five years.

NISP CONNECT is the Northern Ireland element of the Connect network and acts as the catalyst between NI's entrepreneurs, research institutions, investors, technology

corporations and service providers by linking entrepreneurs with the resources they need for success. The portfolio of programmes create the networks which serve to breakdown social and professional hierarchies and drive lateral learning and knowledge transfer; the social infrastructure on which the growth and sustainability of new enterprise depends. The end result is an increase in the quantity of science and technology businesses and their chances of success.

Connect focuses on five key programs on a year round basis:

- **Springboard (Enzyme)** – a year-round, flagship program that assists technology-based companies and entrepreneurs refine their business and financial strategies through a group mentoring process.
- **Frameworks (Innovanet Entrepreneur series)** – a series of 23 half-day workshops targeted at entrepreneurs and the research community. Content is delivered by experts from service providers (law firms, IP, accounting). Key themes are demystifying the Venture capital process or intellectual property basics. Workshops are delivered onsite at the Universities which will further promote NISP to the local audience.
- **Innovanet Evening Series** – Case studies of successful ventures from inside and outside of the region or leading innovation breakthroughs from established European technology companies delivered at the Innovation Centre
- **25K** (potentially 85K award in 2008)– continuation and expansion of the successful program to stimulate action around good ideas
- **halo** – business angel network

Council asks the Review Panel to note that an evaluation of the property and non-property aspects of the Northern Ireland Science Park is currently underway and key findings are expected to be published in November. This evaluation evaluates the performance and impact of the Science Park over the past 10 years.

Recommendation:

Additional research in Universities and public sector bodies should be aligned closely with the needs of industry in NI and potential inward investors to NI. The development of specific new research capabilities should be used as an incentive to attract potential investors.

Council: Council welcomes the development of new research capabilities which can be used in Belfast's value proposition to attract potential investors.

Recommendation:

Industry-led Innovation communities, as suggested in the MATRIX report, should be developed as a pilot to bring together business, academia and Government and exploit available market opportunities.

Council: Council agree with this recommendation.

Recommendation:

More should be done to support innovation in service sector firms beyond software.

Council: Council agree with this recommendation as the Belfast economy is moving from a manufacturing dominated environment towards a service sector environment. If

we are to address the productivity gap in the future we will need our service businesses to innovate to keep up and succeed in the marketplace.

Council advocates the need for providing support for businesses undertaking Innovation, R&D and exports but recommends there must be greater clarity and understanding of the concepts of innovation, R&D and exports which need to be communicated and understood by all stakeholders operating within the economic development environment.

Recommendation:

Invest NI's export assistance should become more dedicated and professional, adopting a similar model to the fee-charging export agencies identified in Chapter 6, with two tiers of charges depending on whether the company is an SME or large firm.

Council: Concerns exist as to the proposed changes to Invest NI's export assistance. Although the recommendation to make it more dedicated and professional is welcome, the proposed fee charging model may act as a barrier from companies seeking advice on exporting or beginning to export entirely.

4. Policy Delivery (DETI)

Recommendation

As soon as practicable, DETI and other relevant departments should commence work on preparing a case for retaining state aid limits that support the changes outlined in this Review.

Council: Council agree that departments should prepare the case for retaining state aid limits. Existing state aid limits imply that competitive businesses in the market place can only receive a limited amount of support from a public source – the threshold of which is 200,000 euros over a three year fiscal period. A reduction in state aid limits would impact upon the ability of LED to deliver business development support to the existing SME and micro-enterprise market.

Recommendation:

DETI and Invest NI should undertake an immediate and focused review of its overall strategic and sectoral approach to capitalise on the benefits of new telecommunications connectivity in NI.

Council: Council agree on the need to undertake this strategic and sectoral review and would welcome the opportunity to work in partnership with DETI to encourage adoption through local economic development initiatives and to ensure connectivity of new physical infrastructures to initiatives such as Project Kelvin.

5. Policy Performance

Recommendation:

DETI, as the funding department, should report on the strategic performance of Invest NI, with the co-operation of Invest NI statistical staff.

Council: Council agree that as the main policy provider, DETI should take overall responsibility for the monitoring of Invest NI's performance against targets. The performance should be reported regularly against initial targets.

Recommendation:

Relevant policies and accompanying resources should be updated annually to quantifiably demonstrate how individual policies/organisations contribute to the PfG productivity goal.

Council: Council would endorse the need to update policies annually and agrees there should be a clearer link between intervention and the overarching PfG productivity goal. However, when reporting on how individual policies/organisations contribute to the PfG productivity goal, consideration of LED activities and how they too contribute to the PfG productivity role should be considered in order to get a complete picture of performance against overarching outputs. DETI and Invest NI should not be the only organisations considered. Policies should also be reviewed regularly as the external environment changes and if need be, should be updated accordingly.

Recommendation:

The Invest NI data collection system needs to be developed as a single database, to be maintained by DETI. The IREP database, constructed specifically for the Review, will be transferred to DETI to help facilitate this process.

Council: Council agree with this recommendation but would strongly advise that other stakeholders involved in local economic development (e.g., local councils) should also have access to this information to facilitate a more joined up approach in terms of overall programme development and support for local companies. Council is developing its own system of data collation and monitoring - entitled Belfast Citystats and we would be very keen to share our information with any system that DETI will have in place.

6. Finance

Recommendation:

Aside from those funds designed to support seed stage projects, Invest NI should disengage its direct involvement with venture capital (VC) funds. Rather than direct participation in the market, Invest NI should act as a facilitator between companies and VCs. In the case of seed stage VC funds, Invest NI should avoid placing restrictions on the market as outlined previously (Chapter 3).

Council: Council agree with this recommendation. However in consideration of the increasing emphasis on innovation and R&D the removal of direct activity within the VC market needs to be carefully managed. Traditionally companies that are highly innovative and/or engaged in R&D would be the likely target for VC funding and as such any removal of direct involvement by Invest NI in this market may affect the deliverability of other recommendations.

The retention of direct involvement in seed corn funding is welcomed but must be developed in line with local authorities who will be given the responsibility for entrepreneurship through RPA.

We recommend Invest NI's venture capital initiatives should be linked to and support local economic development activities undertaken by local councils to ensure indigenous locally operating businesses have accessibility to VC funding.

7. Project Appraisal

Recommendation:

Project appraisal rules should be re-assessed to ensure that projects involving investment in innovation and R&D, which generally present uncertain and wider outcomes, are not placed at an unreasonable disadvantage with NI.

Council: Linking in with the above point on VC funding, the removal of Invest NI's involvement in VC funding may affect the ability of enterprises with greater risk associated with their activities to access funding.

8. Further Research

Recommendation:

A study should be undertaken to determine how NI can more rapidly shift the pattern of inward investment towards higher value sectors.

Council: Council would strongly encourage the review to recognise existence of the WTC Belfast and its offering of an Investor Gateway service. Any study that is commissioned must capture and take account of the activities already engaged with by Council in the area of inward investment.

This engagement with Council is further supported by the reports recommendation for latitude with regards to FDI's ability to locate essentially where they want to which naturally results in the majority of FDI's interested in urban locations. The targeting of higher value sectors should therefore be carried out in line with urban authorities such as Belfast City Council to ensure the infrastructure; talent base and supporting value chain (i.e. smaller private sectors) are matched to the needs of higher value sectors.

Recommendation:

The need to provide industrial land should be analysed to see if the perceived need for Invest NI to purchase large amounts of land is correct.

Council: This approach would be supported where it could be embedded within broader spatial coordination and integrated with the work on the Regional Development Strategy to provide a robust basis for the development of regional policy. This approach would support future work to develop a basis for the identification of a land supply through the new Local Development Plans to be developed by the post RPA local councils as part of their changed statutory roles.

Recommendation:

DETI and other relevant departments should undertake a study to establish how the social economy might be further helped to reduce deprivation and increase labour force participation in disadvantaged areas within NI.

Council: Council agree with this recommendation but would ask the Review Panel to note that Council engages in a wide range of support mechanisms for the SME and

social economy sector and this role is expected to increase with responsibility for this sector being given to local councils through RPA.

Council has identified the development and growth of the social economy as a key element of its enterprise support plan for the period 2009-2011. We agree there should be a focus on enhancing the business viability of the social economy sector and to that end, we have opened our range of business support initiatives to businesses from the social economy sector and endeavoured to ensure that at least one social economy business participates in each of our business development programmes. Therefore any study on the development of this sector must include the role and activities of Belfast City Council.

9. Co-ordination of Economic Policy

Recommendation:

If Northern Ireland is to achieve a step change in economic performance, the economy should remain the top priority of the Executive for many years to come.

Council: Council considers economic growth to be a very important aspect of the overall development of the NI economy however social aspects should also be considered.

Recommendation:

DETI, DEL and Invest NI should work together to more effectively implement their existing liaison arrangements.

Council: NILGA would welcome a more effective and efficient liaison arrangement between DETI, DEL and Invest NI but would suggest that local authorities, DSD and DARD should be included as a strategic partner in these arrangements in order to produce a more holistic picture of sustainable economic development activity.

Recommendation:

As part of the review of strand one institutions, the core economic functions (covering existing DETI and DEL areas of responsibility) should be brought together under a single 'Department of the Economy'.

Council: Council welcome the creation of one department with responsibility for both skills and the economy.

Recommendation:

The Executive sub-committee should agree an economic strategy, building on the findings of the IREP, as a matter of urgency.

Council: Council agree with this recommendation however would stress that the findings should not be considered in isolation for the formation of an economic strategy. As the author states the wider economic environment has not been considered and recent economic conditions such as the recession have not been taken into account. Council is disappointed and gravely concerned that the findings do not consider RPA and the implications on future economic activity, or the current and future role undertaken by local authorities.

10. Governance Arrangements

Recommendation:

DETI should undertake an internal review of its structures to ensure that the allocation of staff is more fully aligned with its policy objectives.

Council: Council recommends that the internal review also considers the allocation of staffing in Invest NI and DEL.

Recommendation:

The core functions of strategic policy development and performance monitoring should be brought together within any revised DETI structures. The department should also provide the necessary support, professional and otherwise, to the Executive sub-committee on the economy.

Council: Council agree with this recommendation however it is important to note there are a wide range of other organisations involved in policy development and performance monitoring (e.g., Council). These other organisations should be consulted.

Recommendation:

A small business unit should be created within Invest NI, with responsibility for the development and coordination of relevant support to SMEs throughout NI.

Council: The promotion and encouragement of enterprise development is critical to the economic vitality of the region and aligns with the priorities of Council in supporting economic development. Council acknowledges that a vigorous enterprise culture is central to the success of Belfast and the region and welcomes the focus on supporting an innovative culture, particularly within the SME and micro-enterprise sector, which is a major growth engine for the Belfast and NI economy.

Although Council welcomes the development of an Enterprise Strategy for Northern Ireland we are disappointed that no progress has been taken regarding the advancement of this strategy. This condition has resulted in an absence of a co-ordinated approach for enterprise activity. Although we recognise the impact of the Barnett Review's findings on this strategy, council requests that dialogue from DETI takes place on developments surrounding this document.

However, concerns exist around the recommendation to develop a small business support unit, the purpose of which is to develop and co-ordinate relevant support to SMEs throughout NI. Given the current activities of local authorities and their increasing remit through RPA the relationship between the small business support unit and local government LED teams needs close attention.

It is proposed under RPA that the responsibility for the Enterprise Development (EDP), Social Economy (SEP) and Youth Entrepreneurship (Prince's Trust and Advantage NI) programmes are transferred to councils however the recommendation contained within the document does not take this into account. The creation of a small business unit would diminish the work currently being completed through council's economic development initiatives. Belfast City Council has close linkages with the business base in the city and has plans to further support the SME sector in years to come.

The degree of local awareness which councils possess is critical if future policy-making is to be focused on the appropriate areas where there is most need. A centrally-managed and controlled small business unit will not achieve those objectives.

As well as the wide range of business support and training available from Invest NI and Council, the review should also acknowledge the role of the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL). DEL has many training mechanisms currently in place to support small businesses to build the talents of their workforce and boost their competitiveness.

Recommendation:

Given the non-executive composition of the Invest NI Board, it should cease to perform executive functions and focus on providing strategic direction and oversight.

Council: Council agree with this recommendation.

Recommendation:

A senior member of the DETI Departmental Board should be represented on the Invest NI Board.

Council: Council agree with this recommendation.

Recommendation:

High level experience in international business and expertise in economic development should be sought when the Invest NI board is reconstituted.

Council: Council agree with this recommendation but would highlight that the Board must also have sufficient local representation.

11. Advisory bodies

Recommendation:

The ETI Minister should stand down the Economic Development Forum and establish a small advisory body, comprising expertise on regional economic development (drawn from business and economics) to provide independent advice on the economy.

Council: Council welcomes the recommendation for a small advisory body, comprising expertise on regional economic development to be established and the recommendation to include representatives from the local community. Council would stress that local authorities (including Belfast City Council) must be considered as a representative on the new advisory body in consideration of the current and growing responsibility for local economic development.

12. Skills

Recommendation:

The local education system should prepare now to meet the anticipated increased demand for higher level skills in STEM and other Innovation relevant subjects arising from the increased prioritisation of Innovation and R&D.

Council: Council agrees with this recommendation. We have recently commissioned research on skills demand and supply which suggests that over half of net new jobs in Belfast over the next decade will require graduate qualifications while less than 1 in 7 are expected to require no qualifications. We would be happy to share this information with DETI and Invest NI.

However Council would argue that increasing employment levels cannot be done by completely ignoring the lower value added sectors as these can potentially provide an avenue through which people can get into employment (or back into employment). There needs to be considerable focus on skills development, with work required on what skills are needed for the current and future employment opportunities.

In addition to knowledge-based industries, Council would suggest that the creative industries and health sectors be acknowledged as growth industries and adequate support be provided to help the capacity and skills base within the region to accommodate this growth.

The knowledge industries are a priority area in Council's own LED Plan and we have undertaken a baseline study of the city's knowledge industries in order to develop our strategic work in this area. We have also undertaken sector analysis on Financial Services, Business Services, Health and Education and would be happy to share these findings with DETI/Invest NI.

The significant challenge to maintain and improve the skills base suggests a need to retain and attract back graduates and well-qualified persons into the labour market (aimed at NI students graduating locally, NI students graduating in GB and NI professionals working in GB, ROI and beyond.) Such a flow of skilled labour could help to address managerial and diversity of graduate subject weaknesses.

However, we have a concern that too much emphasis is placed on high-level skills and graduates - people with lower skills levels and those who are long-term unemployed should not be forgotten either. Any economic policy should take into account the impact of economic growth, and more recently, a recession, on those at the bottom of the skills scale. Re-skilling, further skills development and capacity building should also play a part in the economic policy.

After recognising there are many agencies responsible for the delivery of employment and skills policy and programmes, but no one single agency with the responsibility for coordinating activity, Council convened a Belfast Employment and Skills Board in May 2009 involving representatives from central and local government, universities, colleges, community organisations and employer bodies with the main aim of helping address current and future needs facing the city and developing new ideas and approaches to tackling skills and employability deficiencies.

In January 2010 Belfast City Council will have an agreed strategic framework and action plan which will outline how Belfast will play a role in meeting the Northern Ireland Programme for Government's key objective of having an employment rate of 75% by 2020.

Recommendation:

DEL, DETI and Invest NI should work to significantly develop management and leadership skills in NI and support the proposal for government to sponsor a 'Management Masterclass' to identify and develop the best managers from local industry and the public sector.

Council: Council agree with this recommendation.

13. Infrastructure

Recommendation:

The Executive should ensure that the third ISNI plan takes a much greater economic focus by committing more investment into projects that will maximise NI's future economic performance.

Council: Council agrees for greater economic focus into projects that will maximise NI's future economic performance as this will further enhance and benefit the attractiveness of NI from an investor perspective and recognising the importance of the urban cities in attracting the infrastructure investment should be reflected of this.

This recommendation should be linked to the Regional Development Strategy to ensure the investment is sustainable and seeks to maximise the value of existing assets and infrastructure.

14. Planning

Recommendation:

In the context of reform, the Planning Service should be given processing time targets which are comparable and competitive with those countries and regions against which NI is competing for mobile international investment.

Council: This recommendation would be supported with the obligations transferring to councils following RPA - with the caveat that the transfer should be adequately resourced in recognition of the importance ascribed to the process by the report. The focus should not be exclusively on FDI or larger development proposals the transformation of the system and the targets should benefit the whole economy.

Scope needs to be included that will result in improvements to the timeline of planning applications for SME's and NI indigenous planning applications especially in light of European funding timescales which can be greatly affected by planning processing timescales.

Recommendation:

Planning Service should work to ensure that the legislative timetable for reform is met.

Council: The recommendation for the timetable to be met should also make reference to the importance of the system being adequately resourced and the necessity for appropriate continued delivery of effective support from the departments that will continue to be involved in a consultancy capacity such as DRD and DoE.

Recommendation:

The Strategic Projects Team should deal with all applications relating to investment new to NI. In addition, in terms of what constitutes a ‘regionally significant development’, a clear definition and qualifying criteria should be developed and agreed between DoE, DRD, DETI and Invest NI.

Council: The Council would suggest that this recommendation be reconsidered or reframed to take account of the transfer of functions under RPA. The source of investment (“new to NI”) should not form the basis for regional significance or which body should determine the application. The Council has in the responses to the reform has also highlighted the need for clarity around the issue of “Regionally Significant” applications. The Council considers that the number of applications that would fall within this category should be kept to a minimum to ensure there is clarity in the delivery of the planning function post RPA. Only application of such a scale to be considered to have a wider regional impact or those clearly contrary to approved plans should be considered to fall within a regionally significant category that would be determined by the elements of Planning Service retained by the DoE.

Recommendation:

The Pre-Application Discussion (PAD) process must be as efficient as possible and the

Council: Council would support the continued refinement of the PAD process as outlined in the reform document both in relation to the requirement of planning authority and the obligation on the applicant to satisfy the necessary information requirements.

15. Conclusion

Council remain supportive of all efforts to improve the economic performance of the region and believe that Councils should be more involved in the debate on the future economic policy for Northern Ireland.

We support many of the recommendations set out within the review, however, there are a number of specific comments and issues that have been outlined within this response document which it would like to see reflected in the final review document. In particular there are some fundamental issues with regard to the report in respect of the failure to consider the current direct role of Local Authorities in economic development, the potential changes in the roles of local authorities post RPA and the transfer of other functions referred to in the recommendations. As a report that seeks to consider the period to 2015 these represent significant weaknesses.



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Economic Development Unit Update
Date:	11 November 2009
Reporting Officer:	Shirley McCay/Tim Husbands, Interim Co-Directors of Development
Contact Officer:	Lisa Martin, Economic Development Manager, ext 3427

Relevant Background Information

1. Belfast City Centre Management – Presentation

Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM) is currently delivering its business plan for the 2009/10 financial year and is working on an outline business plan for 2010/11. BCCM has requested an opportunity to present at an upcoming meeting of the Development Committee details of current activities and achievements and draft proposals for the year ahead.

2. Festive Lighting – Arterial Routes

Members will be aware at Development Committee meeting of 15 October 2008 discussion took place in connection with festive lighting during the Christmas period. At this meeting Members expressed the view that in 2009 they would like to see emphasis being placed on the provision of festive lighting on those streets which acted as gateways to the City centre rather than those streets within the centre of Belfast alone. Committee subsequently agreed that further discussions be held with the Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce to examine methods of ensuring that the arterial routes within the City are made more festive during the 2009 Christmas period. This issue has since been explored and 'A Guide to Christmas Lighting in Belfast' has been produced and distributed to areas outside the city centre.

3. East Belfast Mission – Request for Funding

At the April 2009 Development Committee, Members agreed to provide match funding to four organisations which had been successful in securing financial assistance through the European Social Fund (ESF). These organisations were East Belfast Mission, North Belfast Partnership, Women into Business and Training for Women Network. The approval granted was to provide funding for the 2009/10 financial year only and, as a condition of the funding; the four groups were not to request any further

money from the Council in connection with the 2010/2011 aspect of their ESF projects.

Recently, East Belfast Mission has written to Council seeking match funding of £52,509 to further support the Work 4 U project in the 2010/2011 financial year.

4. Retail Therapy - Tender

Retail Therapy is Council's bespoke business development programme for independent retailers aimed at improving the competitiveness of the local independent retail business community within the City.

At the Development Committee meeting in May 2009, approval was given to develop and deliver a second wave of the programme in 2009/10.

5. Committee Site Visits

Interest has recently been expressed by Members and from external organisations in undertaking a number of site visits to various organisations throughout the City as part of an ongoing process of relationship building between Elected Members and the local business community.

6. Customer/Stakeholder Engagement

It is proposed that the Development Committee should host an informal networking session for its customers and stakeholders to help build relationships between Councillors and external organisations.

Key Issues

1. Belfast City Centre Management – Presentation

BCCM is undertaking a number of initiatives aimed at improving the environment and retail offering within the City centre area and has asked for an opportunity to present to Members actions delivered during 2009/10 and a range of activities being considered for 2010/11.

Resource Implications

No resource implications associated with this request.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members agree to receive a presentation from BCCM at the December 2009 meeting of Development Committee.

Decision Tracking

No decision tracking required if recommendation is accepted.

2. Festive Lighting – Arterial Routes

Festive lighting is a key element in providing a vibrant atmosphere during the Christmas period. It is at the core of creating an area's identity and can actively contribute towards attracting shoppers and therefore bolstering trade during the Christmas period.

The Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce and BCCM have recently prepared and distributed a Christmas lighting leaflet to trader groups across the City providing details

of the various lighting options available (e.g. tree lighting, lampposts, cross-street and wall mounted lights) and the associated average costs per unit, including installation and connection fees.

BCCM is eager to project manage additional lighting schemes outside of the City centre and has informed these groups that they are willing to manage the health and safety issues and implementation of lighting on their behalf, free of charge.

Trader groups are however required to purchase their own lights either through the existing City centre contract or through their own networks.

Resource Implications

No specific resource implications associated with this activity.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members note the content of this report.

Decision Tracking

No decision tracking required.

3. East Belfast Mission – Request for Funding

East Belfast Mission, through the Stepping Stone Project, currently delivers the Work 4 U project, funded by ESF and match-funded by the Council. The aim of this programme is to work with unemployed individuals in East Belfast, including those deemed economically inactive, and assist them to find employment.

When Members agreed in April 2009 to co-finance support for all four projects, it was agreed that as a condition of the year two funding, all groups in receipt of match funding must not request further money from the Council in connection with the 2010/2011 aspect of their ESF projects. This condition was written into all four separate Funding Agreements - all of which were signed by the individual parties and returned for the Council's official seal of approval.

Whilst the Work 4 U project is worthy, it is for the reason noted above, that the Development Department has not made provision in its revenue estimates for 2010/11 for groups participating in European Social Fund Projects.

The Council believes it is imperative there is a more strategic, co-ordinated approach to tackling the skills and employability needs of its residents and is currently taking steps to address this issue. In response to this, Members agreed in December 2008 to a proposal to open discussions with Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) and other key skills and employability partners in order to develop an agreed strategy for our City.

Members are advised that the Council convened a Belfast Employability and Skills Board in May 2009 including representatives from Central and Local Government, Universities, Colleges, sector skills councils, trade bodies and the local community. Since this group first formed, regular meetings have taken place and a 'Belfast Employability & Skills Action Plan' is currently in development which will help address current and future needs facing our City. This document is expected to be finalised in January 2010 and is intended to help shape the Council's future role in employability and skills related activity – in particular advancing joint activity with key partners and stakeholders in responding to the economic downturn.

Members are asked to note that if financial assistance is offered to the Work 4 U project it is likely we will be asked to support other ESF projects that we are currently financing, including Local Employment Access Partnership (LEAP), Women into Business and Training for Women Network. Members are also reminded that there are 47 ESF projects in total in the Belfast area and we cannot rule out the possibility that some of these projects would not approach us for year three funding.

Members should also be aware that, given that ESF activity is funded by the EU, any agreement to co-finance these projects will preclude the draw-down of monies from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) (i.e. the money for co-financing will have to come from rates monies only).

Resource Implications

The budget for the Work 4 U project over a 12 month period would be £52,059.

Recommendations

It is recommended this proposal is not funded given the lack of funding within Council and the decision taken by Members in April 2009 – that is, groups in receipt of match funding must not request further money from the Council in connection with the 2010/2011 aspect of their ESF projects. In addition, agreeing to co-finance the Work 4 U project for one further year would adversely affect other activity planned, most notably, that of the Belfast Employability and Skills Board.

Decision Tracking

No decision tracking required if recommendation is accepted.

4. Retail Therapy - Tender

A tender for delivery of Council's Retail Therapy initiative will be issued towards the end of 2009. Members are asked to delegate authority to the Interim Co-Directors of Development, in association with the Chairman of Development Committee, to approve the most economically advantageous tender received, subject to a form of contract being drawn up by Legal Services.

Resource Implications

The budget of £50,000 was approved by Committee in May 2009 and is included in the Departmental Plan.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members note the content of the report and approve the proposal to appoint the most economically advantageous tender following a competitive tendering process and subject to an appropriate legal contract.

Decision Tracking

No decision tracking required.

5. Committee Site Visits

Relationship building between Elected Members and the local business community can be achieved by undertaking a programme of company site visits with selected companies on a sectoral/geographical/scale basis.

To date interest has been expressed by the Port of Belfast, Stena, George Best Belfast City Airport, Belfast International Airport and the Northern Ireland Science Park.

Resource Implications

No specific resource implications associated with this activity.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members of Committee note the contents of the report and approve a programme of site visits to selected companies, including the Port of Belfast, Stena, George Best Belfast City Airport, Belfast International Airport and Northern Ireland Science Park. Additional visits may also be considered at a later date, if deemed appropriate by the Committee

Decision Tracking

No decision tracking required.

6. Customer/Stakeholder Engagement

It is proposed that the Development Committee should host an informal networking session for its customers and stakeholders to help build relationships between Councillors and external organisations.

Resource Implications

Less than £3000.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee agrees to host an information networking session for its customers and stakeholders in December 2009.

Decision Tracking

No decision tracking required.

Key to Abbreviations

BCCM – Belfast City Centre Management
ESF – European Social Fund
LEAP – Local Employment Access Partnership
DEL – Department for Employment and Learning
DETI – Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Economic Initiatives – Markets Unit
Date:	11 November 2009
Reporting Officer:	Shirley McCay/Tim Husbands Interim Co-Directors of Development
Contact Officer:	Ian Carmichael, Markets Development Officer, ext 3522

Relevant Background Information

This report covers the following issues:

1. Name change of Oxford Exchange and proposal for erection of new signage
2. Two replacement markets in St George's

1. Name change of Oxford Exchange and proposal for erection of new signage

There are plans to rename the Oxford Exchange restaurant in St George's Market to the St George's Market Bar & Grill. The owners also wish to erect some additional signage. Most of this signage will be within the restaurant area, looking out onto the road or the market floor through glass panels. Some exterior signage will also be required.

2. Two replacement markets in St George's

St George's weekly markets are on Friday and Saturday. This year's Christmas Holidays fall on Friday 25 December, Saturday 26 December and Friday 1 January 2010. The three days market closure will result in a loss of approx £5000 in stall rental and impact upon the income of the traders.

Key Issues

1. Name change and proposal for erection of new signage

The Oxford Exchange restaurant in St George's Market is currently going through a major refit and has been closed since 11 July 2009. The restaurant hopes to reopen in mid-November under the new name of St George's Market Bar & Grill. The restaurant has been working closely with the Market's management and traders with a view to expanding its involvement with the Market.

This involvement includes the supply and procurement of various products for the restaurant direct from the Market traders. Over the past twelve months, most of the restaurant's food has been supplied by St George's Market traders.

On the matter of new signage, discussions are on-going between Markets Officers and the Estates Surveyor and the NIEA Historical Buildings Unit. If required, discussions will also take place with the DOE Planning Office, the proposed signage is presently with NIEA Historical Buildings Unit. A copy of the proposed signage is attached for information, see Appendix 1.

2.Replacement Markets in St George's

Due to the Christmas and New Year Holidays falling on Fridays and Saturdays this year, St George's Market will be closed on three of its usual operating dates. The Markets management have been in discussion with NMTF representatives to look at ways to compensate for loss of revenue generated by the closures. This loss will be approx £5000 in stall rental and impact upon the income of the independent traders.

As a means of compensation for the losses incurred, it is suggested that St George's operate extracurricular markets on Tuesday 22 December and Wednesday 23 December 2009. Stallage would be charged at Friday and Saturday rates and include the present discount rates for multiple stallage.

Recommendations

1. Further to permission being granted by the NIEA Historical Buildings Unit, it is recommended that Committee approve the additional signage for St. George's Market Bar and Grill.
2. It is recommended that Committee agree to operating two extracurricular markets at St. George's on 22 and 23 December to compensate for the loss of revenue incurred by the Christmas closures and to charging the regular Friday and Saturday stallage rates.

Decision Tracking

1. Following approval by Committee, the Markets Management and Estates Surveyor will await approval from NIEA Historical Unit.

Time Frame: November 2009. Reporting Officer: Ian Carmichael

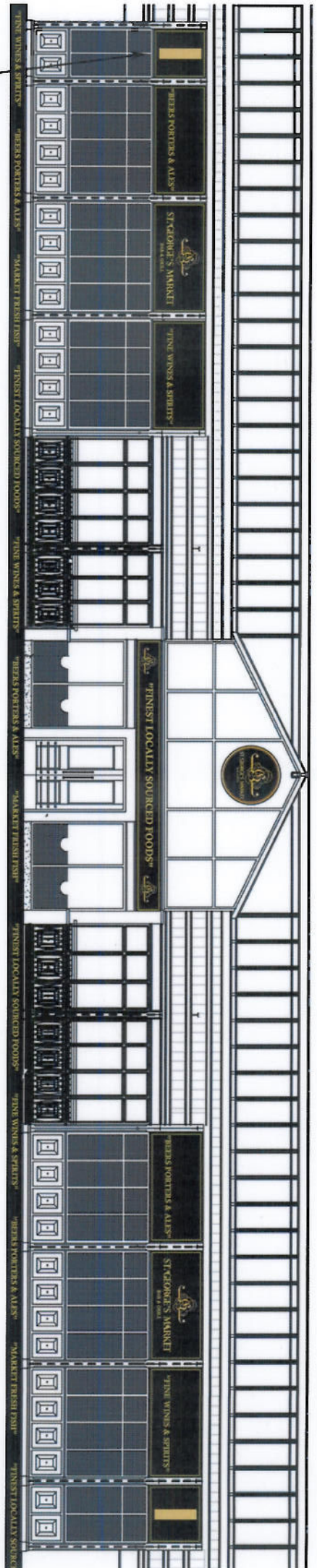
2. Following approval by Committee the Markets Management will arrange to operate markets on the days recommended.

Time Frame: November 2009. Reporting Officer: Ian Carmichael

Documents Attached

Appendix 1: Copy of proposals for exterior and interior signage

Proposed internal elevation



Circular projecting sign



Proposed rectangular logo



Proposed circular logo



Proposed front entrance



Proposed exterior elevation

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Tourism Update
Date:	11 November 2009
Reporting Officer:	Shirley McCay/Tim Husbands, Interim Co-Directors of Development
Contact Officer:	Kerrie Sweeney, Tourism Culture & Arts Manager, ext 3586

Key Issues

1. Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau – Presentation to Development Committee
2. Cathedral Quarter Steering Group – Presentation to Development Committee
3. Arts Council of Northern Ireland – Special Development Committee Meeting

1. Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau – Presentation to Development Committee
 Members will be aware that the Belfast Visitor & Convention Bureau (BVCB) was established in 1999 to promote Belfast as a major leisure and business tourism destination. Their Mission Statement is:

"to establish Belfast as a world class visitor destination by increasing the contribution that tourism makes to the economy in a way that is customer-focused, delivers a quality solution in a cost-effective way, respects the environment, is acceptable to the local community and offers sustainable growth."

BVCB is currently delivering its business plan for the 2009/2010 financial year and are working on an outline business plan for 2010/2011. BVCB have requested an opportunity to present at a meeting of the Development Committee details of current activities, achievements and draft proposals for the year ahead.

Resource Implications:

There are no resource implications.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that Committee receive a presentation from the BVCB at a future meeting.

Decision Tracker

Following approval that the BCVB be invited to make a presentation to Committee

Timeline: January 2010

Reporting Officer: Kerrie Sweeney

2. Cathedral Quarter Steering Group – Presentation to Development Committee

Members will be aware that Laganside Corporation was dissolved in July 2007. In 2008 the Department for Social Development (DSD), working closely with Belfast City Council, Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM) and key stakeholders, set up a Steering Group to develop and implement a 5 year Strategic Vision and Development Plan for the area. DSD committed funding to enable the Steering Group to produce the strategy and promote the area including the employment of a Cathedral Quarter Development Manager. The Cathedral Quarter Steering Group (CQSG) includes broad representation of arts, business, leisure, public sector and other stakeholders - please see Appendix 1 for details.

Members will be aware that the Cultural Tourism Strategy, 'Developing Belfast's Opportunity', details the aim to develop cultural tourism activity in the Cathedral Quarter. Belfast City Council have been actively involved in the development and promotion of the Cathedral Quarter as a cultural tourism destination through;

- infrastructure development in its support of venues such as the MAC, Black Box, Galleries and the Oh Yeah Music Centre
- improving visitor servicing between the hospitality and cultural sectors through skills development workshops and familiarisation tours
- working collaboratively to enhance the quality of the visitor experience in the Quarter and development of branding
- promotion in partnership with BVCB and improving communication through initiatives such as www.thecathedralquarter.com
- the development of new cultural products such as Late Night Art, Music Tourism, Summer Sundays, Support Culture Night and the development of future Cathedral Quarter Street Trading.

The Chair of the CQSG, Paul McErlane, and Cathedral Quarter Manager, Patricia Freedman, have requested an opportunity to present, at a meeting of the Development Committee early in the New Year, an overview of the draft 5 year Strategic Vision and Development Plan for the Cathedral Quarter. Please see Appendix 1 for further details. The CQSG have also written to the Council inviting the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman of the Development Committee (or to nominate two Members as the Committee sees fit) to sit on the CQSG. Please see Appendix 2 for further details.

Resource Implications

There are no resource implications.

Recommendations:

1. It is recommended that Committee receive a presentation from the Chair of the Cathedral Quarter Steering Group and the Cathedral Quarter Manager
2. That Committee consider the invitation for the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman or their nominees to sit on the GQSG.

Decision Tracker:

1. Further to approval that the Chair of the CQSG and the Cathedral Quarter Manager make a presentation to Committee

Time line: January 2010

Reporting Officer: Kerrie Sweeney

2. Further to agreement that the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman or their nominees agree to sit on the CQSG

Time line: February 2010

Reporting Officer: Kerrie Sweeney

3. Arts Council of Northern Ireland – Special Development Committee Meeting

The Arts Council is the lead development agency for the arts in Northern Ireland and offers a range of funding opportunities through the Exchequer and National Lottery funds. Its vision is to place the arts at the heart of Northern Ireland's social, economic and creative life. Providing a joined-up approach to the arts will be of paramount importance, given that the Review of Public Administration will change the landscape and culture of public services in Northern Ireland.

Following a meeting between the Chairman of the Development Committee, Councillor William Humphrey, and the Chair of the Arts Council, Rosemary Kelly, permission is sought for the Committee to receive a presentation from the Arts Council at a Special Meeting of the Development Committee. The presentation is timely given that the Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit's Intergrated Cultural Strategy is nearing completion and consideration needs to be given to:

- Gain a greater understanding of the Arts Council's contribution to Belfast's Culture and Arts Sector, with a particular emphasis on promoting the value of the arts; strengthening the arts; growing audiences; and improving organisational performance
- Determine the Arts Council's future priorities for arts development in Belfast
- Establish a collaborative and integrated approach towards new opportunities

Resource Implications:

There are no resource implications.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Committee agree to a Special Committee Meeting to receive a presentation from the Arts Council of NI.

Decision Tracker:

Further to approval that the ACNI attend a Special Committee meeting to deliver a presentation.

Time line: February 2010

Reporting Officer: Kerry Sweeney

Documents Attached

Appendix 1. Details on the Cathedral Quarter Steering Group

Appendix 2. Details on the nomination of Committee Members to the CQSG

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Appendix 1

Cathedral Quarter Steering Group

In 2008 DSD, working closely with Belfast City Council, Belfast City Centre Management and key stakeholders, set up a steering group to develop and implement a 5 year Strategic Vision and Development Plan for the area. DSD committed funding to allow the steering group to produce the strategy and promote the area including the employment of a Cathedral Quarter Development Manager.

The Cathedral Quarter Steering Group (CQSG) includes broad representation of arts, business, leisure, public sector and other stakeholders. CQSG currently includes:

Paul McErlean, MCE Public Relations Ltd, CHAIR
Anne Mc Reynolds, The MAC
Conor Shields, New Belfast Community Arts Initiative
Heather Floyd, Community Arts Forum
Prof. Kerstin Mey, Interface, University of Ulster
Paula McFetridge, Kabosh Theatre Productions
Will Chamberlain, Belfast Community Circus
Mark Finlay, Barnabas Ventures
Sorcha Wolsey, The Merchant Hotel
Ken Patterson, Belfast Cathedral
Rita Harkin, Ulster Architectural Heritage Society
Carol Ramsey, Department of Social Development
Carolyn Mathers, Belfast City Council
Andrew Irvine, Belfast City Centre Manager
Patricia Freedman, Cathedral Quarter Development Manager

The Steering Group has met monthly since September 2008 to map out an appropriate and sustainable strategy for future development that not only revitalises the area but also safeguards its unique personality as an historic and cultural quarter. The 13 members of CQSG is divided into 5 sub groups, to look at the arts and cultural activity, land use and built environment, development of the strategy, marketing, and lobbying of key stakeholders.

Each sub group meets separately, consults appropriate external stakeholders, and makes proposals back to the larger group to be included in the overall strategy. As the strategy began to take shape a public forum was held for businesses, organisations and other residents of Cathedral Quarter to discuss the 'direction of travel'. Over 80 people attended two sessions in The Black Box on the 19th of May raising some additional issues and providing invaluable feedback. Workshops and consultations by sector are taking place at this time and a second public forum will take place later in the autumn.

Through the land use and built environment sub group, CQSG has commissioned RPS Consulting to do a traffic study that looks at ways of establishing pedestrian priority and calming traffic in the area. The findings of that report are being incorporated into the draft strategy. Over the past few months CQSG took the lead in organising the highly-successful Culture Night event on the 25th of September which attracted 15,000 visitors and showcased what Cathedral Quarter has to offer.

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APPENDIX 2



CM copy & prep for Dev Comm Oct

cathedral
quarter

Shirley McCay
Head of Economic Initiatives
Development Department
Belfast City Council
Cecil Ward Building
4-10 Linenhall Street
Belfast
BT2 8BP

17 September 2009



Dear Shirley,

Thank you for the opportunity last month to present the Cathedral Quarter Steering Group's 'direction of travel' as we develop a plan for Cathedral Quarter. We now feel the essential preparatory work has been done and are eager to liaise with the Development Committee and the Development Department at the most strategic level possible before we take further steps toward the development of a plan.

As we discussed, this is an opportunity to reflect on how we take this initiative forward in tandem with Belfast City Council. We also want to take this opportunity to congratulate Carolyn Mathers on her new post within the Development Department and to express our gratitude for her engagement with the Steering Group over the past year.

By this letter, we request a meeting with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Development Committee as soon as can be arranged in order to brief them on our progress. It is our intention to invite the Chair and Deputy Chair to sit on the Cathedral Quarter Steering Group or to nominate two other members as the Committee sees fit. By this letter, we also request to be put on the Development Committee calendar to make a presentation on the Cathedral Quarter strategy at their earliest convenience, though we understand that the first available opportunity may not be until November or December.

To the extent that our work is relevant to other Departments within Council we would appreciate your guidance on how best to approach them. We would also be grateful for your guidance on the Development Department's ongoing participation on the Steering Group at an official level.

Sincerely,

P.P. Paul McErlean

Paul McErlean, Chair
Cathedral Quarter Steering Group



**Belfast City Council**

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Tourism Monitor and Research Services
Date:	11 November 2009
Reporting Officer:	Shirley McCay/Tim Husbands, Interim Co-Directors of Development
Contact Officer:	Kerrie Sweeney, Tourism Culture & Arts Manager, ext 3586

Relevant Background Information

Members will be aware that the Development Committee, at a meeting held on 9 June 2004, agreed to appoint consultants to undertake an extensive marketing research campaign which would monitor tourism performance in Belfast for the period 2005 to 2009.

The Belfast Tourism Monitor has been extremely effective in measuring the volume and value of tourism to the City. The Monitor has been used to evaluate the return on investment of the Council's funding to the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau.

Key Issues

The current contract for the provision of this service, which was awarded to Millward Browne Ulster, will end in December 2009. It is recommended that tenders be invited for the provision of tourism monitoring and research services for the period from 1 January 2010 to December 2013. It is also recommended that the Interim Co-Directors of Development, in conjunction with the Chairman, be delegated authority to accept the most economically advantageous tender received.

Resource Implications

£80,000 per year over three years, with a total value of no more than £240,000, from within existing Departmental budgets.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee consider the above report and invite tenders for the provision of tourism monitoring to the value of £80,000 per year over three years, with a total value of no more than £240,000 from within existing Departmental budgets.

Decision Tracking
If approval is received, the full outcome of the tender will be reported to Committee in February 2010.
Timeframe: February 2010 Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay

**Belfast City Council**

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Broadway Junction Public Art Update
Date:	11 November 2009
Reporting Officer:	Shirley McCay/Tim Husbands, Interim Co-Directors of Development
Contact Officer:	Kerrie Sweeney, Tourism Culture & Arts Manager, ext 3586

Relevant Background Information

The Broadway Junction Art Piece project (Rise) has been taken forward since 2005 through the Broadway Project Board, a partnership between the Department for Regional Development (Roads Service), Belfast City Centre Regeneration Directorate (Department for Social Development - DSD), the Arts Council for Northern Ireland (ACNI) and Belfast City Council (BCC). The Roads Service is responsible for the ongoing structural work relating to the roundabout/junction, which is part of the M1/Westlink improvement scheme, and the Arts Council and DSD are providing the majority of funding for the project.

The Broadway Project Board met on 15 September 2009 where it was agreed to continue to support the project and seek additional resources to cover unforeseen costs. The Broadway Project Board requested that an application be made to Belfast City Council to underpin the remaining £36,000 shortfall if it cannot be sourced elsewhere.

Key Issues

Members will be aware that at a meeting of the Development Committee on 14 October 2009, Committee agreed to request officers to endeavour to obtain from other public agencies the shortfall of £36,000 required to ensure the completion of the Broadway Junction Public Art project and failing this, to examine the Department's existing budgets to ascertain if that amount could be found.

Officers have since contacted public agencies and the response is as follows:

DRD confirmed that Roads Service is not in a position to provide any capital funds for this project, however they will continue to work with the team to facilitate the project.

Officers submitted an application for the shortfall of £36,000 to the ACNI public art funding programme and this has been unsuccessful (they had previously committed an additional £20,000 to this project).

DSD have in principle agreed a further £30,000 if other partners were willing to award funding to the remaining shortfall of £36,000.

Since all avenues have been investigated and are unsuccessful, it is recommended that Committee meet the shortfall of £36,000. A re-profiling of expenditure has been undertaken and this budget is available within existing Departmental budgets.

Resource Implications

The resource of £36,000 would be allocated through re-profiling existing departmental budgets.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Committee meet the shortfall of £36,000. A re-profiling of expenditure has been undertaken and this budget is available within existing Departmental budgets.

Decision Tracking

The full outcome of decision relating to the shortfall will be reported to the Committee in December.

Timeframe: December 2009

Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay

Key to Abbreviations

ACNI - Arts Council for Northern Ireland
DSD – Department of Social Development



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Response to DSD Area Advice Centre Locations Consultation
Date:	11 November 2009
Reporting Officer:	Shirley McCay/Tim Husbands, Interim Co-Directors of Development
Contact Officer:	Catherine Taggart, Community Services Manager, ext 3525

Relevant Background Information

In September 2007 the Opening Doors Strategy for the Delivery of Voluntary Advice Services was published by the Department for Social Development. This set out a plan for the future of modern advice services in Northern Ireland based on a model of local commissioning arrangements led by councils, supported by DSD and operating within an agreed framework of quality standards. The original strategy has been supplemented by two further phases of research. In 2008 Phase 1 considered and mapped existing provision. The paper proposes a BCC response to the second phase of research which proposes the optimum number and location of Area Advice Centres.

Following this consultation process, DSD has advised that Minister Ritchie intends to publish further guidance "in consultation with councils" before piloting the new advice framework in partnership. DSD has indicated its intention to invite expressions of interest from councils to permit a pilot phase in 2010. Furthermore, implementation of the new framework should take account of and fit the new council areas post RPA. DSD indicated that adoption of the agreed model will coincide with RPA implementation time scales currently expected to occur in 2011.

The consultation document includes questions directed to advice providers and funders of advice provision. The attached draft response (Appendix 1) from BCC only addresses funder specific questions.

Key Issues

The consultation document (Appendix 2) indicates that the Area Advice Centre model will provide:

- Accessible generalist advice, advocacy and support on a range of basic and complex advice issues;
- Offer first line support to those who have specific needs;
- Act as a referral point to specialist agencies where dedicated specialist advice is required;
- Outreach and the use of telephone and online access will be used to ensure adequate advice coverage of an area, this would be agreed and implemented by the council. In Belfast it is envisaged that existing Advice providers/consortia would undertake this function.

After classification of settlements based on population and the level of service provision, 2 further tests were applied to propose locations for the Area Advice Centres.

1. Population

What percentage of the population lives within 5 miles of the proposed Area Advice Centres.

This test found that:

75% of population of N.I. live within the 5 mile radius of the proposed centres.

2. Deprivation

What proportion of the top 10% and top 20% of deprived Census Output Areas are within 5 miles of the proposed Area Advice Centres.

This test found that:

- 96% of top 10% deprived SOAs are within a 5 mile radius
- 90% of top 20% deprived SOAs are within a 5 mile radius

DSD further analysed whether or not Neighbourhood Renewal Areas could be readily linked to an Area Advice Centre. Information detailed on table 5.2 (page 20) of the DSD document indicates all the Belfast NRPs are aligned.

BCC has been aware of and has been working towards being part of the pilot phase of this strategy for several years. Unfortunately the proposed pilot phase, which was originally planned for 2009, has been significantly delayed.

A review of BCC current Advice and Information Services was undertaken and published in February 2008 (Appendix 3). This was commissioned within the context of reviewing the new consortium based approach and to inform BCC comment on and preparation for the implementation of the Opening Doors Strategy.

The review, which was conducted by Deloitte MCS Limited, is complimentary of the consortium approach taken by the Council while identifying a number of best practice changes. It goes on to make recommendations on our future delivery approach, particularly in light of the new regional DSD strategy. Members would note that this research appears to have been very influential in the development of the DSD Area Advice Centre proposals.

A key principle of the Opening Doors Strategy is to provide an integrated network of voluntary Advice services throughout Northern Ireland and to do so in line with the planned implementation of RPA. In order to support the BCC agreed strategy and action plan to meet this time-scale, officers are currently working with the Policy &

Business Development Unit to:

- Recommend an interim position and funding arrangements for the interim year 2010/11 via a Committee paper in January 2010.
- Develop an action plan to inform a Councillor agreed BCC strategy for Advice & Information Services support post 2011 via Committee paper submitted for consideration in Spring 2010.

While the consultation proposes that each new council area will have one contract to cover provision across that council area, it proposes that in Belfast 4 contracts will be issued on a North, South, East and West basis. The attached draft consultation response highlights the current position with 5 consortia, which includes the City centre.

Resource Implications

There is no recommendation or suggestion of any reduction in services or investment for voluntary advice provision, with implementation of the strategy taking place within existing available budgets. However, it is expected that advice services will be commissioned using a procurement process open to competition and leading to contractual arrangements.

Recommendations

1. Members are asked to consider the draft BCC response to the DSD consultation document on the number and location of Area Advice Centres.
2. Members are further asked to note the contents of the report and endorse the officer proposal to table a further 2 reports in relation to:
 - BCC interim support for advice services in 2010/11 and
 - Arrangements to identify options and agree any future BCC strategy for Advice & Information Services support.

Decision Tracking

1. Following agreement of the draft consultation response the Community Development Manager will issue to DSD noting this is subject to Council ratification.

Time-frame: 27 November 2009

Reporting Officer: Catherine Taggart

2. Presentation of two future committee reports by Community Development Manager.

Time frame: 1 January 2010 & 2 March 2010 Reporting Officer: Catherine Taggart

Key Abbreviations

BCC - Belfast City Council
 DSD – Department for Social Development
 SOA – Super Output Area

Documents Attached
Appendix 1 - BCC Draft response to DSD consultation Appendix 2 - DSD Consultation document on the number and location of Area Advice Centres Appendix 3 - BCC Review of BCC's Current Advice & Information Service

Area Advice Centre Locations

This booklet will help you to record your views on the policy proposals for the possible number and location of Area Advice Centres

CONSULTATION RESPONSE BOOKLET

September 2009

**To be read in conjunction with consultation document
HOW TO RESPOND TO THE CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**

A twelve week period for the submission of comments on this consultation document will extend from 7th September 2009 until 27th November 2009. Correspondents are asked to submit their views as early as possible during this period to allow as much time as possible for consideration.

This consultation response booklet has been produced to help you record your views on the policy proposals for the possible number and location of Area Advice Centres in Northern Ireland. The response booklet can be downloaded from the Department's website (www.dsdni.gov.uk) if you wish to respond in writing. If you are unable to access the response booklet, a printed copy can be requested from the Voluntary and Community Unit at the contact details provided below.

Alternatively should you only wish to respond to a particular element of this consultation and do not wish to complete the consultation response booklet then you can submit your comments referring to the relevant section. For example:

Section x (x) – I/We consider that.....

All responses must be made in writing (or by fax or E-mail) and attributable so that there is an objective record of the views expressed. Your name, address and organisation name (if applicable) should be clearly stated. Responses should be submitted before the closing date. Responses should be sent to:-

**Martin Drumm
Community Support Team
Voluntary & Community Unit
Department for Social Development
3rd Floor,
Lighthouse Building
1 Cromac Place,
Gasworks Business Park
Ormeau Road,
Belfast,
BT7 2JB**

**Tel: (028) 90 829 417
Fax : (028) 90 829 431
Text Phone: (028) 90 829 446
E-Mail: martin.drumm@dsdni.gov.uk
Website: www.dsdni.gov.uk**

While we cannot accept responses by telephone, general enquiry calls may be made to the above number.

In view of the number of responses anticipated, the Department will not acknowledge responses or enter into correspondence about the details of proposals.

The information you send us may be passed to colleagues within the Department and published in any summary of responses received. Under the Freedom of Information Act all information contained in your response may be subject to disclosure. More information about the Freedom of Information Act is at Appendix 1.

ASSISTANCE IN PREPARING RESPONSES

If you require any further information, or wish to discuss your proposed response in general terms, please contact us at the above address or call **028 90 829 417**.

Alternative Formats

This document can be made available in an alternative format, style or language. Please contact us to discuss how we can best provide this alternative format for you.

Tel: (028) 90 829 417

Fax: (028) 90 829 431

Text Phone: (028) 90 829 446

E-Mail: martin.drumm@dsdni.gov.uk

YOUR DETAILS

NAME:

John Nelson

ADDRESS:

Belfast City Council
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4-10 Linnenhall Street
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ORGANISATION ON WHOSE BEHALF YOU ARE RESPONDING (IF APPLICABLE)

Belfast City Council

DOES YOUR RESPONSE REPRESENT THE COLLECTIVE VIEW OF YOUR ORGANISATION?

YES/NO

(Delete as appropriate)

IF YES WHO DOES YOUR ORGANISATION REPRESENT?

AND HOW WERE THE VIEWS OF MEMBERS ASSEMBLED?

Report was taken to committee and approved at council

YOUR POSITION WITHIN THE ORGANISATION

Community Services Area Manager

POSSIBLE NUMBER AND LOCATION OF AREA ADVICE CENTRES

Our research identified the following 34 locations as suitable for Area Advice Centres. This is an indicative framework for the number and location of Area Advice Centres throughout NI.

Antrim	Cookstown
Armagh	Craigavon
Banbridge	Derry (Cityside)
Ballycastle	Derry (Waterside)
Ballymena	Downpatrick
Ballymoney	Dungannon
Bangor	Enniskillen
Belfast City Centre	Larne
Belfast East (Newtownards Road)	Limavady
Belfast North (Antrim Road/Carlisle Circus)	Lisburn
Belfast South (Lisburn Road)	Magherafelt
Belfast West (Falls Road)	Newcastle
Belfast (Poleglass/Twinbrook)	Newry
Belfast (Shankill)	Newtownabbey
Belfast (Suffolk/Andersonstown)	Newtownards
Carrickfergus	Omagh
Coleraine	Strabane

Question 1 – (question for all stakeholders)

What is your view of this proposal?

Please circle the number beside the statement which best expresses your opinion and use the box below to detail the reasons for your decision. Please make us aware of any evidence or research you are using to inform your response.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Support	<u>Support</u>	Neutral	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't know

2 – Support proposal

The Opening Doors strategy and in particular a move to specified area advice centres, marks a significant opportunity for both the advice sector and BCC.

It gives the opportunity to implement an advice structure across the city that is replicated across the province, with key advice locations in place that are based on recognized need.

Implementation of the strategy will allow best practice changes to be implemented particularly in the areas of consortia structure and working, targeting need and improving monitoring and evaluation of the service.

Question 2 – (question for local councils)

Do you agree with the locations for Area Advice Centres indicated by our research for your new council area?

Please circle the number beside the statement which best expresses your opinion and use the box below to detail the reason for your decision.

Please make us aware of any evidence or research you are using to inform your response.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly	<u>Agree</u>	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly	No Opinion
Agree				Disagree	Don't Know

2 – Support proposal

The proposed locations of the area advice centres align well to the areas of deprivation and are sited on or near the main arterial routes in Belfast.

The emphasis on the delivery of advice services in Neighbourhood Renewal areas is welcomed but we recognise that at varying times many people, from across the city or those across the province who live in rural areas, have the need to make use of advice services. Therefore the promotion of appropriate outreach, telephone and on line access needs to be given high priority.

Question 3 – (question for local councils)

What are the key difference between the locations of Area Advice Centres indicated by our research for your new council area and the locations at which you currently fund voluntary advice provision?

In Belfast the proposed locations of the Area Advice Centres are in the main already locations for CAB Advice Services.

Proposed sites v actual advice locations

North:	- Carlisle Circus/ Antrim Road	= Antrim Road CAB
	- Shankill Road	= Shankill Road CAB
South:	- Lisburn Road	= Lisburn Road Bradbury Centre CAB
East:	- Newtownards Road	= Arches Health Centre CAB
West:	- Falls Road	= Falls Road CAB
	- Andersonstown Road	= Suffolk and Andersonstown CAB
	- Poleglass/Twinbrook	= currently Lisburn CAB outreach
City Centre -		= No present location as CAB moved from Callender street to Duncairn Gardens. An alternative location for city centre advice will have to be sourced.

This could lead to a two tier system of advice services with CAB being seen as the preferred area advice provider and the Independent Advice providers being seen as fulfilling a more local/neighbourhood advice function. We note that as BCC is committed to the consortia being made up of both CAB and Independent Advice providers, this approach could be problematic.

To recognise one organisation as the preferred provider of Area Advice Centres would give them an advantage within any consortia structure.

At present the consortia appoint a lead organisation and, in a similar way, it is felt that the consortia should propose the location and organisation of an Area Advice Centre.

The proposal for the establishment of Area Advice Centres is a step forward in the coordination of Advice services but in addition clarification needs to be given on the role and status of both Outreach and Specialist providers.

(Questions 4 & 5 are specifically directed at local generalist advice providers)

Question 6 – (question for funders of generalist advice provision)

What impact will the research findings have on your current and planned funding of voluntary advice services?

Please circle the number beside the statement which best expresses your opinion and use the box below to detail the reasons for your decision. Please make us aware of any evidence or research you are using to inform your response.

1
Significant
Impact

2
Moderate
Impact

3
No Impact

4
Don't Know/
No opinion

1 – Significant impact

In Belfast the advice consortia way of working is already established along with the concept of outreach from established advice centres. However the consortia structure is currently based on 5 consortia. The consultation document proposes this will have to be adapted to 4 consortia with attendant implications for current consortia members.

As previously noted, consortia will have to decide and define outreach processes, with the possibility of consortia members making use of temporary advice locations i.e. community centres, doctor's surgeries, home visits and an expansion of the use of telephone and online access.

BCC believe that the standard of advice given in both Area Advice Centre's and within outreach sites must be of the same standard and as such be resourced adequately. The need for, and levels of, outreach should be written into the contract. This is also applicable to the level of interaction and inclusion of specialist advice providers, i.e. can specialist advice providers be part of the proposed consortia and if so how and at what level will they be funded? Will it be a set amount or will it be dependent upon how they are used?

There is also an agreed formula for calculating the percentage level of funding to each group; this would have to be revisited with any potential recalculation influencing the levels of funding individual groups will receive.

The move to advice services being commissioned using a procurement process will also be a major change and could, given the amounts involved, lead to interest from new groups/organisations. This might include interest from the private sector, from outside of Belfast and / or from outside Northern Ireland.

It must be made clear as to whether the 4 Belfast contracts are to be with specific Area Advice centres or with the proposed 4 consortia.

Appendix 1

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Confidentiality of Consultations

The Department will publish a summary of responses following completion of the consultation process. Your response, and all other responses to the consultation, may be disclosed on request.

The Department can only refuse to disclose information in exceptional circumstances. Before you submit your response, please read the paragraphs below on the confidentiality of consultations and they will give you guidance on the legal position about any information given by you in response to this consultation.

The Freedom of Information Act gives the public a right of access to any information held by a public authority, namely, the Department in this case. This right of access to information includes information provided in response to a consultation.

The Department cannot automatically consider as confidential information supplied to it in response to a consultation. However, it does have the responsibility to decide whether any information provided by you in response to this consultation, including information about your identity should be made public or be treated as confidential.

If you do not wish information about your identity to be made public please include an explanation in your response.

This means that information provided by you in response to the consultation is unlikely to be treated as confidential, except in very particular circumstances. The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Information Act provides that:

- The Department should only accept information from third parties in confidence if it is necessary to obtain that information in connection with the exercise of any of the Department's functions and it would not otherwise be provided
- The Department should not agree to hold information received from third parties "in confidence"
- Acceptance by the Department of confidentiality provisions must be for good reasons, capable of being justified to the Information Commissioner.

For further information about confidentiality of responses please contact the Information Commissioner's Office (or see web site at: <http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/>).

APPENDIX 2



Department for
**Social
Development**
www.dsdni.gov.uk

DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Consultation document on the number and location of Area Advice Centres

September 2009

Alternative Formats

This document can be made available in an alternative format, style or language. Please contact us to discuss how we can best provide this alternative format for you.

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Ministerial Foreword

Modern advice services must be accessible to those who need them most. In September 2007, I published *Opening Doors*, the Strategy for the Delivery of Voluntary Advice Services. This set out a plan for the future of such services in Northern Ireland based on a model of local commissioning arrangements, led by councils, supported by the Department and operating within an agreed framework of quality standards. The Strategy stopped short of mapping existing provision or commenting on the optimum location of services indicating instead that the Department intended completing further research. This has been taken forward in two phases.



The first phase of research, which was published in April 2008, mapped existing voluntary advice services and government advice and information provision services across Northern Ireland. It provided important new insights into patterns of provision.

I am pleased now to publish for consultation the findings of the Department's second phase of research – the optimum location for voluntary advice centres in Northern Ireland. The findings of this work have interest to those of us who use advice services, those who deliver them and those who commission and support them. If new commissioning arrangements align voluntary advice provision with these research recommendations, then 96% of people living in areas of greatest social need will be within a five mile radius of an Area Advice Centre. That is a powerful and practical contribution to helping target social need.

Adoption of the model will take place on the implementation of the RPA new council areas in 2011 with implementation of the model occurring from 2011 through to 2012. My Department will continue to work across government, with councils and voluntary advice providers to support the development of new commissioning arrangements and I look forward to seeing the results of this consultation.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Margaret Ritchie".

Margaret Ritchie MLA
Minister for Social Development

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Department for Social Development (DSD) has policy responsibility for helping to support voluntary information and advice services in Northern Ireland. Following public consultation in 2006 and a period of extensive consultation with all relevant stakeholders, *'Opening Doors' - The Strategy for the Delivery of Voluntary Advice Services to the Community* was launched by the Minister Ritchie on 10th September 2007¹. 'Opening Doors' aims to put in place an integrated quality advice service across Northern Ireland and a framework to ensure that services are planned and delivered in a way which matches resources to need. The strategy focuses on generalist voluntary advice provision.
- 1.2 This document is about the next stage of the implementation of the Advice Strategy. The document which is designed to help councils with the location of voluntary advice services sets out the Department's research to identify where generalist advice services are best placed. It will provide councils with an evidence based research methodology for the commissioning of these services in the future and we welcome the views of stakeholders on this research.

¹ The 'Opening Doors' document can be accessed at www.dsdni.gov.uk

2. 'Opening Doors' Advice Strategy - work underway

- 2.1 In addition to the Department's research a number of other actions set out in the Advice Strategy are underway. A Government Advice and Information Group has been set up by Minister Ritchie to look at funding, to advise on best practice and to monitor progress on the strategy. The group comprises representatives from Government Departments who fund voluntary advice provision, the Northern Ireland Local Government Association, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the Legal Services Commission.
- 2.2 DSD has also been working with the Advice Services Alliance (ASA) which is made up of the CAB, Advice NI and Law Centre NI. ASA working groups have been looking at Quality, Training and Information Technology (IT) provision. Findings from the working groups are being considered by voluntary advice providers and by government.
- 2.3 The ASA has also established a Specialist Advisory Panel to help with a range of issues including access for specific groups such as older people and people with disabilities. The group includes a number of regional organisations such as Royal National Institute for the Blind, Age Concern and Help the Aged NI and Disability Action.
- 2.4 DSD commissioned research into voluntary advice services and government advice and information provision. The findings from this research are contained in the report 'Mapping of Advice, Information and Legal Services in Northern Ireland: Data Paper' and can be found at www.dsdni.gov.uk.

3. Area Advice Centre Model

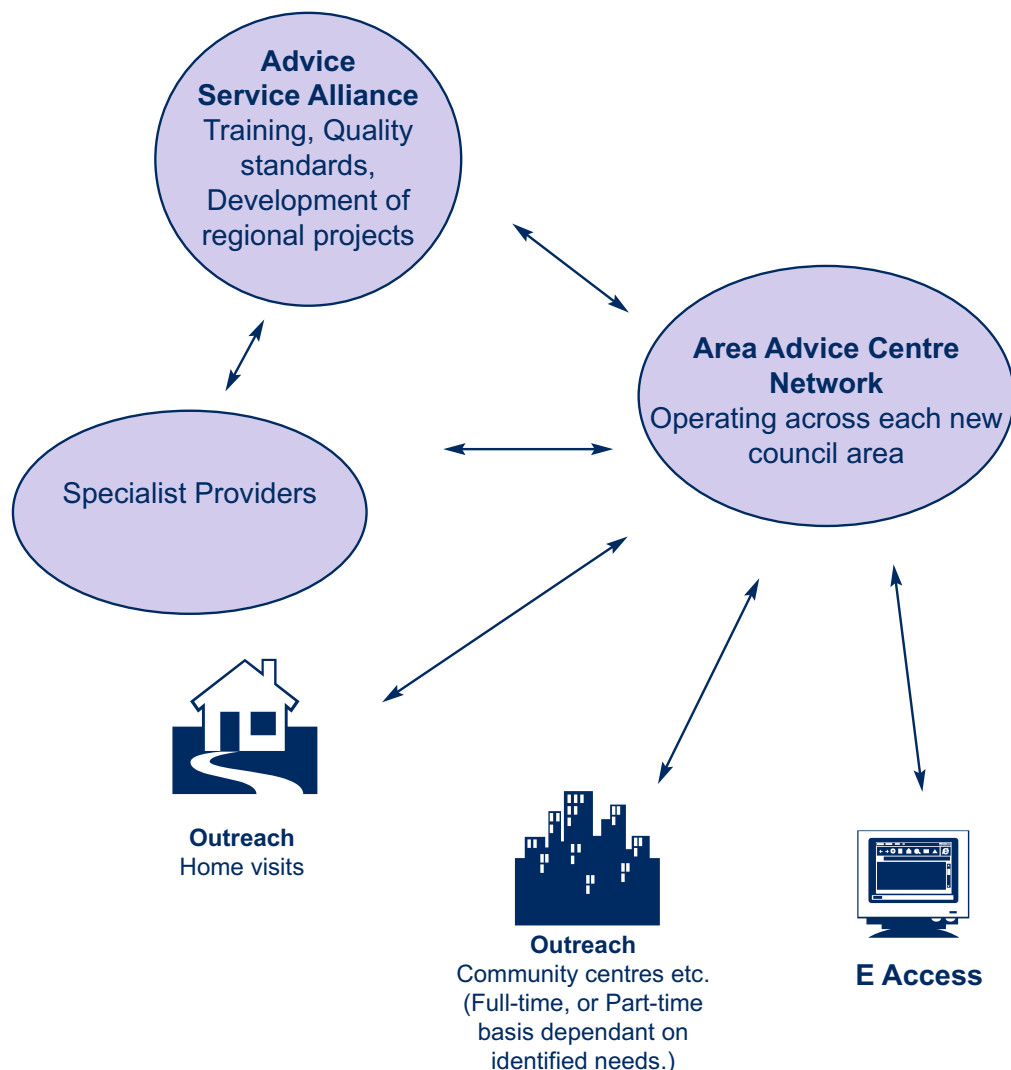
- 3.1 A key principle of 'Opening Doors' is to ensure that there is an integrated network of voluntary advice services throughout Northern Ireland and the proposed framework for delivery of these services envisaged fixed premises (hub and satellite facilities) and flexible outreach services to be put in place. Mindful of the changes in local government proposed by RPA, and seeking to avoid the creation of what might be regarded as a two tier system of advice, the Minister has decided to replace the hub and satellite model with the more flexible concept of Area Advice Centres whilst still retaining all of the elements of commissioning as set out in the Advice Strategy. The Area Advice Centre model is included at **Appendix A** of this document. It is envisaged that each new council will put in place one such contract to cover provision across the council area. This is with the exception of Belfast where 4 such contracts are envisaged, consistent with the model set out in the Advice Strategy.
- 3.2 When a comparison was made between the current pattern of voluntary advice services and the research findings for area advice locations there is a good geographical match. There is no recommendation or suggestion of any reduction in services or investment for voluntary advice provision.
- 3.3 The proposed structure is intended to provide integrated local services with Area Advice Centres located in areas which will best meet community need. In some of the proposed council areas different organisations will be required to co-operate on a consortia basis to ensure that there is adequate coverage across a specified geographical area. This is consistent with arrangements already in place in Belfast set out in **Appendix G**.
- 3.4 An Area Advice Centre will be locally based and will provide a broad range of advice services. It will –
- Provide accessible, generalist advice, advocacy and support on a range of basic and complex general advice issues;
 - Offer first line support to those who have specific needs; and
 - Act as a referral point to specialist agencies where dedicated specialist advice is required.

- 3.5 Outreach, coupled with the use of technology (telephone and on-line access), will be needed to make sure that people who do not live near the Area Advice Centres will still be able to get quality advice easily. This provision will work as part of the advice network and all outreach, telephone and on-line services will be directly linked to the Area Advice Centre in the local area. There will be various forms of outreach service such as half-day sessions in community centres, doctors' surgeries, etc or outreach home visits to those who are unable to physically access advice services. A more detailed description of these services can be found in **Appendix D**.
- 3.6 It is envisaged that there will be a fully integrated service across each of the new council areas with local providers sharing resources and working together. Adoption of the model will take place on the implementation of the RPA new council areas which is currently expected to occur in 2011 with implementation of the model occurring from 2011 through to 2012.
- 3.7 'Opening Doors' states that advice will be provided via a range of outlets e.g. Area Advice Centres, specialist provision and appropriate outreach including telephone and on-line services. This consultation deals only with Area Advice Centre provision it does not include outreach which can be determined by councils at a later stage.

4 Approach for identifying possible Area Advice Centre locations

- 4.1 The identification of possible Area Advice Centre locations has been part of an independent research project undertaken on behalf of the DSD and the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission (NILSC). The element of the research looking at current provision of information and advice by the public and voluntary sectors has been completed and the findings are contained in the report 'Mapping of Advice and Information Services in Northern Ireland: Data Paper' which can be accessed at www.dsdni.gov.uk.
- 4.2 This consultation exercise concentrates on the elements of research taken forward specifically on the possible number and location of Area Advice Centres. Figure 4.1 shows the Area Advice Centre component within the model for the delivery of voluntary advice services.
- 4.3 The research has taken account of issues of accessibility, deprivation and population size. The consultation seeks views on the findings of DSD research to identify the location of these services. It is intended to provide councils with a methodology for determining locations in the commissioning of these services in the future.

Figure 4.1



- 4.4 The Advice Strategy highlights that population, deprivation and accessibility are the criteria for locating advice services. A key principle of 'Opening Doors' is to ensure that there is an integrated network of voluntary advice services throughout Northern Ireland and the proposed framework for delivery of these services offered fixed premises (hub and satellite facilities) and flexible outreach services to be put in place. In this context we are proposing that a network of generalist advice services is put in place at each new council level.
- 4.5 We believe that councils will be best placed to determine the precise levels of service required at each location, therefore we are proposing that instead of a 'hub and satellite' approach envisaged before our research began, that 'Area Advice Centres' should form the foundation of this network of services at each new council level. This will provide councils with the opportunity to commission services in the most responsive and locally appropriate way. It is anticipated that the new councils will have suitable arrangements for public engagement and both equality and rural proofing arrangements at the time of commissioning these services in their local area.

The method used to identify possible Area Advice Centre locations was based on 2 Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) classifications

- Classification of Settlements based on population² and

²**Classification of settlements- Settlements are classified in relation to population alone under this classification. There are 7 categories in total, together with a category for small villages, hamlets & open country. This framework was devised by the Inter-Departmental Urban-Rural Definition Group: Statistical Classification of Settlements. For the purposes of this consultation Bands A-D of the Settlement Classifications are referred to.**

Band A - Belfast Metropolitan Urban Area

Band B - Derry Urban Area

Band C - Large Town (8 identified - Craigavon Urban Area, Ballymena, Newry, Coleraine, Newtownards, Omagh, Antrim and Larne)

Band D - Medium Town (8 Identified - Enniskillen, Armagh City, Banbridge, Cookstown, Dungannon, Downpatrick, Limavady and Strabane)

Band E - Small Town (15 Identified - Ballycastle, Ballyclare, Ballymoney, Ballynahinch, Coalisland, Comber, Donaghadee, Dromore (Banbridge LGD, Kilkeel, Magherafelt, Newcastle, Portrush, Portstewart, Randalstown and Warrenpoint)

Band F - Intermediate Settlement

Band G - Large Village

Band H - Small Village, Hamlet and Open Country

- Settlement Services Classification. This is based on services in a settlement such as shops, health services and education services. The settlement also serves a catchment area providing a range of shops and services for the people living there.³

This was taken as a proxy for accessibility as it identifies service centres with a natural catchment area.

We identified all settlements with a classification of Band D or above (settlement population of 10,000 or above). We also identified 4 settlements, which although their settlement classification was Band E, they had a services classification of level 4 indicating that they were a sub regional service centre.

We then applied 2 further tests to all of these locations.

- a. Population - What percentage of the population lives within five miles of the Area Advice Centres? (The distance of five miles has been chosen to facilitate the assessment. The distance is not significant in itself it has simply been used as a test in this circumstance).
- b. Deprivation - As set out in section 2.5.3 of the Advice Strategy, DSD has a particular responsibility to work for disadvantaged communities and will work to put in place appropriate arrangements to deliver high quality advice and information through the new advice framework that ensures effective provision to the most disadvantaged communities. DSD is particularly concerned to ensure the effective delivery of advice services in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas. Therefore the following tests have also been applied:
 - What proportion of the top 10 per cent and top 20 per cent of deprived census output areas⁴, are within five miles of the proposed Area Advice Centres. The five miles reference is a tool for assessment and is not significant in itself;

³Settlement Services Classification – Settlements are classified according to the services they have such as shops, health services, education services and so on. Regional Centres (Belfast and Derry) have a classification of 5. Sub-Regional Centres such as Coleraine, Armagh for example, have a classification of 4. These classifications are as identified in the report on Settlement Service Classification in December 2006 by the NISRA Settlement Information and Classification Analysis Group (SICAG) http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/stats_and_research/statistics_and_research-sicag.htm. The locations of advice services proposed in this document means that area advice centre services are provided at all settlements classified Level 4 and above.

⁴Census Output Area – a small area used for statistical and administrative purposes by the Census. It is smaller than a ward and smaller than a Super Output Area (also a unit of geography used for small area statistical analysis).

- A second test is whether or not a Neighbourhood Renewal Area can be readily linked to an Area Advice Centre.

- c. Outreach - It is intended that all outreach provision will be determined at a local level as part of the new commissioning arrangements for voluntary advice services envisaged in the Advice Strategy. Outreach, coupled with the use of technology (telephone and on-line access), will be needed to make sure that people who do not live near the Area Advice Centres will still be able to get quality advice easily. This provision will work as part of the advice network and all outreach, telephone and on-line services will be directly linked to the Area Advice Centre in the local area. There will be various forms of outreach service such as half-day sessions in community centres, doctors' surgeries, etc or outreach home visits to those who are unable to physically access advice services.

4.6 Note on Limitations of Analysis

This analysis is a tool to be used in developing possible locations for consultation. Some factors are not accounted for; in particular this analysis is based primarily on spatial geography. It does not take account of advice and information available by telephone, e-mail or internet. Nor does it take account of outreach which brings the service to various populations including individual households, this will be determined at a later stage by local councils.

Work on voluntary advice and internet access is ongoing through a separate strand of the Advice Strategy implementation plan.

5 Research findings for possible Area Advise Centre Locations

5.1 The table below shows the application of the NISRA Classification of Settlements and Settlement Services Classification alongside town population and current council area population.

Table 5.1

Table identifies locations under population and accessibility criteria.

Cities and towns grouped as per new Super Councils	Classification of Settlements	Settlement Services Classification	Population (Towns)	Current District Council Populations
Derry	Band B	Level 5	90,736	106,470
Strabane	Band D	Level 3	13,456	38,555
Limavady	Band D	Level 4	12,135	33,280
Coleraine	Band C	Level 4	24,089	56,035
Ballycastle	Band E	Level 4	5,089	16,300
Ballymoney	Band E	Level 4	9,021	27,815
Ballymena	Band C	Level 4	28,717	59,530
Larne	Band C	Level 4	18,228	30,950
Carrickfergus	Band A (part)	Treated as part of BMUA	27,201	38,445
Magherafelt	Band E	Level 4	8,372	40,845
Cookstown	Band D	Level 3	10,646	33,395
Dungannon	Band D	Level 4	11,139	48,710
Omagh	Band C	Level 4	19,910	38,555
Enniskillen	Band D	Level 4	13,599	58,695
Antrim	Band C	Level 4	20,001	49,240
Newtownabbey	Band A (part)	Treated as part of BMUA	62,056	80,285
Belfast	Band A	Level 5	276,459	271,555
Craigavon	Band C	Level 4	57,685	82,125
Armagh	Band D	Level 4	14,590	55,445
Banbridge	Band D	Level 4	14,744	43,100
Lisburn	Band A (part)	Treated as part of BMUA	71,465	109,315
Castlereagh	Band A (part)	Treated as part of BMUA	54,636	66,060
Newry	Band C	Level 4	27,433	89,635
Newcastle	Band E	Level 4	7,444	65,200
Downpatrick	Band D	Level 4	10,316	
Newtownards	Band C	Level 4	27,821	74,360
Bangor	Band A (part)	Treated as part of BMUA	58,388	77,130

5.2 Our research identified the following 34 locations as suitable for Area Advice Centres. This is an indicative framework for the number and location of Area Advice Centres throughout NI.

Antrim	Cookstown
Armagh	Craigavon
Banbridge	Derry (Cityside)
Ballycastle	Derry (Waterside)
Ballymena	Downpatrick
Ballymoney	Dungannon
Bangor	Enniskillen
Belfast City Centre	Larne
Belfast East (Newtownards Road)	Limavady
Belfast North (Antrim Road/Carlisle Circus)	Lisburn
Belfast South (Lisburn Road)	Magherafelt
Belfast West (Falls Road)	Newcastle
Belfast (Poleglass/Twinbrook)	Newry
Belfast (Shankill)	Newtownabbey
Belfast (Suffolk/Andersonstown)	Newtownards
Carrickfergus	Omagh
Coleraine	Strabane

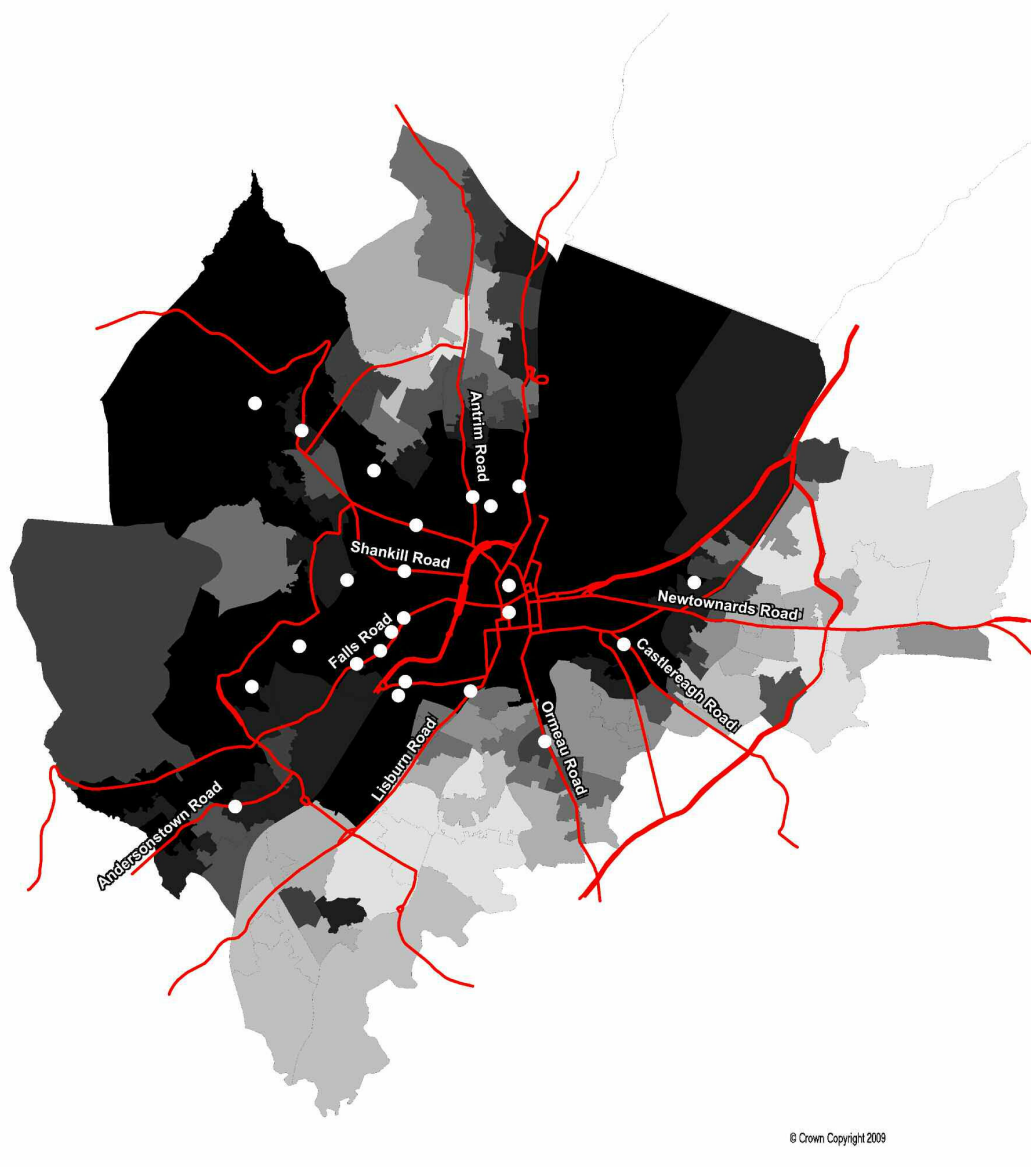
5.3 Possible Area Advice Centre locations - Belfast

Figure 5.1 illustrates the current situation regarding voluntary advice provision in Belfast. It highlights relative deprivation levels across the city (based on 2005 Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure). The Super Output Areas (SOA)⁵ with the darkest shading are most deprived relative to other super output areas. The map also illustrates key routes and locations of current generalist advice providers in the city. These are the locations of advice providers currently funded by Belfast City Council to provide generalist advice services. As can be seen on the map they are well aligned to areas of deprivation and to main roads. Belfast City Council have provided this map and have in so far as is possible classified current provision against the new Area Advice Centres and outreach framework to provide that view on current provision.

⁵**Super Output area (SOA)** - a unit of geography used for small area statistical analysis. It is a small area unit, designed to have a smaller range of populations than wards, used for Census and other statistical outputs.

Figure 5.1 Deprivation and Current Generalist Advice Provision in Belfast

Generalist advice provision shown includes all generalist advice provision funded by Belfast City Council and also includes provision that would be classified as outreach under the new framework.



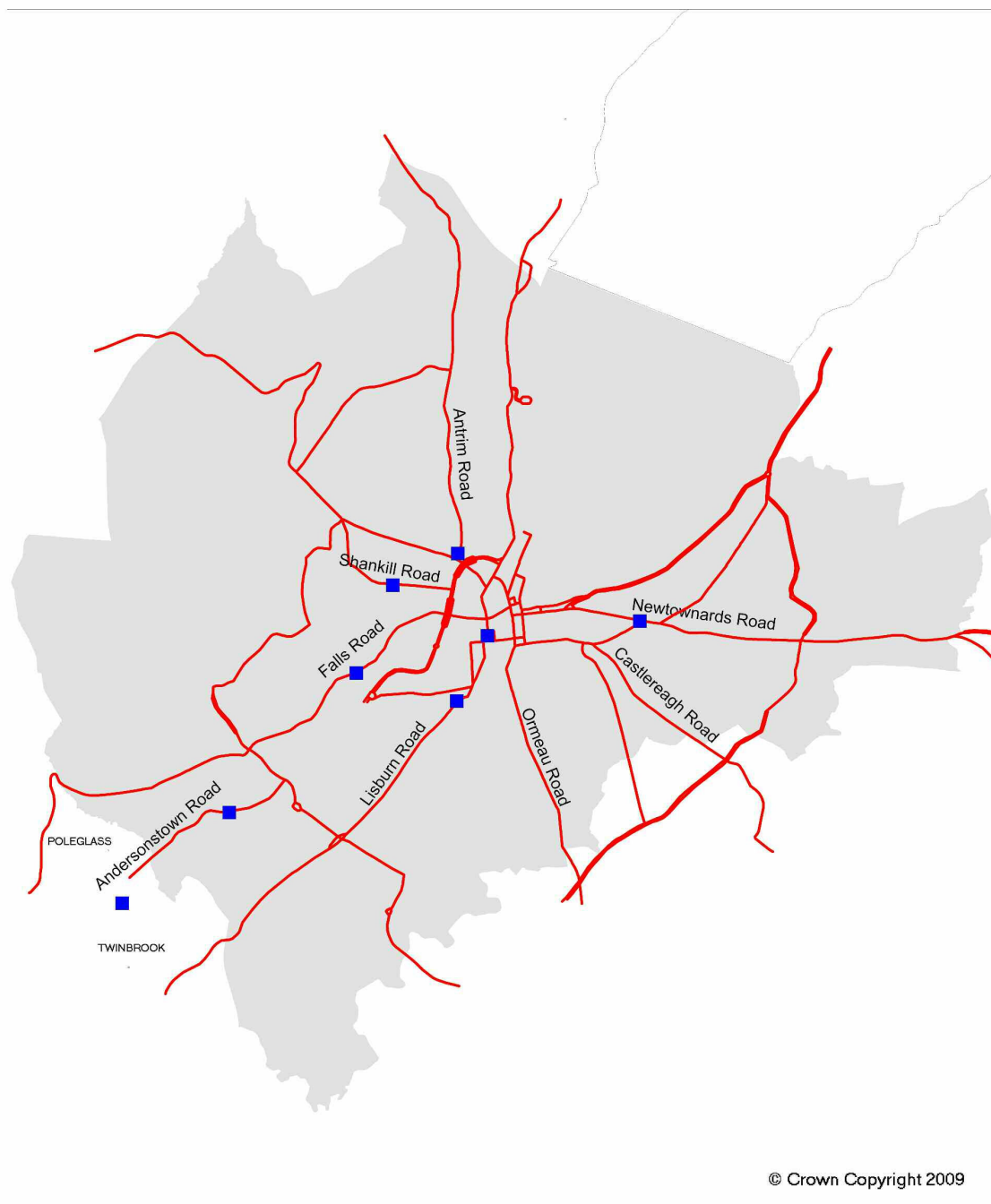
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Belfast Super Output Area's by Rank

800-899	(12)
700-799	(8)
600-699	(13)
500-599	(8)
400-499	(12)
300-399	(10)
200-299	(12)

Our research suggests that the Area Advice Centres in Belfast should be networked on a North, South, East and West basis. This is consistent with the current consortia approach operated by Belfast City Council in funding generalist advice services. It is expected that advice services will be commissioned using a procurement process open to competition and leading to contractual arrangements. It is envisaged that in Belfast 4 contracts will be issued, consistent with the model set out in the Advice Strategy. Due to the population of Belfast and the high concentration of deprivation within it, the Area Advice Centre locations proposed which form the foundation of the network are aligned to deprivation and key routes for accessibility.

Figure 5.2 illustrates only Belfast Area Advice Centres no outreach provision is included.



5.4 Possible Area Advice Centre locations – Derry

Derry has the second largest population in Northern Ireland. It also has four Neighbourhood Renewal Areas indicating significant concentrations of deprivation. Three of these areas are on the Cityside. The scale with regard to geography and population suggests that the city would require two Area Advice Centres. The first is likely to be located in the city centre offering maximum accessibility to the city's population. The majority of areas in need are close to the city centre and current provision operates out of the centre. There is also need for one other Area Advice Centre and research suggests that this is located in the Waterside area.

5.5 Test of locations against criteria

Figure 5.3 illustrates a five mile radius around each of the possible Area Advice Centre locations. Population and deprivation tests will use this five mile radius.

Figure 5.3

34 Potential Area Advice Centre Locations to be Tested Against Key Criteria

Northern Ireland Area Advice Centres
with 5 mile boundaries



5.6 Test One - Population

The first test is what percentage of the population lives within 5 miles of possible advice centre locations⁶

1. Based on 1,702,035, the 2003 mid-year population estimate⁷

Findings

Based on the population analysis the following findings are noted:

- When the five mile test is applied to the proposed network of Area Advice Centre 75% of the population of Northern Ireland lives within the five mile radius applied.

5.7 Test Two – Deprivation

The second test is what proportion of the top 10 and top 20 per cent of deprived Super Output Areas (SOAs) are within five miles of the proposed Area Advice Centres.

Areas of Deprivation within Five Mile Radius of Possible Area Advice Centre Locations

- 96% of top 10% deprived SOAs are within a 5 mile radius boundary.
- 90% of top 20% deprived SOAs are within a 5 mile radius boundary

Findings

Based on the deprivation analysis the following findings are observed:

- The large proportion of highly deprived Super Output Areas is aligned with proposed Area Advice Centres. This is not surprising as the largest concentration of deprivation are known to be associated with the major urban settlements in Northern Ireland

This is an analysis of Area Advice Centre services. Outreach services delivered alongside these will be able to target other areas of deprivation that are outside these zones or indeed target significant areas of deprivation within certain five mile zones.

⁶Method - The populations of Census Output Areas whose centre lines within a five mile radius of the various location are added together for this analysis

⁷The reasoning for using the 2003 dataset was because it could be disaggregated to Census Output Areas for localised analysis.

The Advice Strategy states that DSD will be particularly concerned to ensure the delivery of advice services in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas. Therefore another test is whether or not a Neighbourhood Renewal Area can be readily linked to an Area Advice Centre. Table 5.2 shows that 35 of the 36 Neighbourhood Renewal Areas in Northern Ireland are located within the settlements proposed as Area Advice Centre locations.

Table 5.2 Neighbourhood Renewal Areas within Five Mile Radius of Potential Area Advice Centre Locations

BELFAST REGENERATION OFFICE NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL AREAS		PROPOSED AREA ADVICE CENTRE
Andersonstown		Belfast(Suffolk / Andersonstown)
Colin	Poleglass, Twinbrook	Belfast (Poleglass/Twinbrook)
Crumlin / Ardoyne	Ardoyne, Lower Oldpark, Cliftonville	Belfast (Antrim Rd Carlisle Circus)
Falls / Clonard	Divis / Hamill / John Streets, Roden St Estate, Clonard/ Falls, Cavendish, Fort / Forest Streets, Beechmount, Donegal Road (North), Iveagh , Broadway	Belfast (Falls Rd)
Greater Shankill	Lower Shankill, Mid Shankill / Woodvale, Upper Shankill, Ainsworth, Glencairn, Ballygomartin Road.	Belfast (Shankill)
Inner East Belfast	Short Strand, Lower Newtownards Rd, Albertbridge Road, Albertbridge / Beersbridge, The Mount, Woodstock Road , Lower Ravenhill Road	Belfast (Newtownards Rd)
Inner North Belfast	Duncairn, Limestone Road, Mountcollyer, New Lodge, Unity/Carrick Hill	Belfast (Antrim Rd/Carlisle Circus)
Inner South Belfast	Markets, Donegall Pass, Lower Ormeau.	Belfast (City Centre)
Ligoniel	Ligoniel	Belfast (Antrim Rd / Carlisle Circus)
Outer West Belfast	Lenadoon, Glencolin Estate	Belfast (Suffolk / Andersonstown)
Rathcoole	Part of Rathcoole Estate, Carmeen Drive / Rathmore Drive	Newtownabbey
South West Belfast	Sandy Row, Lower Donegall Road, The Village, Roden St.	Belfast (City Centre)
Tullycarnet	Kinross, Melfort, Vionville	Belfast (Newtownards Rd)
Upper Ardoyne / Ballysillan	Silverstream, Wheatfield, Glenbryn	Belfast (Shankill)
Upper Springfield / Whiterock	Ballymurphy, Springhill, Whiterock 'Rock' Streets, Turf Lodge, New Barnsley, Dermot Hill, Moyard, Springfield Park	Belfast (Suffolk / Andersonstown)

NORTH WEST DEVELOPMENT OFFICE NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL AREAS		PROPOSED AREA ADVICE CENTRE
Triax		Derry (Cityside)
Outer North		Derry (Cityside)
Outer West		Derry (Cityside)
Waterside		Derry (Waterside)
Limavady	The Neighbourhood Renewal Area is on the western side of Limavady and includes the Hospital Lane, Grey-stone Park and Roeview Park areas.	Limavady
Strabane	The main part of this Neighbourhood Renewal Area takes in the Fountain, Springhill Park and Ballycolman estates.	Strabane

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL AREAS		PROPOSED AREA ADVICE CENTRE
Armagh	The Neighbourhood Renewal Area is on the western side of Armagh City and includes the Callanbridge Park, Mullacreevie and Drumarg estates.	Armagh
Ballyclare	The Neighbourhood Renewal Area covers the Grange and Thornhill estates in the northern part of Ballyclare.	Outreach
Ballymena	The Neighbourhood Renewal Area is based around the Ballykeel and Ballee estates.	Ballymena
Bangor	The Neighbourhood Renewal Area is on the south western outskirts of the town, centred on the Kilcooley estate.	Bangor
Brownlow	The Neighbourhood Renewal Area covers a number of estates that are part of the Brownlow development.	Craigavon
Churchlands	This Neighbourhood Renewal Area is based on Churchland ward on the western side of Coleraine, which includes the Heights and Killowen housing estates.	Coleraine
Coalisland	The Square South of Mourne Avenue Newtownkelly Part of Gortgonis Road Part of Annagher Road; Inishmore Park.	Dungannon
Coleraine (East)	This Neighbourhood Renewal Area is based around the Ballysally and Millburn estates on the eastern side of Coleraine.	Coleraine
Downpatrick	The Neighbourhood Renewal Area is based around the Flying Horse ward and will take in the Model Farm, New Model Farm and Flying Horse estates and some other parts of the town.	Downpatrick
Dungannon	The Neighbourhood Renewal Area is to the south and west of Dungannon town centre and will include the Ballygawley Road estate.	Dungannon
Enniskillen	The Island and Derrychara Link; Windmill Heights / Windmill Drive; Rossory Church Road; Willoughby Place / The Brook; Cornagrade and Kilmacormick 1.	Enniskillen
Lurgan	The Neighbourhood Renewal Area is on the western side of Lurgan and will include areas such as Edward Street, Hill Street and Russell Drive.	Craigavon
Newry	The Neighbourhood Renewal Area takes in a large part of the central and western areas of Newry. It includes the Derrybeg, Carnagat, Daisy Hill and Mourneview Park estates and a number of other areas.	Newry
North West Portadown	The Neighbourhood Renewal Area is on the north western side of Portadown and takes in the Obins Street, King Street, Churchill Park and Woodside areas.	Craigavon
Omagh	The Neighbourhood Renewal Area is in the centre of Omagh and takes in the Gallows Hill and Campsie Road areas.	Omagh

Findings

Our research findings illustrate all settlements that have Neighbourhood Renewal Areas within them are possible Area Advice Centre locations, with the exception of Ballyclare. It is proposed that the needs of this area may be factored into outreach plans of the relevant local delivery models. This reflects current practice for the area.

5.8 Conclusion and Summary of possible locations for Area Advice Centres

The framework of Area Advice Centres suggested will provide a network of voluntary advice services in every main settlement in Northern Ireland. This will build on the services which already exist in these areas and compliment advice services provided by Government such as the Social Security Agency, Trading Standards and the Housing Executive. DSD fully respects the role of councils and would want to make sure that what we do assists them. Testing in relation to population, deprivation and accessibility provides positive results and the impact of provision in these terms will be monitored at both pilot phase and full roll out of the model using the analysis of postcode data gathered from clients. It is expected that advice services will be commissioned using a procurement process open to competition and leading to contractual arrangements. It is envisaged that each new council area will put in place one such contract to cover provision across the council area. This is with the exception of Belfast where 4 such contracts are envisaged, consistent with the model set out in the Advice Strategy. This model is being implemented in the context of an ever increasing demand and will need to take place within existing available budgets.

6. Implementation - Next steps

- 6.1 Following consideration of the feedback from the consultation process and in partnership with councils, Minister Ritchie will publish guidance on the optimum location of generalist voluntary advice services.
- 6.2 DSD in partnership with local councils intends to pilot the new advice framework. Councils will be approached to express an interest in piloting the new advice structures. A pilot phase will take place during 2010 and will test partnership arrangements between a range of local providers and referral mechanisms to other regional specialist providers.
- 6.3 It is important that delivery of services is measured in both rural and urban areas. User/customer evaluation will also be included in the pilot phase alongside further work on equality impact assessment and further consideration of rural issues. A number of rural issues have been identified in the development of this consultation document. These issues, along with mitigating measures, have been shown on the Rural Proofing Table at Appendix E.
- 6.4 Given the role of councils in funding and commissioning frontline advice services, the implementation of the new framework for advice services should take account of and fit with new council areas emerging from the RPA review. Adoption of the model will take place on the implementation of the RPA new council areas which is currently expected to occur in 2011 with implementation occurring from 2011 through to 2012.

7. Responding to this consultation

- 7.1 A twelve week period for the submission of comments on this consultation document will extend from 7th September 2009 until 27th November 2009. Correspondents are asked to submit their views as early as possible during this period to allow as much time as possible for consideration.
- 7.2 All responses must be made in writing (or by fax or e-mail) and attributable so that there is an objective record of the views expressed. Your name, address and organisation name (if applicable) should be clearly stated. Responses should be submitted before the closing date. Responses should be sent to:-

Martin Drumm

Community Support Team
Voluntary & Community Unit
Department for Social Development
3rd Floor, Lighthouse Building,
1 Cromac Place,
Gasworks Business Park,
Ormeau Road,
Belfast,
BT7 2JB

Tel: (028) 90 829 417

Fax: (028) 90 829 431

Text Phone : (028) 90 829 446

E-Mail: martin.drumm@dsdni.gov.uk

Website: www.dsdni.gov.uk

- 7.2 A summary of all the possible locations for Area Advice Centres resulting from the research is provided in a separate response booklet.

This booklet has been produced to help you to respond to the consultation. The response booklet can be downloaded from the Department's website (www.dsdni.gov.uk). If you are unable to access the response booklet, a printed copy can be requested from the Voluntary and Community Unit (VCU) at the contact details provided in this section.

The response booklet sets out specific questions on equality and rural issues. The Department would welcome your views on the proposals in the consultation document from a Section 75 perspective and a rural perspective.

- 7.4 Alternatively should you only wish to respond to a particular element of this consultation and do not wish to complete the consultation response booklet then you can submit your comments referring to the relevant section. For example:

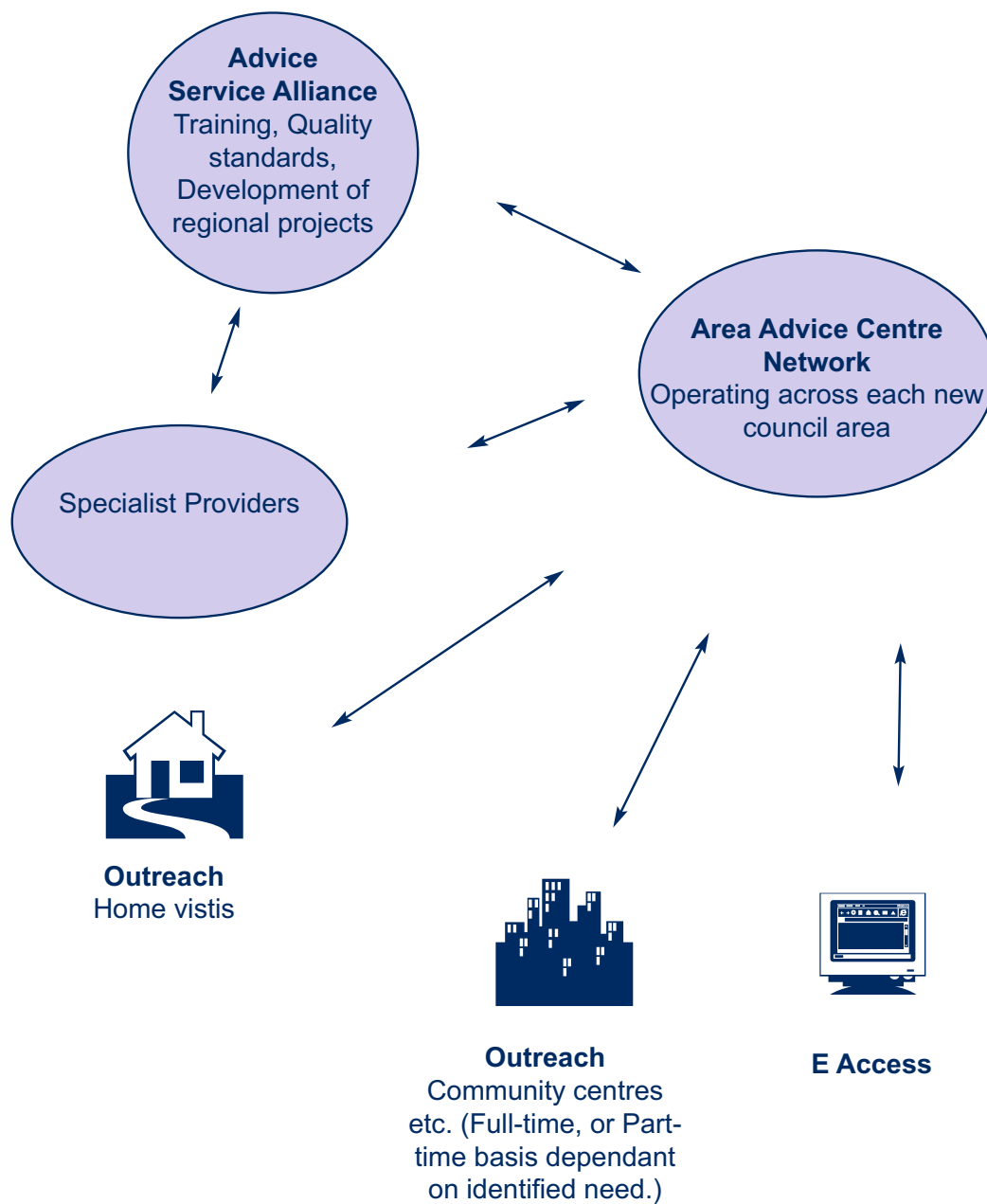
Section x (x) – I/We consider that.....

- 7.5 While we cannot accept responses by telephone, general enquiry calls may be made to the above number.

In view of the number of responses anticipated, the Department will not acknowledge responses or enter into correspondence about the details of proposals.

- 7.6 The information you send us may be passed to colleagues within the Department and published in any summary of responses received. Under the Freedom of Information Act all information contained in your response may be subject to disclosure. More information about the Freedom of Information Act is at **Appendix F**.

- 7.7 If you require any further information, or wish to discuss your proposed response in general terms, please contact us at the above address or telephone 028 90 829 417.

Appendix A: Diagram of 'Opening Doors' Advice Network**The strategy for the Delivery of Voluntary Advice Services to the Community**

Appendix B: List of Abbreviations used in the Consultation Document

List of Abbreviations used in this document

ASA	Advice Services Alliance
CAB	Citizens Advice Bureau
DSD	Department for Social Development
IT	Information Technology
NILSC	Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
RPA	Review of Public Administration
SOA	Super Output Area
SSA	Social Security Agency

Appendix C: Glossary of Terms

Advice Services Alliance (ASA) – this is an overarching body for advice provision and is made up of representatives from Citizens' Advice, Advice NI and the Law Centre. Its main function is to act as conduit between Government and the local advice providers (who are members of one or all of the ASA organisations).

Census Output Area – a small area used for statistical and administrative purposes by the Census. It is smaller than a ward and smaller than a Super Output Area (see definition on next page). A Deprived Census Output Area would be amongst the 10% most deprived of census output areas as defined by the Noble Multiple Deprivation Index.

Classification of settlements – Settlements are classified in relation to population alone under this classification. There are 7 categories in total, together with a category for small villages, hamlets & open country. This framework was devised by the Inter-Departmental Urban-Rural Definition Group: Statistical Classification of Settlements. For the purposes of this consultation Bands A – D of the Settlement Classification are referred to.

Band A – Belfast Metropolitan Urban Area

Band B – Derry Urban Area

Band C – Large Town (8 identified – Craigavon Urban Area, Ballymena, Newry, Coleraine, Newtownards, Omagh, Antrim and Larne)

Band D – Medium Town (8 identified – Enniskillen, Armagh City, Banbridge, Cookstown, Dungannon, Downpatrick, Limavady and Strabane)

Band E – Small Town (15 identified - Ballycastle, Ballyclare, Ballymoney, Ballynahinch, Coalisland, Comber, Donaghadee, Dromore (Banbridge LGD), Kilkeel, Magherafelt, Newcastle, Portrush, Portstewart, Randalstow and Warrenpoint)

Band F – Intermediate Settlement

Band G – Large Village

Band H – Small Village, Hamlet and Open Country

Generalist Advice Provider – provides basic information, advice, advocacy and representation on a wide range of issues including welfare, housing, consumer, health, education, money and debt.⁸

Government Advice and Information Group – This group has been established as part of the implementation of 'Opening Doors'. It is comprised of government departments involved in funding advice and information giving organisations. It provides an opportunity to share information, ensure best use of funding and agree the principles to be applied to advice and information work at both regional and local levels. This group will monitor the implementation of 'Opening Doors'.

'Opening Doors' – this is the strategy for the delivery of voluntary advice services to the community in Northern Ireland. It was launched by DSD on the 10th September 2007.

Review of Public Administration – The Review of Public Administration represents the most comprehensive reform of the public sector in Northern Ireland for more than 30 years. It was launched in 2002 by the Northern Ireland Executive and since then extensive consultation demonstrated that people wanted a more streamlined system of public administration.

The current 26 local government districts will be rationalised to create 11 new local government districts. A range of functions will be transferred to the new councils. These include aspects of planning, rural development, the public realm aspects of local roads functions, urban regeneration and community development, a range of housing related functions and local economic development and tourism.

Settlement Services Classification – Settlements are classified according to the services they have such as shops, health services, education services and so on. Regional Centres (Belfast and Derry) have a classification of 5. Sub – regional centres such as Coleraine, Armagh for example have a classification of 4. These classifications are as identified in the report on Settlement Service Classification in December 2006 by the NISRA Settlement Information and Classification Analysis Group (SICAG)

http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/stats_and_research/statistics_and_research-sicag.htm.

⁸ NI Advice and Information Strategy, Williamson Consulting 2005

Specialist Advice Provider (case based) – these organisations have specialist expertise in a particular area and can offer a high level of advice, advocacy and representation on complex issues for example housing, legal issues, children’s law etc.⁹

Specialist Advisory Panel – this panel has been established as part of the implementation of ‘Opening Doors’. It is made up of senior representatives from regional voluntary organisations to advise on quality, training and access issues in relation to their client groups. This Advisory Panel also reports twice a year on the implementation of ‘Opening Doors’, to DSD.

Super Output Area (SOA) – a unit of geography used for small area statistical analysis. It is a small area unit, designed to have a smaller range of populations than wards, used for Census and other statistical outputs.

⁹ NI Advice and Information Strategy, Williamson Consulting 2005

Appendix D: Description of the Network of Area Advice Centres at each new council level

Network of Area Advice Centres

The Advice Strategy sets out an approach for frontline generalist advice providers described as a flexible and responsive model.

It is intended that there will be a fully integrated service across each of the new council areas with local providers sharing resources and working together.

The network of Area Advice Centres at each council level will provide a wide range of services, including advice, advocacy and support on a range of basic and complex general advice issues. It will also offer first line support to those who have very specific needs and will refer them to specialist agencies where dedicated specialist advice is needed.

The network will incorporate the following:-

- Advisors able to offer advice on each core area of general advice provision and provide basic advice on particular specialist needs;
- dedicated money and debt counselling and the ability to carry out tribunal and high level advocacy work;
- one advisor will have a good level of knowledge in relation to disability issues;
- where fixed premises are required to facilitate optimum service delivery these will be sited on main public transport routes, ideally close to where most people live but also open to those in more rural areas. They will be located in main settlements that the population would also visit to access other services;
- similarly they also will meet the highest standards of disabled access;
- within the network there will be access to advisors responsible for one or more specialist area, including disability, housing, the needs of ethnic minorities, older people, lone parents and children. Advisors will not necessarily be experts in these areas but will have sufficient understanding to recognise the particular needs of the client group and to understand how and when to refer clients to regional voluntary bodies;
- links to a range of outreach service provision. It is envisaged that the network of Area Advice Centres will have good links with larger community organisations in the area so that suitable ways to refer clients can be set up. These will enable community based telephone and on-line access points; and

- well established relationships with relevant regional voluntary bodies and support structures at a Northern Ireland level. These will ensure that the network of Area Advice Centres can maintain their quality, through suitable training, access to specialist information, regular updating of general information.

The network of Area Advice Centres will be expected to deliver advice/advocacy on a range of issues including:

- Benefits (including Disability Benefits, Income Support, Housing Benefit, Job Seekers Allowance, Tax Credits, Pension Credits);
- Appeal and Tribunal support and representation;
- Money and Debt;
- Consumer issues;
- Basic Immigration (with more complex cases referred to specialist organisations);
- Administration of Justice;
- Human Rights;
- Employment;
- Housing;
- Education; and
- Health and Disability.

More complex enquiries relating to employment, housing, education, health and disability, immigration and social security will be referred to suitable specialist organisations.

Appendix E: Rural Proofing Table

	Assesment of Impacts			Consideration Of: Mitigating Measures; and Alternative Policies
	Positive Negative None	Qualitive (Detail Evidence)	Quantitative (Detail Evidence)	
1. Service Provison				
Centralised service outlets: rural people or businesses generally need to travel to an urban centre to use service outlets. How will the proposed rural beneficiaries of a policy have reasonable access to it? Does policy delivery depend upon outlets, which are sparse in many rural areas?	None	Proposed Area Advice Centre locations were identified from research criteria based on – population, deprivation and accessibility. Two key recognised statistical classifications were used; Classification of Settlements based on population and Settlement Services Classification . This is based on services in a settlement such as shops, health services and education services. Area Advice Centres are proposed for settlements with a classification of Band D or above (settlement with a population of 10,000 or above) and Band E classification only where the Services Classification for that settlement is Level 4 or above, indicating that they are a sub regional service centre.	34 Area Advice Centres are proposed throughout NI. Testing illustrates that 96% of the top 10% deprived SOAs are within a 5 mile radius boundary of an Area Advice Centre. Furthermore 75% of the population lives within the 5 mile radius of an Area Advice Centre. In using deprivation indicators there is a current concern that isolated pockets of deprivation in rural areas are not adequately indentified. It is also acknowledged that travel distances have a different impact in rural areas where public transport links and road networks are different.	Area Advice Centres comprise only one element of the advice model set out in 'Opening Doors', the Advice Strategy. The model also contains outreach services, telephone and internet access. Outreach services will be determined by local councils at local level to best meet community needs. This may include provision in isolated pockets of deprivation in rural areas. Consideration will also be given to the appropriate promotion of the services that are available. A pilot phase is currently scheduled to take place in 2010 and will test implementation of the model in both rural and urban areas. It is envisaged that the evaluation will include geographical records of access by customers and will facilitate analysis of use of services by rural and isolated rural dwellers. In the development of this policy following this consultation, rural issues will continue to be considered. It is anticipated that councils will have suitable arrangements for public engagement and both equality and rural proofing arrangements at the time of commissioning these services in their local area.

Appendix E: Rural Proofing Table

	Assesment of Impacts			Consideration Of: · Mitigating Measures; and · Alternative Policies
	Positive Negative None	Qualitive (Detail Evidence)	Quantitative (Detail Evidence)	
		<p>This means that areas regarded as Small Towns (Band E) but not a sub regional service centre (i.e. Level 3 classification or below), Intermediate Settlements (Band F), Large Villages (Band G) or Small Villages (Band H) were not selected as locations for Area Advice Centres as they did not sufficiently meet the assessment criteria of population, deprivation and accessibility.</p> <p>Area Advice Centres are one element of the model for delivery of voluntary advice services set out in 'Opening Doors'. Note that this consultation deals only with the location of Area Advice Centres and does not include other elements of the model for delivery of voluntary advice services.</p> <p>The model also comprises of outreach coupled with the use of technology (telephone and on-line access), which will be needed to make sure that people who do not live near the Area Advice Centres will still be able to access quality advice easily. Outreach provision may include provision such as home visits, service provision in community centres or other accessible community venues, advice information sessions with particular interest groups and so on. Outreach provision will be determined by new local councils to best meet community need in their area.</p>	<p>Research completed by Deloitte on behalf of DSD (Mapping of Advice, Information and Legal Services across NI – Background Data Paper April 2008) concluded that generalist advice organisations are spread across NI with local government contracts/grants ensuring generalist provision in each of the current 26 council areas. Over 70% of those advice organisations responding to the survey stated that they offered services via drop-in, appointment, telephone, home visits and outreach.</p>	

Appendix E: Rural Proofing Table

	Assesment of Impacts			Consideration Of: · Mitigating Measures; and · Alternative Policies
	Positive Negative None	Qualitive (Detail Evidence)	Quantitative (Detail Evidence)	
Few information points: rural areas contain fewer (formal) places to obtain advice and information e.g. libraries, Citizens Advice Bureaux, public Internet points. If the policy's successful delivery requires communication with clients, how will those in rural areas have ready access to information and advice?	None	As above	As above	As above

Appendix E: Rural Proofing Table

	Assesment of Impacts			Consideration Of: Mitigating Measures; and Alternative Policies
	Positive Negative None	Qualitive (Detail Evidence)	Quantitative (Detail Evidence)	
2. Mobility				
Greater travel needs: on average rural people and businesses travel further to reach jobs, facilities, clients and other opportunities. What will the policy effects be upon existing requirements to travel, or the time, convenience and costs entailed for rural businesses or people (especially those on low incomes or without easy access to a car or public transport)?	None	<p>When the current pattern of voluntary advice services and the research findings for Area Advice Centre locations are compared there is a good geographical match. There is no recommendation or suggestion of any reduction in services or investment to the voluntary advice sector. Outreach, coupled with the use of technology (telephone and online access), will be needed to make sure that people who do not live near Area Advice Centres will still be able to get quality advice easily. Area Advice Centre locations were chosen on the basis that they were regional or sub-regional service centres where the population may travel to access other services such as health services, education services.</p> <p>The voluntary advice sector is heavily reliant on volunteers delivering advice services. It is recognised that volunteers travelling to and from, or within, rural areas to volunteer and to deliver advice services are likely to incur extra travel costs and that public transport may not be available or practical.</p>	<p>34 Area Advice Centres are proposed throughout NI. Testing illustrates that 96% of the top 10% deprived SOAs are within a 5 mile radius boundary of an Area Advice Centre. Furthermore 75% of the population lives within the 5 mile radius of an Area Advice Centre.</p> <p>It is also acknowledged that travel distances have a different impact in rural areas where public transport links and road networks are different. Research completed by Deloitte on behalf of DSD (Mapping of Advice, Information and Legal Services across NI – Background Data Paper April 2008) concluded that generalist advice organisations are spread across NI with local government contracts /grants ensuring generalist provision n each of the current 26 council areas. Over 70% of those advice organisations responding to the survey stated that they offered services via drop-in,</p>	<p>Area Advice Centres comprise only one element of the advice model proposed. The model also contains outreach services, telephone and internet access. Outreach services will be determined by local councils at local levels.</p> <p>The reimbursement of volunteer expenses and the recognition that volunteering is not without costs are key features of good volunteer management which advice providers should operate. This is in line with proposals in the DSD Volunteering Strategy which will be consulted on in Summer 2009.</p>

Appendix E: Rural Proofing Table

	Assesment of Impacts			Consideration Of: . Mitigating Measures; and . Alternative Policies
	Positive Negative None	Qualitive (Detail Evidence)	Quantitative (Detail Evidence)	
			appointment, telephone, home visits and outreach.	
Higher service delivery costs: rural distances plus small and dispersed populations can make it more difficult and costly to provide services to rural clients. Does the unit cost of providing the service to rural clients limit the extent or quality of service provision? Are there alternative ways to reduce costs and increase provision?	None	Area Advice Centres comprise only one element of the advice model proposed. The model also contains outreach services, telephone and internet access. Outreach services will be determined by local councils at local levels.	Research completed by Deloitte on behalf of DSD (Mapping of Advice, Information and Legal Services across NI – Background Data Paper April 2008) showed that over 60% of those advice organisations responding to the survey offered services via telephone advice line.	Councils will commission services to best meet community needs within available budgets. Appropriate access to telephone advice may be a cost effective method of service delivery alongside fixed premises and outreach services.

Appendix E: Rural Proofing Table

	Assesment of Impacts			Consideration Of: · Mitigating Measures; and · Alternative Policies
	Positive Negative None	Qualitive (Detail Evidence)	Quantitative (Detail Evidence)	
3. Economic Vibrancy				
Employment Opportunities: Will the policy affect the distribution of intended economic activity in different areas, or the level of access to employment or training opportunities, e.g. the distribution of public sector jobs and the relative accessibility of job skills training.	None	Voluntary advice providers depend heavily on volunteers and provide specialised training and experience which can then be used by the volunteer to enter paid employment.	“It’s all about time” (Volunteer Development Agency 2007) estimates that there are almost 6,800 formal volunteers providing advice and information in NI. In research completed by Deloitte on behalf of DSD (Mapping of Advice, Information and Legal Services across NI – Background Data Paper April 2008) survey respondents indicated that they have 389 full time employees and 128 part time employees.	Training for voluntary advice providers is one of the key areas to be addressed within ‘Opening Doors’ Advice Strategy.
Employment Flexibility: many households require part-time employment or employment with flexible hours to allow them to balance work and life needs (for example, in maintaining a small farm or balancing care arrangements).	None	Location of voluntary advice services should not have any impact on working hours.	Research completed by Deloitte on behalf of DSD (Mapping of Advice, Information and Legal Services across NI – Background Data Paper April 2008) showed that of the 100 survey forms issued to advice providers 92 provided information relating to staff employed.	

Appendix E: Rural Proofing Table

	Assesment of Impacts			Consideration Of: · Mitigating Measures; and · Alternative Policies
	Positive Negative None	Qualitive (Detail Evidence)	Quantitative (Detail Evidence)	
Will the policy help or hinder this sort of employment need or reduce the need for flexibility through, for example, encouraging better childcare provision?			The survey respondents indicated that 389 people were employed full time and 128 part time.	
Small firm economy: more businesses are micro-businesses in rural areas (in particular agricultural) and there are few medium-sized or large firms. Will a policy or initiative target and be of benefit to, small (as well as larger) businesses?	None	Does not apply		
Weak infrastructure: telecommunications infrastructures are generally less developed in rural areas, especially remoter areas. If a fast or high-capacity infrastructure (e.g. "broadband" telecommunications) will play a significant part in implementing the policy or initiative, how will it be delivered in rural areas?	None	This consultation deals only with the location of Area Advice Centres. The full implementation of the model for the delivery of voluntary advice services offers a number of routes for accessing advice, in addition to services at an Area Advice Centre or those services available on the internet, advice can be accessed via the telephone or outreach services which can include home visits.		Area Advice Centres comprise only one element of the advice model proposed. The model also contains outreach services, telephone and internet access. Outreach services will be determined by local councils at local levels.

Appendix E: Rural Proofing Table

	Assesment of Impacts			Consideration Of: Mitigating Measures; and Alternative Policies
	Positive Negative None	Qualitive (Detail Evidence)	Quantitative (Detail Evidence)	
Infrastructure innovations: often, new innovations in infrastructure or service provision are introduced into urban areas first. Can innovations also be tested in rural areas? Might rural areas provide a stronger test in the first instance? Are there plans to roll out new services or infrastructure to rural areas to minimise long periods of inequality?	Positive	DSD intends to pilot the new advice framework. The pilot phase will take place in 2010 and we consider it important that delivery of services is measured in both rural and urban areas. It is envisaged that councils will adopt the model in 2011 in line with RPA and full implementation will occur from 2011-2012.		A pilot phase will take place during 2010 in a rural area. This will test partnership arrangements between a range of local providers and referral mechanisms to other regional specialist providers.
High Impact Infrastructure: could a fast or high capacity infrastructure requirement represent a significant impact on environmental or social assets in rural areas (e.g. the impact on social cohesion of increased mobility stemming from the upgrading of roads). Could it be modified to reduce these impacts whilst still delivering policy benefits.	None	Does not apply		

Appendix E: Rural Proofing Table

	Assesment of Impacts			Consideration Of: . Mitigating Measures; and . Alternative Policies
	Positive Negative None	Qualitive (Detail Evidence)	Quantitative (Detail Evidence)	
4. Social Well Being				
Countryside amenity and access: the countryside provides important recreational opportunities and a place to get away from it all for people wherever they live. What will be the impact of the policy or initiative for people wishing to reach and use the countryside as a place for recreation and enjoyment?	None	Does not apply		
Needs not concentrated: rural disadvantage and social exclusion does not exist in the types of concentrations found on urban housing estates or in inner city neighbourhoods. It is generally scattered and, in wealthier parts of the countryside, exists side by side with affluence. Will a policy, especially area-based initiatives, have provision for reaching people or households in the open countryside as well as more concentrated locations of disadvantage?	None possibly positive	The consultation deals only with the location of Area Advice Centres. Proposed voluntary advice locations were identified from research criteria based on – population, deprivation and accessibility. The identification of locations for Area Advice Centres is one element of the Advice Strategy.		Area Advice Centres comprise only one element of the advice model proposed. The model also contains outreach services, telephone and internet access. Outreach services will be determined by local councils at local levels.

Appendix E: Rural Proofing Table

	Assesment of Impacts			Consideration Of: · Mitigating Measures; and · Alternative Policies
	Positive Negative None	Qualitive (Detail Evidence)	Quantitative (Detail Evidence)	
		The Advice Strategy aims to put in place an integrated, quality advice service across Northern Ireland and a proper framework to ensure that services are planned and delivered in a way which matches resources to need, with a particular focus on meeting the needs of the most disadvantaged in society. Outreach provision is also a feature of the model for the delivery of voluntary advice services and will be one method for targeting particular areas of disadvantage or dispersed client groups.		
Different types of need: the mix of deprivation characteristics is somewhat different between rural and urban areas. Poor access to services (including health & social services), low local wages, limited job opportunities and a lack of affordable housing are key rural issues. What needs or deprivation indicators will be used to target an initiative: will they reflect both rural and urban concerns?	None	Proposed voluntary advice locations were identified from research criteria based on – population, deprivation and accessibility. Deprivation levels were taken from the Noble Indices.		DSD believe that councils will be best placed to determine the precise levels of service required at each location and that 'Area Advice Centres' should form the foundation of this network of services at each new council level. This will provide councils with the opportunity to commission services in the most responsive and locally appropriate way. It is anticipated that the new councils will have suitable arrangements for public engagement and both equality and rural proofing arrangements at the time of commissioning these services in their local area.

Appendix E: Rural Proofing Table

	Assesment of Impacts			Consideration Of: · Mitigating Measures; and · Alternative Policies
	Positive Negative None	Qualitive (Detail Evidence)	Quantitative (Detail Evidence)	
5. Social Capital				
Low institutional capacity: private, public and voluntary sector bodies in rural areas tend to be smaller and often struggle to forge partnerships or submit bids, especially to tight timescales. If a policy or initiative depends upon local institutions, how will it allow for areas with low institutional capacity? How might it avoid a bias in favour of urban representation and influence if partnership formation is a key method for delivery or for subsequent mainstreaming of learning from pilot initiatives?	None possibly positive	It is envisaged that during the testing phase in 2010 piloting of the new framework of services will take place in a rural area. Our research has shown a good spread of voluntary advice providers across NI and the commissioning approach proposed would seek to build on this. DSD supports regional infrastructure in both rural and urban areas to help local voluntary organisations.		Our approach does not preclude collaborative working even for very small organisations.
Social Capital and community cohesion: provision of services or design of village renewal, new or regeneration of housing estates can impact on sense of community and social capital. Will the policy contribute to strengthening or weakening social capital and hence, the health and sustainability of rural communities?	None	This consultation deals only with the location of Area Advice Centres. The model for the delivery of voluntary advice services also proposes delivery of services via telephone, internet and outreach services. Outreach provision may include provision such as home visits, service provision in community centres or other accessible community venues, advice information sessions with particular interest groups and so on.		Good quality independent voluntary advice provision contributes to community capacity.

Appendix E: Rural Proofing Table

	Assesment of Impacts			Consideration Of: . Mitigating Measures; and . Alternative Policies
	Positive Negative None	Qualitive (Detail Evidence)	Quantitative (Detail Evidence)	
		<p>Outreach provision will be determined by new local councils to best meet community need in their area.</p> <p>Voluntary advice provision is an important service within a community especially during this time of economic uncertainty and good quality independent voluntary advice provision contributes to community capacity. DSD voluntary advice policy work currently takes place within a broader community development policy framework and is enabled through the DSD Community Support Programme and Regional Infrastructure Programme.</p>		

Appendix E: Rural Proofing Table

	Assesment of Impacts			Consideration Of: · Mitigating Measures; and · Alternative Policies
	Positive Negative None	Qualitive (Detail Evidence)	Quantitative (Detail Evidence)	
6.Natural & Cultural Capital				
Land-based industries: land-based industries (e.g. agriculture, forestry, fishing and extraction / mining) have an important impact on the rural landscape, environment and biodiversity, and remain significant employers in certain rural areas (despite being a fairly small element of the overall rural economic base). Will a policy have any particular impacts on –land-based industries and, therefore, on rural economies and environments?	None	Does not apply.		
Landscape quality and character: our rural landscapes are highly valued for their beauty and distinctiveness and contribute significantly to our tourism potential. What will be the likely policy impact upon the quality and distinctive character of natural and built rural landscapes, especially (but not only) on protected landscapes and on biodiversity?	None	Does not apply.		

Appendix E: Rural Proofing Table

	Assesment of Impacts			Consideration Of: Mitigating Measures; and Alternative Policies
	Positive Negative None	Qualitive (Detail Evidence)	Quantitative (Detail Evidence)	
Local Craft and Food production: A key resource for the growth of many micro-businesses in rural areas is the use of traditional crafts, foods and recipes. Will the policy have an impact on the production of any of these, (e.g. regulations affecting food hygiene and production standards) and if so how traditional approaches might be accommodated.	None	Does not apply.		

Appendix F: Freedom of Information

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Confidentiality of Consultations

The Department will publish a summary of responses following completion of the consultation process. Your response, and all other responses to the consultation, may be disclosed on request. The Department can only refuse to disclose information in exceptional circumstances. Before you submit your response, please read the paragraphs below on the confidentiality of consultations and they will give you guidance on the legal position about any information given by you in response to this consultation.

The Freedom of Information Act gives the public a right of access to any information held by a public authority, namely, the Department in this case. This right of access to information includes information provided in response to a consultation. The Department cannot automatically consider as confidential information supplied to it in response to a consultation. However, it does have the responsibility to decide whether any information provided by you in response to this consultation, including information about your identity, should be made public or be treated as confidential. If you do not wish information about your identity to be made public please include an explanation in your response.

This means that information provided by you in response to the consultation is unlikely to be treated as confidential, except in very particular circumstances. The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Information Act provides that:

- the Department should only accept information from third parties in confidence if it is necessary to obtain that information in connection with the exercise of any of the Department's functions and it would not otherwise be provided
- the Department should not agree to hold information received from third parties "in confidence" which is not confidential in nature
- acceptance by the Department of confidentiality provisions must be for good reasons, capable of being justified to the Information Commissioner.

For further information about confidentiality of responses please contact the Information Commissioner's Office (or see web site at: <http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/>).

Appendix G: Belfast City Council Voluntary Advise Consortia Arrangements

Belfast City Council Consortia Arrangements

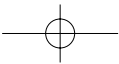
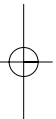
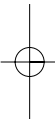
In Belfast the support of and delivery of Advice and Information Services is based on consortia of providers based on geographical areas (North, South, East, West and Central Belfast) and on a mix of CAB and independent advice providers.

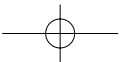
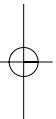
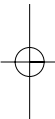
Funding is allocated to the consortia on a pro-rata basis based on a deprivation-weighted population.

The consortia are based on providers who offer generalist advice services to the community at large, rather than on specific topics or section of the community.

All areas provide basic information, advice advocacy or representation on a wide range of issues including, welfare benefits, housing, consumer, health education and money/debt. Outreach into areas/neighbourhoods of low advice provision has also been undertaken and coordinated within each consortium.

The consortia operate a variety of partnership working but all have enabled a move from a previously uncoordinated delivery of advice services, towards a more strategic network of providers.







APPENDIX 3

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

**REVIEW OF BELFAST CITY
COUNCIL'S CURRENT ADVICE
AND INFORMATION SERVICE**

FINAL REPORT

FEBRUARY 2008

**Deloitte MCS Limited
19 Bedford Street
Belfast BT2 7EJ
Northern Ireland**

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Appendix I – Stakeholder Consultations

Appendix II – Grant Assessment Information

Appendix III - List of Abbreviations

DISCLAIMER

This report is confidential to Belfast City Council and has been prepared solely for the purpose set out in our engagement letter. No other party is entitled to rely on our report for any purpose whatsoever and we accept no duty of care or liability to any other party who has shown or gains access to this report.

For your convenience, this document may have been made available to you in electronic as well as hard copy format. Multiple copies and versions of this document may, therefore exist in different media. Only the final hard copy should be regarded as definitive.

1 Executive Summary

Introduction

1. Belfast City Council (BCC) commissioned Deloitte MCS Limited in August 2007 to undertake a review of their provision of advice and information services across the city.
2. The terms of reference were to review the Council's current Advice and Information Grant Service, identify best practice changes that are needed to the current delivery model and make recommendations on delivery approach going forward, particularly in light of the new regional strategy.

Methodology

3. The methodology used was a literature and policy review, collation of data from BCC and advice providers, followed by a period of consultation with BCC, delivery organisations, service recipients and strategic stakeholders. Comparative research was undertaken through desk review and follow up consultations, in particular focusing on advice provision mechanisms implemented by Derry City Council and Glasgow City Council.

Context

4. The voluntary sector advice provision context across Northern Ireland has been one of change with growth in the sector followed by a restructuring and tightening of the funding landscape and heightening requirement for transparent standards, modernisation and consolidation. In September 2007 a new regional strategy *Opening Doors - A Strategy for the Delivery of Voluntary Advice Services to the Community* was launched.

Current Model of Delivery

5. The current model of advice and information in Belfast is based on consortia of providers, based on geographical areas (North, South, East, West and Central Belfast). BCC focused funding on generalist providers i.e. those providers who offer general advice services to the community at large rather than on specific topics or to a designated section of the community. A number of essential criteria were required by applicants in order to be considered for funding. Consortia applicants varied across the city with some being assessed as consortia (i.e. South, North and East) whereas others were assessed as individuals (i.e. groups in West and Central). Funding was allocated on pro-rata basis based on a deprivation-weighted population. This equated to 32 per cent in West Belfast, 27 per cent in North Belfast, 16 per cent in East Belfast, 13 per cent in South Belfast and 10 per cent in the city centre. This indicated that North and West Belfast were in the highest need.
6. There has been significant increases in the total amount of BCC and DSD funding provided to advice organisations across the city since 2005, with over 20 per cent increases each year, £505,725 in 2005, £616,450 in 2006 and £782,779 in 2007. Although providers receive funding from other organisations / bodies BCC and DSD remain the core funders of advice and information services in the city.
7. The allocation of funding across the city is based on a weighted deprivation-population measure which was updated in 2005 with the latest super output area deprivation and population figures.
8. Advice provision within Belfast varies between delivery organisations but generally all areas provide basic information, advice advocacy or representation on a wide range of issues including welfare benefits, housing, consumer, health, education, tribunals and money / debt. Partnership working is more advanced in some areas of the city than others. There is a variety of methods of evaluating impact and quality standards across the city between consortia and delivery organisations. The relationship

between delivery organisations and BCC has been predominantly a 'process relationship' in that beyond the application / monitoring returns and delivery of funding there is little contact.

Review of Current Model

9. The Council model of consortium working has helped move a largely organic and un-coordinated delivery of advice services towards a more strategic rationale network of providers. The new strategy however, marks a key opportunity for delivering a further step up in advice services;
10. There are over 20 organisations involved in the delivery of advice services in Belfast across the five sectors of Belfast. This includes a Citizens Advice Bureaux presence across each of the five areas, North, South, East, West and Central;
11. There is a spectrum of partnership working within consortium areas with North and East Belfast having the most developed partnership working arrangements. The partnership in North Belfast before the BCC contract and has benefited from support from the NB Community Action Unit. The Consortium in East Belfast has benefited from good relations between just two providers, which along with Central is the least number of providers across the Consortium areas. West Belfast providers are making concerted efforts to deepen their working relations, including development of a joint constitution. In South a coalition rather than a consortium has remained with a close relationship between independent organisations, but a limited working relationship between this grouping and CAB organisations. The Central area whilst different in nature demonstrates limited evidence of partnership working between CAB and BURC;
12. There are substantial difficulties in assessing performance and comparing performance within and across consortia due to number and range of providers involved and subsequent inconsistencies in recording systems and in monitoring and recording practices. The following indicators can be used to assess an overall picture:
 - a. The benefit claw back compared with amount of grant funding. This has highlighted significant variation between the areas. East Belfast figures suggest significant success in benefit claw back. All sectors report total benefit claw back of more than double the grant funding. This is indicative only as there are issues with consistency of recording systems;
 - b. The quantity of enquiries dealt with compared to funding allocation. What can already be ascertained is that South and West record a lower number of enquiries relative to funding than North, East and Central; and
 - c. Whilst relatively small in number compared to overall use of the service, the qualitative service recipient interviews we have undertaken have highlighted positive feedback from individuals who have used the services.
13. Overall we conclude that current delivery of advice services is making a difference to many individuals in need and evidence suggests value for money for BCC. We also feel however there are significant opportunities for improvement both within certain areas and across the city as a whole.
14. BCC targets need through a number of means including, its method of allocating funding across the city, the application process and the delivery of advice through local providers.
15. BCC's grant allocation process has used an analysis of population and deprivation to decide funding allocations across the city. This is reasonable on the assumption that consortia, with local knowledge and networks in place then implement delivery to target need at the local level and ensure they are easily accessed. This has been worked out differently in different areas – for example in East Belfast there are just two providers one in a health and well being centre located on a key arterial route and one in a more inner city location. North Belfast, in contrast, partly due to its complex

sectarian geography has a higher number of providers, several of which are aligned to particular communities.

16. Therefore criteria for funding sectors of the city should be based on:

- a. Proportion of population living in that area of the city;
- b. Level of deprivation in that part of the city; and
- c. As the central area does not fit with regard to population and deprivation criteria enquiry numbers should be monitored going forward. If there is a substantial difference between proportion of funding (currently 10 per cent) and proportion of enquiries a funding revision for the central service a realignment of funding should be considered.

17. The assessment process criteria provided a reasonable cross-section of requirements relating to delivery of advice services. There is an opportunity to tighten these criteria in order to align with Opening Doors and the future direction of advice services. The timescale for these criteria changes may need to be aligned with regional efforts to converge standards across the sector. The specific criteria that need to be developed are:

- a. Evidence of previous experience and performance of delivering advice services, including evidence of delivering value for money and partnership working;
- b. Detail of proposed hub, satellite and outreach facilities – specifying:
 - i. How the consortia can deliver the set of skills and expertise to be available in a primary generalist hub as described in Annex 4 of Opening Doors. (Including dedicated money and debt counselling, tribunal and advocacy work);
 - ii. How areas of need within the area will be targeted. This should include specifics on local populations and levels of deprivation and not rely on informal local knowledge or pre-existing infrastructure. It should also detail existing networks and relationships within the area to be served, and how and where outreach will take place;
 - iii. Evidence of accessibility:
 - 1. location (e.g. arterial route, on public transport routes);
 - 2. premises (e.g. physical access);
 - 3. opening hours (e.g. weekend, evening); and
 - 4. service delivery options (e.g. use of translation services).
- c. Consistency of systems within the area - quality assurance standards, case recording systems, IT systems. What steps need to be taken to move to consistency and how these will be taken and a timeframe for doing so; and
- d. How BCC funding could leverage in other funding – and how together these contribute to sustainability of core advice services and any supplementary services.

Good Practice Identified in Belfast and through Comparative Research

18. The consortium approach in Belfast has resulted in some good practice examples from existing BCC consortia in both general delivery and partnership working. These include:

- a. Regular liaison between organisations to identify needs / trends and also to plan future partnership working;
 - b. Review outreach services. Ongoing and strategically once a year to assess coverage of an area and to ensure outreach services provided by the various partners are complementing each other;
 - c. Sharing specialist skills and expertise across the forum (formally and informally);
 - d. Protocols for referrals (where there are insufficient resources available for one organisation to meet the needs of a client refer on to another within the area);
 - e. The provision of advice services from a perceived 'neutral' venue in the City Centre results in a service accessible to all;
 - f. Regularly capturing service recipient feedback;
 - g. Use of the same case recording system, allowing for better consistency of management information and helping increase equity of service;
 - h. Strategic choice of location for service provision. The deliberate location of modern advice centres within health and well being centres in South and East Belfast works both as a model that provides synergies in terms of clients using both health and advice services and also through helping develop a modern high quality facility; and
 - i. The production of joint publicity materials resulting in economic efficiencies for all organisations involved.
19. The comparative research focused on Derry City Council and Glasgow City Council advice delivery mechanisms. Key good practice findings from DCC were:
- a. There has been a reduction in the number of advice providers within the city;
 - b. A cross-party Advice Service Panel has provided political support throughout the process;
 - c. The funded providers have been required to use the same case recording system and to sign-up to a standard quality code;
 - d. Enquiry numbers are monitored and if service delivery drops the Council include the right to challenge the organisation and potential reduce funding; and
 - e. DCC has moved from grant aid for advice providers into three year service level agreements with local organisations. This approach is likely to run until the new Council structures come into effect.
20. In Glasgow the key good practice findings were:
- a. Area based collaborative working has been developed;
 - b. There is citywide planning with regard to referral protocols, quality issues, management systems, staff training and monitoring procedures
 - c. There is citywide delivery of time-consuming tribunal work.
 - d. There has been an effort to calculate the financial benefit to the city overall;
 - e. A single case management system has been implemented across all advice providers. Training has been provided to ensure it is used consistently;

- f. As management information data is built up and analysed GCC will become able to set meaningful targets for providers; and
- g. GCC has staff dedicated to overseeing implementation and delivery of advice provision.

Recommendations

21. BCC should take the opportunity the regional strategy affords and seek substantial improvements in advice service delivery in Belfast. With this in mind the good practice highlighted above should be considered. In particular the following best practice changes are recommended:

With regard to targeting beneficiaries:

- a. Use consolidation to bring economies of scale to strengthen joint marketing and branding efforts so that potential beneficiaries are more aware of advice provision in an area;
- b. Within consortium areas there should be regular liaison between organisations to identify needs / trends and also to plan future partnership working. This should include setting aims and SMART objectives for service delivery in the area;
- c. Review of outreach services. This should be done on an ongoing basis and strategically once a year. It should also use data on number of enquiries coming at various outreach locations to best target demand. Reviews should also assess outreach coverage of the overall area;
- d. Use of a range of facilities for both main and outreach service provision. The deliberate strategic location of modern advice centres within health and well being centres in South and East Belfast works both as a model that provides synergies in terms of clients using both health and advice services and also through helping develop a modern well designed facility;
- e. Development of potential service delivery channels, in particular more focus on telephony including regular review of telephony service provision and usage; and
- f. The provision of advice services from a perceived 'neutral' venue in the city centre results in a service accessible to all.

With regard to improving consortia working:

- g. Facilitative processes are needed to develop relationships in south Belfast between independents and CAB activity. West are also seeking help in developing a Constitution for the West Belfast Advice Forum. In general facilitative processes should work towards the essential characteristics identified for hubs, and in particular make clear a single lead organisation for each area;
- h. Skills and expertise should be used strategically on an area wide basis. This will require mapping of specialist skills and expertise within structures and working out practices to allow these to be used flexibly within future structures – even if new hub structures include more than one organisation;
- i. To ensure the client receives a quality of service protocols for referrals within area structures should be developed and implemented. These should activate where there are insufficient resources available for one element of the structure to meet the needs of a client, or if the client could be better served by the practitioner with responsibility for a particular specialism in an area (e.g. housing, disability, lone parents, older people, needs of ethnic minorities); and

- j. A city-wide forum should help identify and share good practice between consortia and ensure that where necessary and where possible consortia work well together. This forum should include representatives from lead organisations in each hub and BCC.

With regard to monitoring and evaluation:

- k. Convergence with regard to use of the same case recording system, allowing for better consistency of management information;
 - l. Convergence around training to ensure consistent processes amongst practitioners with regard to use of case recording systems, calculation of claw back etc.
 - m. Provision of regular quarterly reports in electronic and hard copy format from consortium to BCC. Each consortium should analyse data across and within their area to help plan use of their own resources, whilst BCC should analyse data on both a consortium wide area basis and on a city wide basis.
 - n. Key Performance Indicators should include:
 - i. Number and type of enquiries;
 - ii. Breakdown of enquiries undertaken face-to-face in the main office, via telephone, outreach and E-Access;
 - iii. Scale of claw back;
 - iv. Service recipient feedback and satisfaction levels;
 - v. Scale of funding leveraged on the back of the core BCC funding;
 - vi. Staff training undertaken; and
 - vii. Quality standards in place / update on progress to gaining quality standard.
 - o. The collation and analysis of comparable and consistent data will allow for meaningful target setting with regard to enquiries.
22. We suggest that at this important juncture with advice services looking to make strategic changes the role and capacity of resources with responsibility for advice within BCC needs to be enhanced.

There are a range of considerations in the scenario of BCC investing more in the relationship. In the short run (1-2 years) through piloting, implementation of new systems and processes and competitive tendering phases we think there will be need for a dedicated resource from BCC. In the medium term following transition and assuming the improvements in the sector with regard to standards, convergence of case recording systems and consolidation in the sector with regard to delivery structures, it is anticipated that BCC will have to spend less time on process issues. This will give an opportunity for BCC to invest more in the relationship with regard to reviewing outputs and impact, setting and reviewing targets and ultimately to ensure that quality advice services are being provided and are demonstrating value for money, whilst potentially reducing the resource required to undertake this. Therefore, as noted in transitional funding considerations we estimate a dedicated resource for the period of implementation with 0.5 of a manager level in the longer run, post-implementation.

BCC could also consider an Advice Service Panel, bringing together Councillors from across the political parties. This could oversee the implementation of the strategy in Belfast, and potentially help to sustain the momentum of the process when difficult decisions are required.

23. The Opening Doors regional strategy marks a significant opportunity for the sector and for BCC. It is an opportunity for a challenging step-up from the current model which is characterised by significant local variation in partnership working and service delivery.

As a minimum the future model of delivery should take on board the characteristics identified as 'essential characteristics':

- Convergence of standards and systems;
- Use of improved management data for target setting and targeting of resources;
- Tailor hub structure to needs of an area – accounting for pros and cons of number of sites and organisations involved;
- There should be an agreed lead organisation;
- Single brand;
- Representation from each hub on a city-wide advice forum.

With regard to the number of hubs a range of models were put forward. The two given most consideration by delivery agents and stakeholders were a four hub and single hub model.

Taking into account the current delivery structure within Belfast, most importantly the multiple providers and the networks and relationships that they have in place, alongside the consistent view that there should be four hubs rather than one hub and the transitional issues that need to be managed, we recognise that to step directly to a one hub model from the current position would be a large and difficult step. This is particularly so, in advance of any learning from a pilot phase.

Whilst moving to one hub, or indeed fewer than four hubs, may be a step too far at this juncture, this should be further tested through the consultation phase on proposed hub locations for the regional strategy and considered through lessons learned in the piloting phase. If a multiple hub option is taken forward the potential for further convergence should continue to be monitored.

24. All areas of Belfast are to undertake a pilot phase. We recognise that different areas in Belfast are at different stages within their consortium development and face different challenges for example scale of need, sectarian geography and accessibility issues. Therefore if all proposed hubs were piloted, this would allow learning across all variables, whilst also ensuring all areas created forward momentum; and

An evaluation should take place alongside the piloting phase ensuring that lessons from across the pilots are identified, collated and analysed. At the end of the pilot phase, following completion of the review, a service level agreement (SLA) framework should be developed for the preferred hub approach.

25. BCC is to take forward the required actions in line with timescales put forward by DSD with regard to the wider regional advice strategy. Taking into account timescales proposed within Opening Doors and current progress it is likely that the approximate timeline is pilot phase during 2008, implement full model including unified IT and information systems during 2009. Both phases will factor in reviews of progress. We note that the time line may be subject to change depending on progress with certain work streams.

2 Introduction

2.1 Introduction

Deloitte MCS Limited was commissioned by Belfast City Council (BCC) in August 2007 to undertake a review of their provision of advice and information services across the city.

The purpose of this section of the report is to set out the terms of reference for the review and to outline the approach undertaken in completing the review.

2.2 Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for this engagement were as follows:

- to review the Council's current Advice and Information Grant Service which is to include a detailed review of:
 - the consortium approach that currently exists across each of the five geographical areas (North, South, East, West and Central), including a review of the number and location of each consortium;
 - the performance of individual consortia against the terms of offer of grant support, comparing the consistency across individual consortia;
 - the grant allocation process – how funding is allocated across the city, identifying the most appropriate criteria for allocation of resources, to provide a transparent and fair system; and
 - the assessment process and criteria for grant application.
- identify best practice changes that are needed to the current delivery model and approaches for Advice and Information Grant Services in order to:
 - maximise support to target beneficiaries and improve consortia working; and
 - monitor and evaluate the quality of advice services, particularly ensuring compliance with Advice Services Alliance guidelines, highlighting key performance indicators for assessing the effectiveness of the Council Advice Services Strategy.
- make recommendations on:
 - how the Council's approach should be amended to fit into the Department of Social Development's (DSD) regional strategy of how to encapsulate the 'hub' ethos, matching advice provision to community needs;
 - the most appropriate delivery approach for future allocation;
 - suggested template for allocation of funding and targeting of resources within the context of Belfast City Council grant aid policy and future changes;
 - how to improve partnership, networking and co-operation between providers; and
 - the issues and resource requirements of implementing DSD's future recommended approach with suggestions as to how these could be addressed (staff and time-scales etc).

The following project outputs were required:

- a written report evaluating the success of Belfast City Council's current consortium approach and processes (from an internal and external perspective), identifying the key critical gaps, inconsistencies and areas for improvement with best practice options for overcoming these;
- based on the recommendations of the elements above, liaise with DSD to identify what BCC should include in the application process to be considered as a pilot area hub as part of DSD's regional strategy;
- liaise with DSD to produce a list of prioritised changes and processes that need to be in place to ensure that BCC's approach fits into the DSD's regional strategy for supporting delivery of voluntary advice services to the community;
- carry out a review of the issues, practical considerations and resources required to implement the approach recommended by DSD, and how these can be addressed; and
- identification of how partnership, networking and co-operation can be improved between providers at regional and local level.

2.3 Methodology

The research methodology is summarised in table 1.1.

Table 1.1

Research Methodology

Stage 1 – Project Initiation
A project initiation meeting was held with the Steering Group on 13 th August. The purpose of this meeting was to introduce the team, agree the scope, approach, roles and responsibilities and timetable for reporting.
Stage 2 – Evaluation Workteam
A key element of the assignment was to take stock of the current service delivery approach, and review how effective it has been. In order to do this we:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developed and issued an initial information request. This was based on our awareness of data required and on documents and data discussed at the project initiation meeting; ▪ Developed a programme of consultation with the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ contracting agent – working closely with BCC staff responsible for issuing grants, the grant terms of offer and the ongoing management of the contracts. Through this we have developed an understanding of the end to end process involved and views on effectiveness of service delivery; ▪ delivery organisations – we met with delivery organisations from each of the consortia on a consortium basis. Holding five sessions, one with members from each geographical consortia; ▪ strategic stakeholders – we consulted with DSD, Citizens Advice and Advice NI, helping to capture views from these organisations as to the Belfast model and establish the challenges going forward in light of the new regional strategy and other issues facing the advice sector; and ▪ service recipients – we worked with consortia to get feedback directly from service users on how effective they believed the service to be. We used service recipient feedback that had already been collected through ongoing monitoring and evaluation processes and

<p>conducted telephone conversations with a number of service recipients.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted an internal half day workshop to review data collated and develop conclusions on effectiveness of the current approach; and Facilitated an interim findings workshop with the steering group to discuss the findings from the initial evaluation workstream analysis.
<p>Stage 2 – Quality, Targeting and Best Practice</p> <p>Through the evaluation work stream we gathered information on formal quality accreditations in place, accreditations being worked towards and other quality assurance processes applied in practice. We were then in a position to make an assessment on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> quality standards in place and being worked towards; and how this position compared with the requirements and expectations of the advice sector. <p>Through consultation and understanding of the hub model we identified the key criteria that can be applied by BCC to ensure that future funding is targeted optimally.</p> <p>We then considered best practice within the context of the new strategy direction for the sector and existing practice on the ground in Belfast. We then sought to confirm and identify good practice principles that would apply for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> best practice in hub style approaches for the delivery of advice and information; best practice in working collaboratively; best practice in managing the change towards a hub style approach; and best practice models of advice and information service delivery from other cities comparable with Belfast. <p>This review of best practice was undertaken by a mixture of desk research and follow up consultations with representatives from Glasgow and Derry City Councils.</p>
<p>Stage 3 - Reporting</p> <p>The final stage of the review included preparation and presentation of draft and final reports.</p>

2.4 Format of this Report

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

Section 3:	Context of the Advice Sector in Northern Ireland
Section 4:	Current Delivery of Services in Belfast
Section 5:	Outputs, Outcomes, Quality and Partnership Working
Section 6:	Good Practice Comparative Research
Section 7:	Analysis of Belfast City Council's Advice Provision
Section 8:	Conclusions and Recommendations

3 Context

3.1 Introduction

This section describes the advice sector context within Northern Ireland, the development of the regional strategy and policy drivers within Belfast City Council (BCC).

3.2 Advice and Information Services

Advice, information and legal services in Northern Ireland are provided through a range of organisations and bodies.

At present the following organisations provide advice and information:

- government departments and agencies (e.g. Social Security Agency, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Health and Social Service Trusts);
- regional and local voluntary organisations (e.g. Housing Rights Service, Law Centre NI);
- Citizens Advice Bureaux (CAB); and
- independent advice services.

Providers are generally members of one or more umbrella organisation. The three key umbrella bodies in Northern Ireland are Citizens Advice (providing support for local CAB offices), Advice NI (providing support for independent advice providers) and the Law Centre NI (support to local providers on legal and welfare issues). Citizens Advice, Advice NI and Law Centre NI are linked through the Advice Services Alliance, the overarching body for networks of independent advice providers across Northern Ireland (and the rest of the UK).

The sector has grown considerably over the past ten years, partly driven by increased availability of funding in the Voluntary and Community Sector. With the funding landscape becoming more challenging and contextual changes related to Investing Together and Positive Steps, it was apparent that change within the sector was needed. The DSD, given its policy responsibility for voluntary information and advice services and alongside sectoral concerns sought to develop an integrated strategy for delivery of advice services.

Work subsequently undertaken by DSD highlighted the potential role of the Advice Services Alliance with its remit including encouraging the sector to work together. It was acknowledged that whilst the three supporting structures Advice NI, Citizens Advice and the Law Centre NI had co-operated on some issues (e.g. training, welfare reform) there is a limited track record of working together, and the organisations had wished to maintain their role and ethos within sector.

A Strategy for Delivery of Voluntary Advice Services to the Community was subsequently released for public consultation by the DSD in January 2006. This document and the results of the public consultation on this document led to the launch of a new overarching strategy for the advice sector in Northern Ireland.

3.3 Opening Doors

Opening Doors - A Strategy for the Delivery of Voluntary Advice Services to the Community was launched by the Minister for Social Development on 10th September 2007.

The *Opening Doors* Strategy proposes a structure for delivering advice services that seeks to ensure increased co-operation between local providers and improved accessibility for the many people who rely on these services across Northern Ireland. Central to the structure is the development of a network of generalist advice providers referred to as area Hubs and Satellites. Specialist provision will be offered separately often at a regional level. Referral mechanisms will be implemented to ensure those approaching generalist Hubs and Satellites will be referred to the correct specialist body.

Whilst the Hub and Satellite model is the focus of this paper it is noted that the strategy is more comprehensive and includes recommendations on:

- High level generalist advice provision (to be aligned with population, deprivation and accessibility factors);
- Maximising access to basic advice provision;
- Resourcing the sector in the future;
- Quality of provision;
- Using existing resources effectively; and
- A monitoring and review plan.

3.3.1 Hubs and Satellites

The *Opening Doors* Strategy sets out a Hub and Satellite approach for frontline generalist advice providers. These are described below.

Primary Generalist Hub

A primary generalist area hub is a locally based advice provider or advice partnership of a complete range of services, including advice, advocacy and high level support on a range of basic and complex general advice issues, open to as many people as possible. It will also offer first line support to those who have specific needs and will refer them to specialist agencies where dedicated specialist advice is needed.

Hubs are to have the following elements:-

- 4-8 advisors able to offer advice on each core area of general advice provision and provide basic advice on particular specialist needs;
- dedicated money and debt counselling and the ability to carry out tribunal and high level advocacy work;
- be sited on main public transport routes, ideally close to where most people live but also open to those in more rural areas;
- meet the highest standards of disabled access and one advisor will have a good level of knowledge in relation to disability issues;
- each advisor will be responsible for one or more specialist area, including disability, housing, the needs of ethnic minorities, older people, lone parents and children. Advisors will not necessarily be experts in these areas but will have sufficient understanding to recognise the particular needs of the client group and to understand how and when to refer clients to regional voluntary bodies.
- be linked to a range of satellite and outreach provision. Hubs will have good links with larger community organisations in the area so that suitable ways to refer clients can be set up. These will enable community based E- access points.

- have well established relationships with relevant regional voluntary bodies and support structures at a Northern Ireland level. These will ensure that Hubs can maintain their quality, through suitable training, access to specialist information, regular updating of general information and provision of staff training.

An Area Hub will be expected to deliver advice/advocacy on a range of issues including:

- Benefits (including Disability Benefits, Income Support, Housing, Job Seekers Allowance, Tax Credits, Pension Credits);
- Appeal and Tribunal support and representation;
- Money and Debt;
- Consumer issues;
- Basic Immigration (with more complex cases referred to specialist organisations);
- Administration of Justice;
- Human Rights;
- Employment;
- Housing;
- Education; and
- Health and Disability.

More complex enquiries relating to employment, housing, education, health and disability, immigration and social security will be referred to suitable specialist organisations.

Satellite Description¹

Outreach and satellite provision, coupled with the use of technology (E-access), will be needed to make sure that people who do not live near the generalist Hubs will still be able to get quality advice easily. They must work as part of the Hub structure and be able to update information, provide training and support for staff and have administrative support to be effective. This is how the strategy proposes they will work:

- **Full-time, permanent satellite advice centres** in other parts of a new council area(s) with high population and an identified community need, as outlined in the mapping exercise.
- **Outreach services in specific community places** at local level such as half-day sessions in community centres, doctors' surgeries, etc.
- **Outreach on an occasional basis** at advice clinics, promotional events, etc. in community centres, leisure centres, schools and other public locations.
- **Outreach home visits** to those who are unable to access advice services.
- **Part-time satellite provision** such as a two day per week session with a part-time advisor located in an area of high demand.
- **IT based community E-access points**, such as single computers within a community centre, library or a community organisation's premises linked by broadband access to the Hubs. They could cover basic advice needs that could

¹ Satellite provision in the strategy is described alongside outreach and E-Access.

be easily dealt with and offer advisors cheaper and faster links to a wide range of people.

- **All satellite, outreach and E-access services** should be directly linked to the primary generalist Hub in the area.

Review of Public Administration

The initial consultation paper on delivery of voluntary advice services indicated that there would be one hub per Council area post-Review of Public Administration boundary changes. This alignment is not explicit in the final strategy, partly as the outcome of RPA with regard to number of Councils remains unknown. In terms of Belfast, the strategy noted that Belfast may need more than one hub (suggesting four) due to “population levels and extent of community segregation²”.

3.4 Belfast City Council

BCC has a long history of providing support for advice giving organisations within the voluntary and community sector. As is the case with other public bodies, BCC is obliged to demonstrate best value in delivery of services and in common with other bodies the Council has found it difficult to determine the most appropriate and fair means of allocating funding to advice providers, whilst remaining cost effective and accessible.

In 2002-2003 BCC commissioned consultants to carry out a review of advice services in Belfast. The review concluded that decisions on advice provision needed to be made on the basis of a number of factors including, funding, quality of service, location and availability of provision in the specific areas. The review also highlighted that advice providers were generally supportive of the development of a strategy which would allow clearer understanding of BCC's expectations and mechanisms for support. The development of the strategy was commissioned in 2005.

In the interim period between the review in 2003 and the development of the strategy in 2005 BCC agreed an allocation of advice services funding across the city. Initially, 10 per cent was allocated to city centre provision (on the basis that some people would seek provision in a neutral venue), with the remaining balance divided on the basis of an analysis of population and deprivation. At this stage BCC also worked with advice providers on the development of consortia through a process of consultation and facilitation.

The development of a strategy in 2005 was set against this backdrop with the aim of providing a long-term framework for advice provision in the city. The values underpinning the strategy required the advice services to be accessible, needs-based, of a quality standard, on appropriate premises, up to date, best value, sustainable, equal, free and independent. The recommendations for future advice provision were that BCC should continue with the consortium approach, supporting this in a manner which encouraged co-operation between providers in each area (North, South, East and West) through the following:

- Determining how best to allocate city centre provision;
- Allocating the remaining funding based on a deprivation-weighted population to indicate need;
- Call for registration of interest from generalist advice providers;
- Early assessment of registrants to determine if they met quality standards;

²Opening Doors, page 14

- BCC would then indicate to those who met standards that a consortium or shared bid should be submitted from the area; and
- Funding allocated on a consortia basis or if a consortia approach can not be agreed funding to be split on a pro-rata basis, using numbers of enquiries for each organisation.

Full details on the Council's advice provision application and assessment can be found later in the report.

The Council's Corporate Plan 2003-2006 set out strategies to help achieve and realise a vision of "Believing in a better Belfast." Specifically the strategies related to:

- **Providing Civic Leadership** - highlighting the challenges that face the city and working with others to achieve co-ordinated solutions;
- **Improving Quality of Life, Now and for Future Generations** - creating a cleaner, more attractive, safer and healthier city, with a strong economy;
- **Promoting Good Relations** - encouraging fair treatment, understanding and respect for people of all cultures; and
- **Delivering Best Services** - providing high quality, value for money services, when and where people need them.

Overarching the four strategies was the need for organisations to work in partnership to make the best use of the resources that currently exist in the City.

The 2007 - 2008 Corporate Plan focuses activities around three key areas:

- Improving quality of life, now and for future generations;
- Providing leadership and strategic direction for shaping, developing and managing the city; and
- Meeting the needs of local people through the effective delivery of quality, customer-focused services.

The current approach to delivery of advice services in Belfast has been in operation since April 2005 and BCC is in its third year of funding advice providers in this manner. In the sections that follow we outline the processes through which BCC has allocated funding across the city and highlight some of the outcomes / outputs from this funding.

Decisions in respect of the allocation of grant-aid to advice providers and the allocation of additional match funding is undertaken by the Community and Recreation Sub-Committee that sits within Community Services. We recognise that Belfast City Council is currently undergoing a review of their Community Services Strategy and that this will inevitably impact on their advice provision in the city in the future. In the later sections we discuss advice provision in the city in the future and discuss BCC's role with advice services within the wider way forward for advice provision.

3.5 Summary

In summary our consideration of strategic context for provision of advice services in Belfast confirmed:

- There are three key umbrella bodies for the provision of advice and information services in Northern Ireland including Citizens Advice, Advice NI and Law Centre NI who are all linked through the Advice Services Alliance;

- A context of change with the considerable growth in the sector followed by a restructuring and tightening of the funding landscape and heightening requirement for transparent standards, modernisation and consolidation; and
- The *Opening Doors* Strategy proposes a structure for delivering advice services that seeks to ensure increased co-operation between local providers and improved accessibility for the many people who rely on these services across Northern Ireland. Central to the structure is the development of a network of generalist providers referred to as area Hubs and Satellites.

4 Current Delivery of Services

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to describe the processes underlying the Council's Advice and Information services.

4.2 Council Approval

In November 2004 the BCC Community and Recreation Sub-Committee met and agreed the funding allocations for the 2005-2006 funding year. This allocation was similar to previous years in that 10 per cent was to be allocated to city centre provision, with the remaining balance divided on the basis of an analysis of population and deprivation. Following this meeting bids were sought via public advertisement from generalist advice providers in the city. Further details on the application processes involved and the funding allocations are set out in section 4.3 and 4.6.

In December 2005, DSD announced that it would be providing a supplementary £152,725 of development support grant funding for allocation for year ending 31st March 2006. In addition, with this news was the request that in subsequent years BCC should match this funding from rateable income starting from the funding year commencing April 2006. The match funding from BCC was agreed through the striking of the rate in February 2006 and the Community Services budget was increased in line with this increase.

Generalist advice providers were invited to a meeting in January 2006 to offer views on distribution across the city, allocation of supplementary DSD funding for 2005-2006 (£152,725), and allocation of all funding for 2006-2007.

Opinions expressed by advice providers are detailed below³:

1. the latest SOA analysis should be used with immediate effect, including overall allocations for the current year;
2. the allocation should remain at 10 per cent in the City centre;
3. the additional DSD funding should be allocated pro-rata on the awards already agreed by Council;
4. advice providers should be permitted to use the additional grant for capital items such as computers and software; and
5. BCC should encourage consortia applications, but where this was not possible Council should facilitate the allocation funding. Where consortia agreement could not be agreed, Council were to negotiate with individual groups to allocate the funding based on advice need and the capacity to meet this need based on the number of enquiries each organisation receives.

The BCC Community and Recreation Sub-Committee met again in February 2006 to consider a report from the Head of Community & Leisure Services in respect of the allocation of grant-aid to advice providers and the provision of additional match funding to support DSD's information and advice services strategy. Details of the recommendations set out by the report can be found in Appendix II. Following discussions and questions with the consultants involved in the initial allocation of funding, Council agreed to the recommendations contained in the report.

³ Source: 2006 - Report of Head of Community & Leisure Services Community and Recreation Department

4.3 Application

Application form and completion

By 2005-2006 the funding of advice services in the city had been open to discussion for a number of years. Research conducted on behalf of BCC by external consultants in 2002-2003 was followed by consultation in 2005 with advice providers and as discussed in the previous section led the Council to progress towards supporting advice services on a consortia basis across five areas of the city in 2005. The five areas were to be North, South, East, West and Central Belfast. Effectively therefore, proposals were invited, via an application process, for the provision of advice services across the city. In preparation for this application forms and a scoring pro forma were prepared aimed at assessing whether the consortia could meet the requirements set by BCC.

Table 4.1 below provides a breakdown of the application form including narrative around what details were required in each section of the form.

Table 4.1
Council Grant Application Form

Section Details	Information Required
Consortium Details	Name of consortium; Area Targeted; and Lead consortium member organisation.
List of Consortium Members	Name of individual delivery organisation within consortium; and Membership of A.S.A organisation (i.e. Advice NI / C.A.B).
Area Coverage	Details of area coverage; and Details of any specific advice offered within the area
Gaps in Provision	Current gaps in provision – specifically including accessibility through Public Transport routes, outreach work etc
Addressing Gaps	(1) how the consortium plans to address the gaps; and (2) how individual delivery organisations plan to address gaps.
Access Difficulties	How the consortium intends to address the needs of those who have particular access difficulties (i.e. older people, people with disabilities, those with sight or hearing difficulties and those who don't use English as their Primary Language)
Volume of Advice	Expected number of enquiries by each delivery organisation
Statement of Collaborative Working	Specific information on how consortium members will hold each other accountable for the quality and quantity of their advice work; How members propose to meet, communicate with each other and relate information to ensure they are operating in the most efficient and non-competitive way; and Information on the consortium member that will act as primary contact for the Council – this should also state what they are allowed to do and not to do on behalf of the consortium.
Agreement	Applications are only accepted if they include all members' signatures

Source: Belfast City Council Files

By the end of 2005 applications were sought from all consortia, with over 20 organisations completing the application forms. In January of 2006 these applications were initially assessed in conjunction with BCC by the same consultants who had developed the advice strategy for the council in 2005, full details of the assessment procedures are provided in the following sections.

Grant Application Assessment

BCC's strategy was focused on generalist advice provision, i.e. those providers who offer general advice services to the community at large, rather than on specific topics

or to a designated section of the community. For example, the Rape Crisis Centre was rejected because it did not fit the 'generalist' criteria. Full details of the assessment criteria can be found in Appendix II.

Initially a successful application required an overall minimum score of at least 60 per cent or 120 out of 200. BCC developed a range of criteria against which to score the applications. A summary of the areas that are assessed are outlined below:

- evidence of a 'well run community organisation as defined by BCC';
- geographical boundaries of the area being served;
- description of need within the area for which funding was sought;
- track record of the applicant in advice services provision including current level of services offered;
- details of suitability of information recording system;
- ASA standards – i.e. is the organisation a member of CAB or Advice NI.
- Staff / volunteer training details;
- how the organisation was going to contribute to BCC objectives; and
- details of how BCC funding has attracted or will attract additional financial support from other sources.

Initial Assessment

The approach to consortia working across the city has been varied from the beginning, with different areas having to overcome different challenges / barriers to consortium working. Some areas were able to agree quite readily to the consortium approach whilst others found the whole process needed significant facilitation and deliberation. Details on the types of applications received and methods by which they were assessed are contained in the following sections.

North Belfast and **East Belfast** providers were able to reach agreement and delivered consortium bids in both cases. These bids also met the requirements of including all eligible advice providers in the area and representing both independent and CAB providers.

In **South Belfast**, independent advisors came together as the South Belfast Independent Advice Services Working Group and submitted an application on that basis, whereas a single application was received from the Suffolk and Andersonstown CAB⁴. Both applications did indicate however that they were working towards a consortium and were also prepared to service mutually exclusive parts of the area. Accordingly, these applications were scored together as a coalition.

Providers in **West Belfast**, although making progress towards a consortium approach in recent times, were unable to reach agreement in time for the application to be progressed as a joint approach. All of those that did apply for funding (seven in total) expressed support for the bids from fellow organisations, however, as applications were strictly individual, each was assessed on an individual basis.

In the **Central area**, applications were received from Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre (BURC) and Belfast Central CAB independently and were therefore assessed as such.

⁴ Suffolk / Andersonstown deliver advice services in parts of South and West Belfast. For this reason representatives sit within the consortia of both areas, however, BCC funding for the organisation is delivered through South Belfast allocation.

Given the Council's wish to encourage a consortium approach, the assessment criteria were such that individual applications would generally score significantly lower than consortia. Some of the applications, which were of acceptable quality in terms of their content, fell below the threshold required because they had received no points for being in a consortium, therefore for individual applications the threshold was reduced from 120 to 100. In total, 20 organisations submitted applications either individually or as part of a consortium. The consortia / coalitions in East Belfast, South Belfast and North Belfast all met the minimum threshold score of 120 and were therefore considered for application. In central Belfast, both CAB and BURC met the threshold of 120, meeting the quality requirement. In West Belfast, five of the seven providers met or exceeded the proposed threshold for quality of 100, whilst two, Greater Turf Lodge Residents Association and EPIC both fell short of this target and were rejected. If however, these groups had applied in West Belfast within a consortium bid, all of the providers would collectively have achieved the consortium score.⁵

During our consultation consortium members were asked to give their view on the application form and the majority of the participants stated that the application form was relatively straightforward to complete, whilst they also believed an appropriate amount of information was requested and appropriate questions were asked. This view was upheld when consortium members were asked to compare the BCC application with that associated with other funding / grant providers. The majority indicated that the BCC application process was not as onerous or time intensive as other funding bodies. One organisation did however feel that the application was very two-dimensional in that it seemed to be very 'number orientated' and didn't consider the fact that many of the organisations measure enquiries and service levels in different ways.

In our opinion the application form for the advice funding is relatively straightforward when compared with other funding / grant schemes. The assessment process criteria provide a reasonable cross-section of requirements relating to delivery of advice services. Going forward there is an opportunity to tighten these criteria to align with the Opening Doors strategy and the future direction of advice services, specifically, information on the skills and expertise from consortia (money / debt counselling, tribunal / advocacy work etc) and a more formal approach to analysing local population-deprivation statistics and how services will be targeted to specific areas of need. Further analysis on the application and assessment process can be found in sections 7 and 8.

Prior to delivery organisations receiving funding, advice providers were asked to agree the funding split within each area. Initially, North, South and East because they had agreed a consortia application were asked to agree the split, with the Council facilitating agreement in West and Central. Following the agreed split, a letter of offer was then sent to each applicant outlining what had been agreed. BCC then issued contracts to each organisation with each delivery organisation expected to sign and return. BCC keeps a hardcopy of this agreement as well as other project details within their internal filing system. The funding contract outlines the main contractual agreement between the Council and the advice delivery organisations and includes details on timescales, details of performance indicators required and situations in which funding will be withdrawn by the Council. As is the nature of the consortia, the contracts are different across the city, for instance in West Belfast each individual organisation receives a contract, whereas in North and South the consortia receive contracts. Additionally, two types of contracts are issued, one relating to the standard / core funding provided by BCC and the other relating to the supplementary funding made up of DSD and BCC monies. Full details on the funding arrangements can be found later in section 4.6.

⁵ The two groups who did not meet the quality targets required in the BCC application form remain part of the developing consortium in the West.

4.4 Monitoring

In order to receive funding, delivery organisations must submit a Progress Monitoring Return on a quarterly basis to BCC with the final quarter update to be provided in early April. All projects are provided in advance of their quarterly submission with a progress reporting template which must be submitted by post to BCC and is then retained by the Council in hardcopy in their files.

Projects are required to report on the following areas:

- Description of the group's activities for the year;
- Summary of the group's financial position;
- Details of any constitutional changes;
- How the organisation is contributing to the Council's Corporate Strategic Objectives;
- Details of yearly profile and usage of advice services;
- Geographical focus of the organisation;
- Numbers of volunteers;
- Other Resources Levered; and
- Any other relevant details.

Consortium members were asked to comment on the monitoring information required during our consultations. Respondents stated that the monitoring forms were clear, straightforward and provided a user friendly process. In addition, monitoring information was deemed to be less burdensome and onerous than other funding / grant providers.

Despite this view on ease of completion, BCC noted the difficulty in getting full monitoring information from consortium / coalitions / organisations on a timely basis. For instance, a delay in receiving monitoring information from the North Belfast Advice Partnership resulted in almost six months of delay in commencing planned activity in the area as funding could not be released.

We consider that the requirement for monitoring returns on a quarterly basis is appropriate and the information requested by Council is adequate and provides a reasonable cross-section of detail in relation to consortia / organisation activities throughout the year, however, there is no requirement for delivery organisations to seek service user feedback. Although, some organisations do this as best practice, others do not, the requirement for feedback would sit well within the current and future modernisation of advice services and could help provide better services for advice beneficiaries in the future.

BCC themselves must provide DSD with a return on an annual basis. This annual return must be provided to DSD by mid-April 2007 and predominantly includes details of all enquiries received by consortia / organisations over the course of the year, broken down by the type of enquiry and details of any benefit entitlement 'clawed back' by the client.

4.5 Targeting Need

BCC attempts to target need through a number of processes and procedures. Initially, the agreement to allocate funding based on factors of population and deprivation, strongly indicates that targeting need is a priority. Further details on the specific allocation process can be found in section 4.6. Furthermore, local knowledge

can be very well developed across the city, (gained from experience working in deprived communities and wider areas). The application process requires delivery organisations to identify gaps in service provision and determine how they are going to address these gaps. In addition, the application form requires clear guidance from applicants on how proposed services target local needs. As noted in section 4.3 there is scope in application processes for applicant organisations to analyse population-deprivation statistics within consortium areas and think more strategically as to how services will be targeted to specific areas of need identified.

The method of service delivery is also critical, with the majority of organisations providing outreach services in various areas including peripheral areas and pockets of need, through community centres, leisure centres, tenants associations and health facilities. A number of the central advice providing offices, such as East Belfast Independent Advice Centre on Castlereagh Street and Ballynafeigh Community Development Association in South Belfast are provided on arterial routes, whilst others like East Belfast CAB are provided in close proximity to health services. The two organisations in Central Belfast, Central CAB and BURC are also very accessible to a number of people in the city due to their close proximity to bus and rail networks.

4.6 Funding

As discussed in previous sections, the allocation of funding across the city was made on the basis of an analysis of deprivation and population across North, South, East and West Belfast. The exception to this is the allocation to the Central Area where an arbitrary 10 per cent funding has traditionally been allocated. The central allocation of funding has been done on the assumption that a proportion of BCC residents would choose to seek advice in the City Centre where they either work or can achieve greater anonymity. The remaining balance is divided on the basis of an analysis of population and deprivation as follows:

- The wards in each quarter of the city were categorized according to their extent of deprivation based on deprivation statistics provided in the latest Noble multiple deprivation measures;
- The population in each of the wards was then calculated and from this a deprivation weighted population was calculated for the ward and the quarter of the city as a whole; and
- Funding was then allocated on a pro-rata basis based on the deprivation weighted population.

The percentage allocation of funding for 2005-2006, 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 across the city is detailed in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2
Allocation of advice services across the city 2005-2006 and 2006-2007

Area	Percentage Allocation of Funding (%)
North Belfast	27.33
South Belfast	13.51
East Belfast	16.82
West Belfast	32.34

City Centre	10
Total	100

Source: Belfast City Council

According to the deprivation measures West Belfast and North Belfast should receive the highest percentage of funding allocation, indicating that these two areas of the city were in highest need.

In 2005-2006 applications were invited for funding anticipating a total 'standard' fund of £311,000. In early 2006 DSD announced that an additional £500,000 for local advice services across Northern Ireland was to be allocated, of which £152,725 was offered for distribution by BCC. BCC agreed to match this amount from the rates with effect from April 2006.

As discussed in previous sections, advice providers in North, South and East Belfast were asked to agree the funding split within each area, whilst for West Belfast and City Centre the Council allocated the funding across the area as consortia / coalitions could not be agreed. The allocation of funding received by each consortium for the 2005-2006, 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 financial years are detailed in Tables 4.3 to 4.5. The additional funding allocation is comprised of a supplementary fund provided by DSD and matched through rate monies by BCC in 2006 and 2007. This additional money is allocated across the city in the same percentages as illustrated in table 4.2.

Table 4.3
Allocation of Funding 2005-2006

Area	2005-2006		
	Funding agreed	Additional Funding	Total Funding
North	£97,044	£38,101	£138,215
South	£46,206	£20,626	£68,323
East	£59,046	£24,114	£85,063
West	£108,384	£51,517	£163,551
City Centre	£42,430	£18,257	£50,573
Total	£353,110	£152,615	£505,725

Source: Belfast City Council

In 2005-2006 standard funding was agreed of £311,000 across the city. Following an appeal by providers in North Belfast an additional £42,000 was approved by Council leaving a standard funding total of £353,110. This was supplemented by an additional £152,615 of monies provided by DSD in March 2006. In line with the percentages illustrated in table 4.2 North and West Belfast receive the highest proportion of funding across the city, which indicates that funding allocation does equate to deprivation-weighted population, in that most funding is provided to areas with the highest need.

Table 4.4
Allocation of Funding 2006-2007

Area	2006-2007		
	Funding agreed	Additional Funding	Total Funding
North	£84,996.30	£83,479.49	£168,476
South	£42,016.10	£41,266.30	£83,282
East	£52,310.20	£51,376.69	£103,687
West	£100,577.40	£98,782.53	£199,360
City Centre	£31,100.00	£30,545.00	£61,645
Total	£311,000	£305,450	£616,450

Source: Belfast City Council

Prior to 2006 it had been traditional for the advice services budget to be increased each year by 3 per cent to allow for inflation. However, as the additional amounts provided through DSD supplementary funding and matched funding from BCC equated to a sum much larger than 3 per cent it was agreed that the base figure for 2005 (i.e. £311,000) be applied in 2006. In addition, DSD supplementary funding of £152,725 was matched by BCC providing an additional £305,450 amount across the city. Again, in line with the percentages in table 4.2 West and North Belfast receive the highest proportion of funding across the city.

Table 4.5
Allocation of Funding 2007-2008

Area	2007-2008		
	Funding agreed	Additional Funding	Total Funding
North	£87,546.19	£126,387.48	£213,933.67
South	£112,435.83	£162,319.81	£274,755.64
East	£53,879.51	£77,784.02	£131,663.53
West	£103,594.72	£149,556.20	£253,150.93
City Centre	£32,033.0	£46,245.0	£78,277.96
Total	£320,330	£462,449.61	£782,779.61

Source: Belfast City Council

In 2007-2008 the three per cent increase was applied to standard funding resulting in a standard grant for that year of £320,330. In addition, DSD increased the additional funding they provide to £309, 725 and BCC provided a further £152,725. Overall, West Belfast receives the most funding split between seven delivery organisations. [Note: although there are seven providers in West Belfast only five are funded by BCC – due to two organisations failing to meet required BCC standards] North

Belfast receives the second highest also split between seven delivery organisations, East Belfast receives the next highest allocation split between two organisations, and South Belfast receives the next highest split between the South Belfast Independent Advice Working Group (SBIAWG) and South Belfast CAB. The remaining allocation is split between Central Belfast CAB and BURC in the city centre. Table 4.6 provides a comparison across the three years.

Table 4.6
Allocation of Funding 2007-2008

Year	Amount	Increase from Previous Year	
		£	%
2005-2006	£505,725		
2006-2007	£616,450	£110,615	21
2007-2008	£782,779	£166,319	27

Source: Belfast City Council

As can be seen from table 4.6 there has been significant increase in the amount of funding allocated across the city since 2005 with over 20 per cent increases each year. Although, the funding has increased significantly BCC have not asked for anything additional from advice providers over the course of the three years through monitoring / enquiry information. This is discussed in more detail later in the report.

BCC acknowledged that since the initial funding arrangements there have been a number of expressions of interest from other advice providers in the city. For instance, a church in South Belfast wanted to provide advice for Migrant workers in that area. As with other interested parties BCC advised the provider to speak to the lead consortium partner in the area (in this case SBIAWG). This signifies that although the door is not closed for potential advice providers they need to demonstrate to the consortia for the area what additional value their advice would provide for the area.

Other Key Funding Support

Although BCC / DSD remain the core funders of advice and information services in the City many of the delivery organisations have sought funding from elsewhere, in some instances this is for specialist advice delivery, e.g. Belfast CAB have received funding from the Macmillan Cancer Trust towards providing a CAB service to cancer patients and their families at City Hospital. Whilst, in other cases funding has been directly levered based on the BCC allocation, for instance EBIAC has indicated that funding from the Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment (DETI), Local Community Fund (LCF), Peace II, Investing for Health, South and East Belfast Trust, Lloyds TSB and the Rowan Charitable Trust have all been levered as result of BCC funding. Additional funding sources differ across the city with some delivery organisations receiving from a number of different funders whereas others like the BURC only receive funding from BCC. In the main however the following organisations provide additional funding as identified through the delivery organisations annual monitoring returns.

- DSD - Belfast Regeneration Office [NOTE: BRO are a separate funding stream from the other DSD support, which comes via the Voluntary and Community Unit];
- The Big Lottery Fund;

- Community Relations Council – Counselling Services for victims, their families and carers;
- Lloyds TSB;
- Investing for Health;
- Health Boards and Trusts; and
- The Local Community Fund.

4.7 File Review

As part of the overall review Deloitte carried out a file review of advice services project files at BCC premises. The files consist of a number of colour coded files organised by initial enquiries, quarterly and annual advice returns by each consortia (which is included in a file for each of the areas across Belfast) and a specific file relating to the 2007-2008 funding year which includes contracts for the current year of advice provision.

The consortium files reviewed contained manual copies of the following:

- application forms received from individual organisations;
- funding agreements for 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 for each of the consortia / organisations;
- monitoring returns provided by each consortia / organisation; and
- correspondence to and from BCC.

The files reviewed by Deloitte were largely comprehensive and laid out in a logical manner. Files, however, seem to be missing letters of offer for each of the delivery organisations / consortia. There were no file notes created to log calls with the project or print outs of emails sent or received, given the limited volume of calls and emails this may not be necessary but it may be important if significant issues / problems were to develop in the future. One further issue was if there were correspondence letters they were not held in a separate section of the file. As a result of this a person who is unfamiliar with the project would not be able to determine immediately if there were any letters which dealt with specific issues or other significant matters.

Apart from the issues noted we believe the files are adequate and include a necessary amount of information.

4.8 Summary

This section has provided an overview of the Council's current advice and information service in terms of how it is operated and its main activities. In summary it shows that:

- The current model of advice and information is based on consortia of providers, based on geographical areas (North, South, East, West and Central Belfast);
- BCC focused funding on generalist providers i.e. those providers who offer general advice services to the community at large rather than on specific topics or to a designated section of the community;
- A number of essential criteria was required by applicants in order to be considered for funding;
- Consortia applicants varied across the city with some being assessed as consortia (i.e. South, North and East) whereas others were assessed as individuals (i.e. groups in West and Central);

- Funding was allocated on pro-rata basis based on a deprivation-weighted population. This equated to 32 per cent in West Belfast, 27 per cent in North Belfast, 16 per cent in East Belfast, 13 per cent in South Belfast and 10 per cent in the city centre. This indicated that North and West Belfast were in the highest need;
- There has been significant increases in the total amount of BCC and DSD funding provided to advice organisations across the city since 2005, with over 20 per cent increases each year, £505,725 in 2005, £616,450 in 2006 and £782,779 in 2007;
- Consortia must provide monitoring information to BCC on a quarterly basis, the council then provides details to DSD at the end of the financial year;
- BCC targets need through a number of means including, its method of allocating funding across the city, the application process and the delivery of advice through local providers;
- The allocation of funding across the city is based on a weighted deprivation-population measure which was updated in 2005 with the latest super output area deprivation and population figures; and
- Although providers receive funding from other organisations / bodies BCC and DSD remain the core funders of advice and information services in the city.

5 Outputs, Outcomes, Quality and Partnership Working

5.1 Introduction

This section of the report provides details of management and administration processes that the Council has in place during each stage of the application and funding process. The information contained in this section has been informed based on desk research and information provided by those consulted, including the advice providers in each area, senior officials from Advice NI and CAB and BCC representatives. Full details of all those consulted can be found in Appendix II.

5.2 Overview of Current Structure

As is discussed in earlier sections the current model of advice and information provision in the BCC area is based on consortia of providers, based in geographical areas (North, South, East, West and Central Belfast). Table 5.1 provides details of the five consortia including a breakdown of the delivery organisations involved within each consortium.

Table 5.1
Current Delivery Organisations

Area and Name of Current Delivery Organisations	
<u>North Belfast Consortium</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower North Belfast Community Council (LNBCC) Ligoniel Improvement Association (LIA) Ballysillan Community Forum (BCF) Tar Isteach Vine Centre Ardoyne Association Antrim Road CAB 	<u>West Belfast</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corpus Christi Services Springfield Charitable Association Ltd Falls Community Council Greater Turf Lodge Residents Association Neighbourhood Development Association (NDA) EPIC Shankill CAB
<u>East Belfast Consortium</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> East Belfast Independent Advice Centre (EBIAC) East Belfast CAB 	<u>South Belfast Coalition</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Belfast Independent Advice Services Working Group (SBIAWG)⁶ Suffolk and Andersonstown CAB South Belfast CAB
<u>Central Belfast</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central CAB Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre (BURC) 	

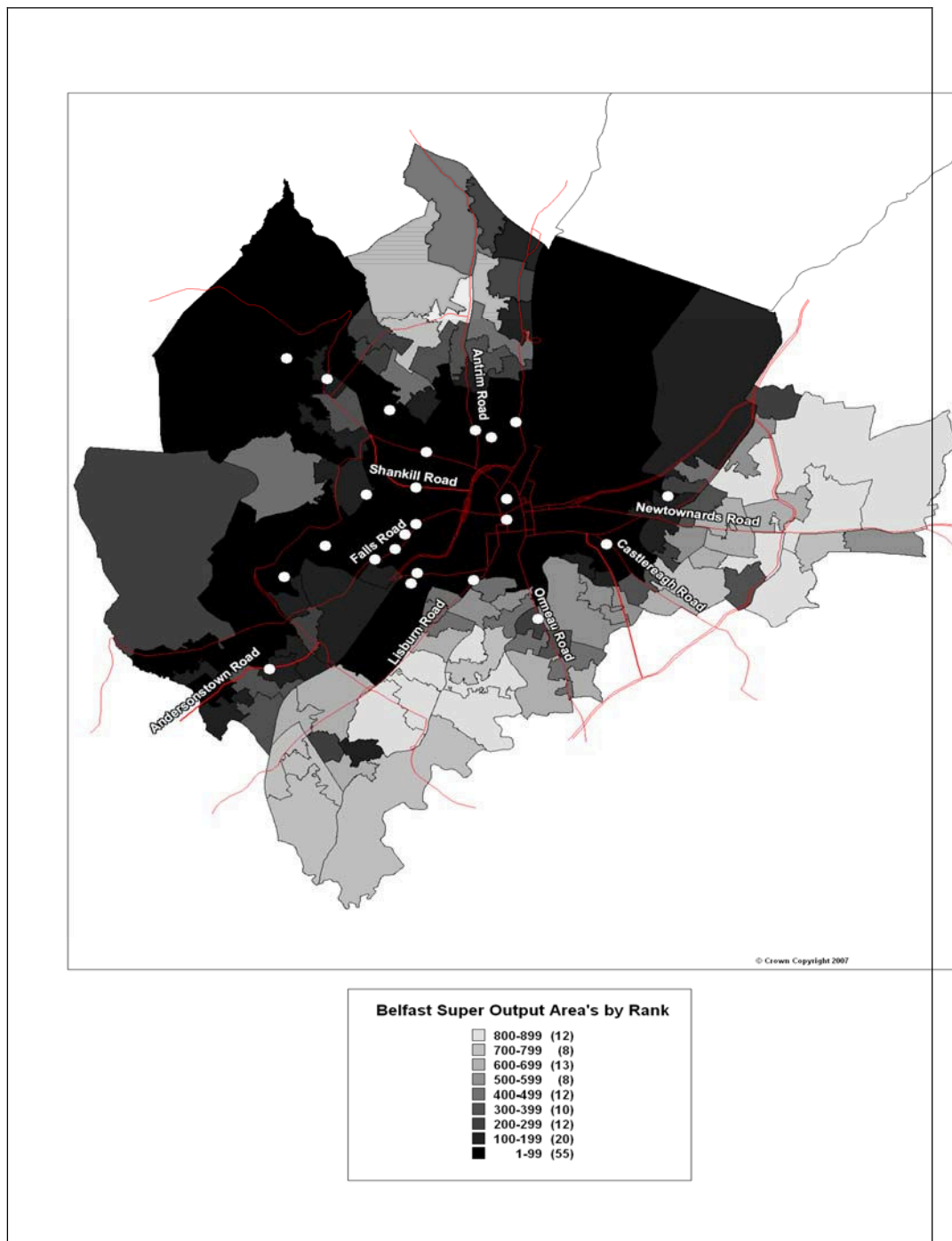
Source: Belfast City Council

Figure 5.2 illustrates the current situation. In particular it highlights relative deprivation levels across the city (based on 2005 Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure). The super output areas⁷ with the darkest shading are most deprived relative to other super output areas. The map also illustrates key routes and locations of current generalist advice providers in the city (represented by the white dots on the map). These are the locations of advice providers currently contracted by Belfast City Council to provide generalist advice services. As can be seen on the map they are well aligned to areas of deprivation and to main arterial routes.

⁶ Includes Ballynafeigh Community Development Association, Windsor Women's Centre and South City Resource

⁷ Super Output Area – A unit of geography used for small area statistical analysis.

Figure 5.2
Deprivation and Current Generalist Advice Provision in Belfast



Advice provision within Belfast varies between delivery organisations but generally all areas provide a range of basic information, advice advocacy or representation on a wide range of issues including welfare benefits, housing, consumer, health, education, tribunals and money / debt. Further detail on the specific provision throughout the City by each consortium is indicated in the sections that follow.

5.3 Scope of Data

Due to the nature of the consortia approach across the city, the data provided varies in quality and detail. In some cases, the monitoring information is provided by the consortium (i.e. North and East Belfast) whereas in other areas the details are provided by individual organisations making comparison by consortia across the city difficult to compile. In addition, a number of other factors must be taken into consideration when considering the information in the following sections, including:

- In many cases clients who receive advice do not return to the Advice provider to give feedback on benefit 'claw back', therefore the figures provided may be grossly underestimated;
- The information provided by some Advice providers does not include telephone enquiries which are recorded separately; and
- Providers do not all record information on the same basis. Whilst, enquiries are generally likely to be comparable across organisations, some may treat a minor enquiry as part of a larger enquiry and therefore not include it, whilst others may record this as a separate enquiry.

In conclusion, although the information in the following section is broadly comparable across providers it is only being used for indicative purposes to highlight trends / patterns across the city. Therefore, in light of these factors it is recommended that the analysis is considered as a reasonable guide but not a wholly accurate picture.

5.4 Outputs

North Belfast

The Parliamentary Constituency of Belfast North encompasses a population of c. 81,736 people according to the NISRA Demography Branch mid year estimates 2005. It is made up of 19 local government wards; 14 of which are within the Belfast City Council area (Ardoyne, Ballysillan, Bellevue, Castlevue, Cavehill, Chichester Park, Cliftonville, Crumlin, Duncairn, Fortwilliam, Ligoniel, New Lodge, Water Works and Woodvale).

The North Belfast Advice Partnership (NBAP) has seven main partners as detailed in Table 5.1 and operates throughout the North Belfast area but are concentrated in inner North Belfast in areas of high social and economic deprivation that lack social and community cohesion.

Funding Allocation in North Belfast 2006-2007

In 2006-2007 North Belfast received the second highest allocation of funding across Belfast. As indicated earlier the allocation of funding was according to a population-weighted measure indicating that North Belfast was in considerable need of advice provision. Table 5.2 provides details of the funding split across the area by delivery organisation.

Table 5.2
North Belfast Advice Partnership Funding 2006-2007

Organisation	Percentage of area enquiries	Amount of Total Funding
Antrim Road CAB	44.0	£74,129
Tar Isteach	13.0	£21,902
LNBBCC	11.2	£18,869
Ardoyne Association	10.5	£17,690
Vine Centre	8.2	£13,815
LIA	7.1	£11,962
Ballysillan Community Centre	6.0	£10,109
Totals	100	£168,476

Source: Belfast City Council

The allocation of funding in North Belfast per organisation is determined by the number of enquiries that each organisation receives. As such, Antrim Road CAB who received 44 per cent of the enquiries in 2006-2007 also received the highest allocation of funding in the area.

Table 5.3 provides details of the number and type of enquiries received by the NBAP in the 2006-2007 funding period as contained in the final quarterly monitoring return provided to BCC.

Table 5.3
North Belfast Advice Partnership Service Returns 2006-2007

Type of enquiry	Number of Enquiries	% of total enquiries
Benefit	29,370	75.5
Consumer	2,914	7.5
Housing	2,558	6.5
Employment	1,479	3.8
Health	1,443	3.7
Money / Debt	980	2.5
Other ⁸	-	-
Appeals / Tribunals	168	0.5
Total number of clients	18,743	48.2
Total number of enquiries	38,912	100
Total Benefit 'claw back'	£1,988,081	

Source: Belfast City Council

The majority of advice delivered in this period is benefit related with 75.5 per cent in this category. From the information supplied in the monitoring returns the North Belfast Advice Partnership has provided £1,998,081 in client financial gain within the period 2006 – 2007. Taking into consideration total BCC funding in 2006-2007 of £168,475, for every pound that BCC puts into North Belfast, the client financial gain is £11.80. The total number of enquiries at 38,912 is 31.7 per cent of all enquiries in Belfast, the highest amount from a consortium area.

Description of the consortium's activities for the year

After a number of meetings and consultation between the members of the consortium it was decided that funding should be used in following way:

- 1 F/T advice worker post at the Vine Centre and 1 F/T advice worker post at Lower North Belfast Community Council allowing these organisations to continue to deliver generalist advice services and expand outreach services;
- Recruitment of P/T advice assistants in Ballysillan Community Forum, The Vine Centre and Ardoyne Association to enhance existing services in these communities;
- Portable loop hearing systems were purchased for all partners to enable more effective communication with clients who are hearing impaired;
- A subscription was taken out with language line which allows access to a telephone translation service for clients whose first language is not English;
- A promotional DVD was made to increase awareness of the partnership and raise profile;
- The addition of a counselling service allowing all staff to refer clients who were in need of this service to a trained counsellor; and

⁸ Other enquiries include relationship / personal, taxes, utilities, education, leisure, human rights and justice.

- Staff training courses, which entailed refresher courses for all staff resulting in advice provision which is of high quality and relevant to clients.

In summary, the Partnership shows some good progression in terms of the consortium approach as highlighted by their ability as a group to allocate funding and work together to allocate resources across the area. The dominance of benefit enquiries was no surprise in discussion with the Partnership members who noted the extent of benefit related issues across North Belfast, and in particular in inner North Belfast where poor health, high unemployment and some ageing communities are common characteristics. In addition, the significant amount of benefit gain for clients is a positive indicator for BCC in terms of the allocation of their funding. The Partnership highlighted that money and debt issues, despite their relatively low proportion of total enquiries were increasing. Housing enquiries were often related to affordability concerns, whilst health often related to mental health and ageing issues. A key point that was observed is that advice issues are often multi-faceted and intertwined.

South Belfast

The Parliamentary Constituency of Belfast South encompasses a population of c. 92,818 people according to the NISRA Demography Branch mid year estimates 2005. It is made up of 12 local government wards; including Ballynafeigh, Botanic, Blackstaff, Finaghy, Malone, Musgrave, Ravenhill, Rosetta, Shaftesbury, Stranmillis, Upper Malone and Windsor

The South Belfast Advice Coalition has three main partners as detailed in Table 5.1 and operates throughout the South Belfast area, the opening of the South Belfast CAB at the Bradbury Centre in March 2007 has significantly increased the provision of advice in the area, however, as they have only recently opened they are not included in the statistics in this section. Advice provision by Suffolk / Andersonstown CAB covers some parts of South and West Belfast and therefore representatives sit on consortia for both areas. BCC funding for Suffolk / Andersonstown CAB is provided through the allocation for South and for that reason enquiry figures are provided in this section.

South Belfast receives the least allocation of funding across the four quarters of the city at £83,282 with only city centre providers receiving less. The split in the area between South Belfast CAB providers and SBIAWG is determined by the number of enquiries each of the organisations received as indicated on their application forms in 2006. SBIAWG then meet independently and through negotiation and discussion split the funding allocation between member organisations.

Table 5.4 provides details of the number and type of enquiries received in the South Belfast area in the 2006-2007 funding period as contained in the final quarterly monitoring return provided to BCC. For indicative purposes the figures for SBIAWG and Suffolk / Andersonstown have been added together to give a South Belfast wide perspective. As the Bradbury Centre CAB only opened in March 2007, their figures were included in this analysis.

Table 5.4
South Belfast Advice Coalition Returns 2006-2007

Type of enquiry	Number of Enquiries	% of total enquiries
Benefit	3,957	58.4
Money / Debt	1,031	15.2
Employment	212	7.3
Housing	493	4.4
Health	93	3.1
Consumer	299	1.4
Appeals / Tribunals	58	0.9
Other	688	10.2
Total number of clients	3,572	52.8
Total number of enquiries	6,772	100.00
Total Benefit 'claw back'	£950,203	

Source: Belfast City Council

Benefit related advice represents the majority share of advice provision in South Belfast with over 58 per cent of all enquiries in this area. The number of money / debt related enquiries are also significant at 15.2 per cent of all enquiries in the area.

In addition, from the information supplied in the monitoring returns the South Belfast area has provided £950,203 in client financial gain within the period 2006 – 2007. Taking into consideration the total BCC funding in 2006-2007 for South Belfast of £83,282, for every pound that BCC puts into South Belfast, the client financial gain is £11.42.

The scale of benefit enquiries was no surprise as representatives from South Belfast noted the dominance of benefit related advice across the area. In addition, recent years has seen a marked increase in the demand for debt / money advice - those consulted indicated that there has been a significant increase in the level of debt that people are seeking advice on, resulting in more challenging and time intensive cases for advice workers in the area. Advice provision for the elderly population, which tends to be more resource intensive due to the requirement for home visits, is also quite significant in the area.

Representatives also acknowledged that gaps have been identified in a number of areas of South Belfast that each of the members are trying to fill in accordance with the application sent to the Council in 2006. More specifically, these gaps relate to advice provision for ethnic minorities and migrants, this issue is seen as a priority given the increase in residency within the area of the Chinese population, Eastern Europeans and other minority and ethnic groups. The additional demand for advice brings its own challenges – specifically in terms of tribunal, advocacy and representation services which tend to increase the pressure on existing resources as the cases tend to take much longer to resolve. Since April 2005 there has been no dedicated advocacy and representation service and there is a need for specialism in employment representation and Social Services Advice.

Methods of service delivery within the area include home-visits, appointments, drop-in facilities and outreach services (Suffolk / Andersonstown CAB provide outreach services in Finaghy, whilst SBIAWG provides outreach in the Markets, Mornington, Donegal Pass, Toughmonagh and Suffolk). Telephone and a limited email advice service are also provided by some of the delivery organisations. These services do vary quite significantly between the delivery organisations. Although the coalition has access to language line they did acknowledge that this service was very expensive and increased volunteers from ethnic minority communities may go some way to enabling greater advice access for ethnic minority groups.

East Belfast

The East Belfast Advice Partnership is comprised of the East Belfast CAB based at Hollywood Arches Health and Well Being Centre and the East Belfast Independent Advice Centre which is based in Castlereagh Street. East Belfast is defined within an area that runs from the River Lagan going east as far as Dundonald and Ballybeen and from Belfast Lough south to Braniel estate with a population of approximately 81,000.

The area contains some of the most affluent areas in Greater Belfast and yet within the inner East area there are four of the most deprived wards (Ballymacarrett, The Mount, Island and Woodstock) in Belfast and indeed Northern Ireland. This combination of best and worst has resulted in pockets of deprivation that are masked. According to various statistics these four inner East wards display high levels of need including:

- High levels of ill health;
- Higher than average levels of children with disabilities;
- High numbers of lone parents; and
- High benefit dependency and lack of awareness of benefit entitlement.

The combination of these characteristics indicates a strong need for advice services in the East Belfast area. In addition an increase in the ethnic minority population has resulted in an increasing focus on migrant working rights. As translation costs are considered to be too expensive the partnership are reliant on community groups and friends / family of the clients to help with language barrier issues. This situation is far from ideal within the area.

Each of the delivery organisations provide a number of methods through which contact by clients can be made. EBIAC offer a drop-in, telephone and email advice service from their offices in Castlereagh Street, an arterial route ensuring accessibility for residents of inner and outer East Belfast. Outreach services are provided to the residents of Lower Ravenhill, Woodstock, Short Strand and Tullycarnet. A home visit service is also available to those unable to access the service due to a physical or mental health problem, or as a result of caring responsibilities.

The East Belfast CAB operates from one central venue at the Hollywood Arches with multiple outreach venues across the area including Castlereagh, Knockbracken, Island and the HIV support centre. Whilst the traditional methods of advice delivery remain – face to face and telephone – the bureau has also developed e-mail advice. Home visiting has also developed and this ensures that the bureau is able to reach out to clients who are not able to access the services locally due to ill health or disability.

East Belfast receives a total of £103,687 between the two advice providers in the area. Although the number of enquiries between organisations would indicate that CAB should receive twice as much funding an agreement was made between the two organisations to receive funding in a 50:50 split. Table 5.5 provides details of the types and number of enquiries provided within the East Belfast area as indicated on the 2006 – 2007 monitoring returns for each of the delivery organisations in the area.

For indicative purposes the figures for both organisations have been added together to provide an East Belfast wide perspective.

Table 5.5
East Belfast Service Returns 2006-2007

Type of enquiry	Number of Enquiries	% of total enquiries
Benefit	18,814	66.3
Consumer	2,246	7.9
Health	1,650	5.8
Housing	1,132	4.0
Employment	922	3.3
Money / Debt	740	2.6
Appeals / Tribunals	237	0.8
Other	2,821	9.9
Total number of clients	14,883	52.4
Total number of enquiries	28,830	100
Total Benefit 'claw back'	£3,521,811	

Source: Belfast City Council

Two-thirds of enquiries in the East Belfast area relate to benefits. From the information supplied in the monitoring returns the East Belfast area has provided £3,521,811 in client financial gain within the period 2006 – 2007. Taking into consideration the total BCC funding in the period of £103,687, for every pound that BCC puts into the East Belfast Advice Services, the client financial gain is £33.97. This is the highest rate of return across all the consortium areas.

West Belfast

The Parliamentary Constituency of Belfast West encompasses a population of c. 85,028 people according to the NISRA Demography Branch mid year estimates 2005. It is made up of 16 local government wards, 13 of which are in Belfast City Council's remit including Andersonstown, Beechmount, Clonard, Falls, Falls Park, Glencairn, Glencolin, Glen Road, Highfield, Ladybrook, Poleglass, Shankill, Upper Springfield and Whiterock.

West Belfast has seven main partners as detailed in Table 5.1 and operates throughout the West Belfast area but more specifically in areas of high social and economic deprivation that lack social and community cohesion. As discussed earlier only five out of the seven partners receive BCC funding as they did not match the Council's applicant assessment standards.

Funding Allocation in West Belfast 2006-2007

In 2006-2007 West Belfast received the highest allocation of funding across Belfast. As indicated earlier the allocation of funding was according to a population-weighted measure indicating that West Belfast was in considerable need of advice provision.

Table 5.6 provides details of the funding split across the area by delivery organisation.

Table 5.6
West Belfast Advice Partnership Funding 2006-2007

Organisation	Percentage of area enquiries	Amount of Total Funding
NDA	31.2	£62,200
Springfield CA	35	£69,776
Falls Community Council	5.2	£10,367
Corpus Christie Services	4.8	£9,569
West Belfast and Shankill CAB	21	£41,865
Totals	100	£199,360

Source: Belfast City Council

The allocation of funding in West Belfast per organisation is determined by the number of enquiries that each organisation received according to the application submitted to council in 2006. As such, Springfield CA who received 35 per cent of the enquiries also received the highest allocation of funding in the area.

Table 5.7 provides details of the types and number of enquiries provided within the West Belfast area as indicated on the 2006 – 2007 monitoring returns for each of the delivery organisations in the area. For indicative purposes the details for each organisation have been added together to give a West Belfast wide perspective.

Table 5.7
Combined West Belfast Service Returns 2006-2007

Type of enquiry	Number of Enquiry	% of total enquiries
Benefits	18,737	59.7
Housing	3,705	11.8
Employment	2,672	8.5
Consumer	1,581	5.0
Health	1,389	4.4
Debt / Money	1,100	3.5
Appeals / Tribunals	400	1.3
Other	1,650	5.3
Total Clients	16,717	53.2
Total Enquiries	31,404	100.00
Total Benefit 'claw back'	3,445,968	

Source: Belfast City Council

* An additional 1,100 enquiries were received by telephone through Greater Turf Lodge Residents Association which were not broken down by type of enquiry

In West Belfast, the majority of enquiries in the area relate to benefits equating to 59.7 per cent of the total enquiries. Significantly, the number of housing related enquiries is also substantial indicating the degree of housing need in the area.

From the information supplied in the monitoring returns the West Belfast area has provided £3,445,968 in client financial gain within the period 2006 – 2007. Taking into consideration the total BCC funding in the period of £199,360, for every pound that BCC puts into the West Belfast Advice Services, the client financial gain is £17.29.

The providers in West Belfast highlighted changing characteristics in advice provision. They noted that the average time spent with each enquiry was rising. They perceived this change to be driven by increasingly complex legislation, especially regarding benefits alongside other factors such as literacy and language problems particularly with ethnic minorities, the increase of migrant workers and the location of Traveller community members within West Belfast.

Central Belfast

Central provision of advice services is split between Central Belfast CAB and the Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre.

Historically the need for a neutral venue for advice provision has meant that city-centre providers tend to receive enquiries from all over the city. The close proximity to bus, train and rail networks as well as the city centre location means that it is ideally suited for people seeking advice throughout the BCC area. In 2006-2007 Central Belfast received 20,494 enquiries and had contact with 9,723 people. There are eight volunteers working within the central Belfast CAB service equating to approximately 3,200 hours of advice provision per year.

The key areas of need in Central Belfast are reflected in the types of enquiries received. Historically these tend to be focussed around the following areas:

1. Consumer Advice;
2. Benefits;
3. Housing; and
4. Employment Issues.

In recent times the increase in ethnic minorities moving into the city has resulted in an increase in immigration advice enquiries. This has resulted in language difficulties and has pressurised resources as enquiries of this nature can be time consuming. The central Belfast CAB offices also get a number of referrals from the Chinese Welfare Association. In terms of service delivery in the area advice provision is offered through drop-in, telephone, email, appointment and outreach facilities.

Table 5.8 provides details of the combined Central Belfast advice provision, completed using figures supplied by CAB and BURC on their annual monitoring forms to BCC in 2006 - 2007. For indicative purposes details on both organisations have been added together to give a Central Belfast perspective.

Table 5.8
Combined Central Belfast Service Returns 2006-2007

Type of enquiry	Number of Enquiries	% of total enquiries
Money / Debt	10,926	53.31
Benefit	4,472	21.82
Employment	1,580	7.71
Consumer	1,231	6.01
Housing	929	4.53
Health	866	4.23
Appeals / Tribunals	984	4.8
Other	2,670	13.03
Total number of clients	9,723	47.44
Total number of enquiries	20,494	100
Total Benefit 'claw back'	£131,297	

Source: Belfast City Council

The pattern of enquiries is quite different from other areas. Money / Debt issues are the main type of enquiry received in Central Belfast at 53.3 per cent. This may reflect the additional anonymity a central advice provider could be perceived to offer to such clients. Only one in five enquiries (21.8 per cent) are benefit related a much smaller proportion than the other areas.

In addition, from the information supplied in the monitoring returns the Central Belfast CAB has provided £131,297 in client financial gain within the period 2006 – 2007. Taking into consideration the total BCC funding in 2006-2007 for Central Belfast of £45,741, for every pound that BCC puts into the Central Belfast, the client financial

gain is £2.87.⁹ The lower proportion is somewhat expected due to the lower proportion of benefit related enquiries.

City-wide Summary Analysis

In this section we present a 'snapshot' of advice delivery across the city in 2006-2007 using enquiry details provided by advice providers on monitoring returns in that funding period. Table 5.9 sets out details of the type of enquiry and the percentage of enquiries in each area as a proportion of the city totals. As is noted at the beginning of this section caution must be used in the interpretation of these figures, providers do not record information in the same way and therefore these figures are for indicative purposes only.

Table 5.9
Percentage City-Wide Statistics 2006-2007

Type of Enquiry	% enquiries across Belfast				
	North Belfast %	West Belfast %	South Belfast %	Central Belfast %	East Belfast %
Benefits	39	25	5	6	25
Consumer	35	19	4	15	27
Health	27	26	2	16	30
Employment	22	39	3	23	13
Housing	29	42	6	11	13
Debt / Money	7	7	7	74	5
Other	0	21	9	34	36
Appeals / Tribunals	9	22	3	53	13
Total Clients	29	26	6	15	23
Total Enquiries	31	25	5	16	23
Total Funding	27	32	14	10	17
Benefit Clawback	20	34	9	1	35

Source: Belfast City Council

Key points to note:

- In terms of benefit enquiries North Belfast receives the highest number of enquiries across the city with 39 per cent of all benefit enquiries in the City in that area. North Belfast also receives the highest enquiries in relation to consumer related enquiries;
- West Belfast receives the most housing related enquiries, with 42 per cent of all enquiries across the City received in this area (likely linked to housing demand issues in the area). West Belfast also receives the most employment related enquiries;
- In East Belfast the number of Health related enquiries is significantly higher at 30.3 per cent than across the City, although the location of the East Belfast CAB within the Arches health centre will significantly impact on the number of enquiries in this area;

⁹ These figures relate to funding and enquiries for Central Belfast CAB independently of BURC in the area and are for indicative purposes only. Currently, BURC has no means through which to monitor client benefit entitlement and therefore for comparative purposes across the city we have calculated leverage in the Central area using Central Belfast CAB figures independently.

- 74 per cent of all money / debt related advice is provided in Central Belfast, indicating that people may prefer to travel into a more neutral / anonymous area in order to receive money / debt advice;
- Central Belfast undertakes the most appeals / tribunal enquiries with more than half (54 per cent) of all Belfast enquiries in the central area – this is significant as appeals / tribunal work tends to be more resource intensive. Additionally, this may indicate that significant numbers of appeal / tribunal work is referred from other providers or that clients prefer the anonymous nature of city-centre provision.

Funding is allocated according to population and deprivation (with the exception of the central area). The number of enquiries compared to funding can be used as an approximate indicator for how appropriate this is. The points below highlight that the formula appears broadly validated on the basis of enquiry numbers, with South Belfast showing the greatest deviation from this.

- In **North Belfast** the number of enquiries dealt with is higher (at 31 per cent) than the actual funding allocation of 27 per cent;
- In **East Belfast** the number of enquiries dealt with is significantly higher (at 23 per cent) than the actual funding allocation of 17 per cent;
- In **West Belfast** the number of enquiries dealt with is lower (at 25 per cent) than the actual funding allocation of 32 per cent;
- In **Central Belfast** the number of enquiries dealt with is higher (at 16 per cent) than the actual funding allocation of 10 per cent; and
- In **South Belfast** the number of enquiries dealt with is significantly lower at 5 per cent than the allocation of funding of 14 per cent.

5.5 Service Recipient feedback

As part of the evaluation work stream consortia / delivery organisations were asked to provide recent client feedback in relations to services requested / provided. It is not an essential requirement for delivery organisations to obtain customer feedback and therefore some of the organisations do not have this data available. In this case, consortia were asked to provide details of a number of clients from each of the areas who were contacted by phone and asked to comment on the service they had received from the organisation and the quality of advice provision.

East Belfast CAB provided summary details of a recent client satisfaction survey, which had been carried out over a ten day period with personal callers calling into the bureau. EBIAC provided ten samples of two separate comment forms completed by clients after receiving advice provision in the centre, in addition EBIAC provided contact details for six clients who were contacted by telephone. SBIAWG, also provided details of ten clients who were contacted by telephone.

We recognise this is not a statistically significant result from which we can make definitive recommendations; however, it does provide us with an indication of client satisfaction.

Use of the Advice Services

A range of services had been accessed by the various service recipients, with advice sought ranging from general money advice to more specific benefit related enquiries and enquiries relating to employment law issues following work disputes. The majority of clients found out about the advice services offered through family and friends who had previously accessed the service, indicating previous clients had a positive experience with the services offered and were happy to signpost relatives / friends to use it. Other methods by which clients had found out about the services

included, through social workers, public services and local community groups indicating that the service is relatively well advertised locally among other agencies.

Level of satisfaction with respect to the relevance of the advice available

The overall feedback received from clients, both through surveys and telephone feedback, around the relevance of the support available was very positive with the majority stating that they were very satisfied with the relevance of the advice provided. None of the clients stated that they were dissatisfied.

In all cases clients stated that their knowledge prior to receiving the advice was very limited indicating that after the advice service they were now better informed. In addition the majority of clients indicated that they were better off as a result of the advice either directly through increased benefits or indirectly through a reduction in debt issues.

Positive client comments include:

"I found the advice and information very helpful and would not have known about the options available to me without this centre"

"The advice was straightforward and easy to understand, not like other places that confuse you with long words and nonsense"

"I would be very happy to call back for future advice and will certainly be recommending the services for others"

Benefits of Support

Clients were asked through the telephone calls to comment on their satisfaction with the benefits that have resulted from the advice support as well as the specific benefits received. All of the respondents indicated that they were very satisfied with benefits accrued, most of those consulted had received financial 'claw back' in terms of benefits that they were either unable to claim before or unaware of, whilst others were just happy to know that someone was available for them to speak to if required. Sample responses from clients include:

"I'm much better off knowing that someone is available to help me understand the benefit forms and what I am entitled to"

"Financially I am better off as my debts are now manageable and I can see light at the end of the tunnel"

Additional Comments

The majority of respondents indicated that if the local advice centre was not there they would be unaware of alternative local sources to seek this kind of advice. All clients also indicated that, if needed, they were very likely to seek support from the advice centres in the future, illustrating satisfaction with the services provided.

Finally, service recipients were asked to indicate if they felt there were any gaps in provision or if there was anything else that the organisations could have provided. Overall the comments received were very positive, however, some people suggested that additional childcare provision would be helpful, whilst one client indicated that a translation service would have been very useful.

Summary of Service Recipient Findings

To summarise, the results of the survey highlighted a number of important findings;

- overall in terms of promotion, previous service recipients play a key role in the promotion of the advice services;

- with regard to the relevance and quality of the advice services, clients indicated that they were generally very satisfied with provision;
- the benefits received as a result of support range across a number of financial and non-financial means; and
- without the service offered many of the clients would not have known where else to seek help.

5.6 Evaluating Impact

Although Belfast City Council themselves do not formally evaluate impact, individual delivery organisations are required to outline the additional benefit entitlement that clients have claimed back on their yearly monitoring returns, full details of this impact across the city can be found in section 5.4.

From our analysis of the monitoring information it is clear that considerable return is generated across the city in terms of 'claw back' claimed by clients following advice provision. Last year for instance the network of advice providers across the city secured around £9.5m benefit 'claw back' – often money that people didn't even know they were eligible for. By implication, the advice services increases the spending power, particularly for those who may suffer or be vulnerable to living in poverty in relatively deprived areas, and has a positive impact on the local economy.

Whilst the claw back indicator is central to current advice provider analysis on impact, it is clear from our analysis that there are many enquiries not related to benefit advice. Other advice provided (e.g. health, housing) can also have an impact helping people become better informed, make better decisions and have a better quality of life.

5.7 Quality assurance

Previous research by Deloitte into support organisations within the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) indicates that there are a range of accredited and non-accredited approaches to quality amongst voluntary and community organisations. Examples include:

- Investors in People (IIP);
- Practical Quality Assurance Systems for Small Organisations (PQASSO);
- ISO 9001;
- Charter Mark;
- Kite Mark; and
- European Foundation Quality Model (EFQM).

In the advice sector efforts have been made by umbrella organisations to develop quality standards for advice and information services. The Advice Services Alliance (ASA) was established in 1980, and is the umbrella organisation for independent advice services in the UK. A key aim for it has been the development of quality standards within the sector.

In Northern Ireland Citizens Advice and Advice NI have taken different routes with regard to quality standards.

The CAB Membership scheme sets out the quality assurance standards to which all bureaux are expected to operate and is fully convergent with the Community Legal

Service General Help Level Quality Mark¹⁰. All bureaux in Northern Ireland have been accredited under this scheme. The quality assurance standards are made up of four sections as follows:

1. Membership agreement – highlighting service standards and how they will be monitored and how things will be put right in the event of failure;
2. Core advice services and social policy – defining the standards to which all bureaux must operate in delivering advice services to clients;
3. Quality of Advice – sets the standard for monitoring the quality of advice delivered to clients by bureaux; and
4. Organisational quality – details the quality standards and the requirements to which bureaux should operate in order to function as effective, efficient and economic organisations.

Advice NI secured funding from DSD under Building Sustainable Prosperity Measure 3.2 to take forward the issue of quality assurance. Following research of Quality Standards compatible with the advice networks, Advice NI selected Investors in People as the standard on which to form the basis of the Advice NI Quality Management System. The criteria for a suitable standard were based upon the following:

- A recognised standard able to raise the profile of Advice NI and the independent advice sector;
- A standard to support development of a quality assurance framework enabling members to engage in quality initiatives;
- A standard encouraging system and people development;
- A standard with an integrated quality approach that will reduce duplication;
- A standard that is linked to The Quality Mark or requirements of The Legal Services Commission; and
- A cost effective standard in terms of resource requirements and accreditation fees.

Delivery Organisation Approach to Quality Assurance

As an essential requirement within the application for funding, applicants were asked to indicate whether the level of provision provided by the consortia / coalition or individual organisation was to ASA standard, whether that be Advice NI or CAB.

¹⁰ The Quality Mark is a quality standard for information, advice and specialist legal services used by the legal services commission in England and Wales. The standards which make up the Quality Mark are designed to ensure that a service is well run, and has its own quality control mechanisms that monitor the quality of the information, advice or other help provided.

There are five different levels within the Quality Mark – Self-help Information, Assisted Information, General Help, General Help with Casework, and Specialist Help. Standards for Self-help Information are basic, with organisations needing to ensure that information is up to date, that it is meeting client needs, and that the Quality Mark logo is displayed on their premises. At the other end of the spectrum, at Specialist Help level, there are minimum requirements for supervisors, for independent review of the legal advice and services provided, and for case management, as well as management standards relating to the running of the organisation.

In addition many of the organisations are members of other organisations providing access to their training and information resources. For instance in South Belfast, all members of the coalition are members of the Law Centre and the Housing Rights Service. BURC in central Belfast are actively involved on the management committees of Law Centre NI and have also embarked on the Investors in People award. The EBAIC in East Belfast are members of the Law Centre NI, Housing Rights Service, Disability Action and Child Poverty Action Group. Membership and Active participation all enable these organisations to ensure their service is accurate, up to date and of a high quality.

In South Belfast the SBIAWG has developed a 'Fit for Purpose' framework for service delivery and have employed a consultant to explore systems in relation to quality and delivery – the CAB are not involved in this framework. The purpose of the baseline quality framework is to bring all organisations involved in the SBIAWG up to an equal standard. Although there are no formal meetings between the South Belfast Consortium and other consortia in Belfast, there is an ongoing contact between BCDA and North Belfast Consortium in regards to the sharing of best practice quality standards.

5.8 Partnership Working

The grant application for advice services requires consortia / organisations to outline a statement on how they intend to work, specifically giving details on:

- How they intend to hold member organisations accountable for the quality and quantity of their advice work;
- How cooperative / consortium members intend to work to ensure that advice provision is maximised; and
- Which organisation will act as primary point of contact for the cooperative / consortium and what they are empowered to do on behalf of the consortium?

South Belfast

SBIAWG have a consortium agreement which was drawn up in January 2006. The consortium meets bi-monthly and recognises that by sharing resources and working collectively, they can complement each others' work and reach out to the vulnerable elements of society. The Working Group works to ensure effective and efficient use of services in South Belfast by sharing resources, signposting, referral mechanisms and information exchange. These regular meetings provide an opportunity for communication and dialogue between organisations and to highlight any issues they may be facing. The CAB serving South Belfast however are not within this group and meetings between the South Belfast Coalition as a whole are less regular, tending to only occur when funding requirements are being negotiated.

East Belfast

The Partnership approach in East Belfast has provided an opportunity to find out more about each other and the work that is carried out by each organisation. By working together the partnership believes that they can maximise the impact of advice services for the communities of East Belfast. The Consortium meets bi-monthly and focuses on operational issues and identification of needs and trends. In addition there are regular meetings between the management committee in order to discuss the partnership and planning future partnership work. Since the inception of BCC funding and the requirement for partnership working both organisations within the consortium stated that they have been much more strategic in their approach to advice rather than working in isolation and on a case by case basis.

A partnership agreement between the two organisations is in place with the aim of providing:

- A comprehensive advice service in East Belfast available at different access points and varying levels, which responds to its users more efficiently and effectively;
- A top quality advice service through which the people of east Belfast can access professional advice which supports their decisions and a service which inspires confidence in the delivery of advice, irrespective of the agent;
- Provision of a seamless range of services with no gaps in provision; and
- Best use of resources and effective working relationships in the interests of the wider client base.

The Consortium approach appears to have worked effectively in East Belfast. One organisation noted that:

“It is very important that in looking forward we do not lose the existing expertise / networks” (East Belfast Advice Partnership)

Benefits of the consortium identified include:

- Bridging gaps in advice provision in the area;
- Protocol for referrals – referrals can be made between organisations where there are insufficient resources available to one of the organisations. The amount of referrals are monitored and collated by the partnership;
- Joint promotional material resulting in reduced economic costs; and
- Information shared on funding applications.

North Belfast

A key driver in the development of partnership working in North Belfast situation was the Dunlop Report. This report considered the social and community environment in North Belfast and highlighted isolated efforts working on common themes. Working together on these themes was recommended as a way forward with regard to better serving the area and building capacity. A government unit, the North Belfast Community Action Unit, (NBCAU) was developed to help co-ordinate efforts at community capacity building. A primary mechanism was through 13 Community Empowerment Partnerships (CEPs) across North Belfast. It was in this context that the North Belfast Advice Partnership was initiated in 2003. The CAB joined the Partnership in 2005. Therefore the North Belfast Advice Partnership was already up and running when the BCC contract requiring consortium working was put forward.

The Partnership had undertaken joint funding bids, most notably to the NBCAU, which provided funding for two advice co-ordinators, two specialist advisers and two part-time administration posts.

There are approximately 15-17 full-time equivalent staff employed across the Partnership. The Partnership meets regularly and there is substantial informal contact between members. The consortium negotiates the funding allocation annually, agreeing what proportion of the North Belfast funding each partner should receive. The lead partner in terms of contact for BCC is LNBCC. LNBCC has played a key role in maintaining this partnership through some difficult circumstances. LNBCC administers the funding from BCC to the various partners and also collates the activity returns. CAB, whilst working with the Partnership, maintains a separate line of contact with BCC.

The context in North Belfast will change over coming years as the CEP initiative is integrated into DSD's wider Urban Regeneration and Community Development Group. The NBCAU is also expected to take on a reduced form. This will likely remove some level of funding and infrastructural support within the area. As noted

some short term funding from NBCAU is supporting staff within the North Belfast Advice Partnership. Therefore there will likely be challenges with staff funding and potentially the wider community infrastructure of which the Partnership is connected to.

Good practice partnership working was identified within North Belfast. For example:

- The Partnership includes Money Advice expertise and Tribunal Representation service that can be made available to clients across the Partnership. Looking forward the Partnership is seeking to develop a more strategic approach to their skills and expertise base. Identifying what skills and expertise they have amongst their members and using them more strategically across the Partnership.
- The partnership has held residentials and annual reviews to develop thinking on how to act more strategically in North Belfast;
- All partners use the same case recording system (the CAB's CARMA system). This links into equity of service and easier comparison of activity;
- If outreach is unable to take place somewhere in one week, people can be directed to alternative outreach services. Also the annual review includes consideration of where outreach takes place as "*needs can change*";
- Advice workers meet monthly. Expertise and experience is also shared informally as needed by telephone and email;
- Joint training allowing for economies of scale; and
- Consortium is cross-community working across the polarised sectarian geography of North Belfast.

West Belfast

As previously noted advice providers in West Belfast were unable to reach agreement in time for the application to be progressed as a joint approach. Therefore despite BCC's requirement for a Consortium approach, the applications were from separate organisations. Since the BCC contract has come into place the providers have been developing a consortium approach, establishing themselves as the West Belfast Advice Forum. The BCC contract was critical in getting this process started as previously there had been no meaningful networking.

This move towards becoming a consortium is apparent through a number of activities. The organisations now agree what proportion of west Belfast funding each organisation should get (BCC, however, then have to allocate funding directly to each organisation and collect activity returns from each organisation). The organisations meet monthly and have set up working groups to consider fund-raising, policy and terms of reference. The Forum has established a mission statement, statement of values, strategic goals, and a balanced scorecard addressing customer service, internal processes, learning and growth and financial issues. The Terms of Reference working group has been set-up to developing a Constitution and Memorandum and Articles to make the Forum a legal entity. They feel this will be advantageous in sourcing funding from a wider range of sources.

The activity undertaken highlights that the direction of movement is toward a single consortium for the West of the city, Whilst the development of this is still occurring a number of benefits and good practices from partnership working have been identified. These include:

- More strategic planning of provision across West Belfast rather than acting in competition;

- Referral of clients to organisations who have expertise or specialist skills in particular areas; and
- The various organisations act as a support network for one another in formal and informal ways. Notably day to day the relationships in place allow for regular sharing of knowledge and experience.

City-Wide

It was noted in consultations that a Belfast-wide advice forum had been in place but had not been sustained. This brought representatives from across the city. Consultations highlighted support for a city-wide forum. It was suggested that it would be useful for sharing good practice and developing relationships and working practices, for example in boundary areas.

5.9 Relationship with BCC

The relationship between consortia / coalitions / delivery organisations and BCC tends to be predominantly a 'process relationship' in that beyond the application / monitoring returns and delivery of funding there is little contact. Although, as a minimum this is all that is required from the Council, there is potential to develop the relationship for mutual benefit in the future.

We recognise that personnel have changed in the Community and Leisure Services team and that as an ongoing process they are considering how this role fits within the wider Development Department.

During the consultation programme, consortia and delivery organisations were asked to comment on this relationship. The majority of those consulted indicated that this approach from the Council worked well, with the organisations being left to concentrate on delivery of service rather than unnecessary administration / bureaucracy, however, one organisation did state that they were 'unclear as to who had the decision making power in terms of advice funding' and that this would need to be made more transparent in the future delivery of funding in the sector.

5.10 Summary

This section has provided an overview of the management and administration processes in place, providing a number of points to note, including:

- Advice provision within Belfast varies between delivery organisations but generally all areas provide basic information, advice advocacy or representation on a wide range of issues including welfare benefits, housing, consumer, health, education, tribunals and money / debt;
- Partnership working is more advanced in some areas of the city than others;
- There is a variety of methods of evaluating impact and quality standards across the city between consortia and delivery organisations; and
- The relationship between consortia / coalitions / delivery organisations and BCC has been predominantly a 'process relationship' in that beyond the application / monitoring returns and delivery of funding there is little contact.

Forward looking analysis of this information is provided in section 7.

6 Good Practice Comparative Research

6.1 Introduction

The section is structured to provide an overview of the Advice services in Londonderry and Glasgow identifying lessons for potential application within the proposed model and good practice principles for collaborative working.

6.2 Description of Case Studies

6.2.1 The Derry City Council Area

Background

Derry City Council (DCC) is one of the largest of the twenty-six district councils in Northern Ireland, serving a population of approximately 107,000. A large percentage of the Council area is rural in nature with 509 farms registered to addresses in the area in 2004 and a total agricultural labour force at that time of 1044 persons.

The city offers a wide range of attractions for visitors including the historic walls, and the Tower Museum and is an important centre for the arts, accommodating the Millennium Forum, the Nerve Centre, the Playhouse and a diverse range of community arts groups as well as staging numerous events such as the Halloween Festival, the Doire Feis and the Jazz festival.

Despite these strengths, not everyone in the district has shared its success. Disadvantage and exclusion is evidenced by higher than average levels of unemployment, widening income differentials and the polarisation of communities. The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2005 (NIMDM 2005) identifies small area concentrations of multiple deprivations across Northern Ireland. According to the measure DCC has an extent of 46 per cent, meaning that 46 per cent of the DCC population live in the most deprived super output areas in NI. On the same measure BCC has an extent of 48 per cent. Overall, DCC is ranked as the third most deprived Local Government District (LGD) in NI, with Belfast ranked as one (the most deprived LGD in NI).

DCC has four neighbourhood renewal areas for the city including Cityside, Outer West, Outer North and Waterside. BCC has twelve taking in five areas of West Belfast, four in North Belfast, two in South Belfast and one in East Belfast. Although comparing favourably with BCC in terms of deprivation it is clear that DCC faces a number of challenges. These challenges inevitably mean that demand for advice services in the area is substantial.

Delivery of Advice Services

A DCC official explained that up until a few years ago there were up to 16 organisations providing advice across the city. A period of substantial consolidation has been undertaken and now only five organisations are funded by DCC to provide advice services.

The process including a review of current delivery and development of a framework in which advice service delivery was to move forward. The review included discussion with Advice NI, Citizens Advice, Law Centre NI, ASA and local providers. An Advice Service Panel, comprising councillors from across the political spectrum, was also set-up to oversee the process and ensure political approval for decisions made.

Guidance on what was expected from delivery organisations and criteria was provided and an application process was developed in which certain criteria were set. Organisations applied and had to score a certain amount to qualify for funding

support. The funding was subsequently allocated on the basis of a formula based on population, deprivation and centrality. The official said the process was not pain free as some organisations were not subsequently funded. Associated with this the official highlighted the importance of the Advice Service Panel to ensure political support throughout the process and to ensure that decisions were taken collectively.

With regard to convergence of quality standards, all organisations signed up to a code of service which was developed in consultation with ASA and agreed by the Advice Service Panel. Meeting this code was part of the application process. The new approach required funded organisations to use the same recording system (the CAB CARMA system). Use of a consistent case recording system was considered essential for monitoring and evaluation. The number of enquiries and claw back are monitored. Notably DCC highlighted that if organisations delivered below a certain number of enquiries they would be challenged on this and it could potentially affect their funding. DSD confirmed that no additional funding was provided from the regional block for this period of transition and consolidation.

The five organisations that DCC currently funds are:

- Londonderry CAB;
- Neighbourhood Assist / Dove House;
- Galliagh Integrated Advice Services;
- Rosemount and District Welfare Rights Group; and
- Carnhill Resource Centre.

Details on funding received by each of these organisations across the city can be found in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1

Allocation of advice services funding across DCC 2005-2006

Organisation	DCC electoral area	Allocation of Funding (%)
Londonderry CAB (total funding = £88,781.84)	Cityside North	13.11
	Cityside South	34.09
	Waterside	40.72
	Rural	37.09
	Central & Level 2	100.00
Dove House Community Trust (total funding = £32,902.78)	Cityside North	18.72
	Cityside South	51.24
	Waterside	16.97
	Rural	14.61
Galliagh Integrated Advice Services (total funding = £12,631.57)	Cityside North	25.17
	Cityside South	3.46
	Waterside	10.54
	Rural	12.53
Rosemount and District Welfare Rights Group (total funding = £3,243.10)	Cityside North	0.95
	Cityside South	6.06
	Waterside	15.89
	Rural	17.88
Carnhill Resource Centre (total funding = £19,940.71)	Cityside North	42.05
	Cityside South	5.16
	Waterside	15.89
	Rural	17.88

Source: Derry City Council

(N.B: Level 2 = Specialist Advice – including the provision of support to other Generalist providers)

Londonderry CAB received the highest allocation of funding in 2005-2006 at £88,781.84 and is also the only provider of advice in the Central area of DCC. Londonderry CAB also receives the highest allocation of funding in the Waterside and Rural electoral areas. The highest allocation of funding in the Cityside North electoral area is Carnhill Resource centre, with 42 per cent of the total allocation in that area.

In terms of Cityside South, Dove House Community Trust receives the highest allocation of funding at 51 per cent.

In recent years, Londonderry CAB has taken the decision to merge with two other local advice organisations – Waterside Churches Advice Centre and Derry Community Social Services. These mergers were thought to be the first in NI between advice organisations. A review of activity highlighted that the mergers have resulted in:

- Sharing of resources between organisations;
- Improved services for local people; and
- Increased demand for services.

This also represented a consolidation in advice providers across the city.

Key Messages

- There has been a reduction in the number of advice providers within the city;
- A cross-party Advice Service Panel has provided political support throughout the process;
- The funded providers have been required to use the same case recording system and to sign-up to a standard quality code;
- Enquiry numbers are monitored and if service delivery drops the Council include the right to challenge the organisation and the potential to reduce funding;
- The five funded providers work across various parts of the city. It is not divided into five geographical sectors;
- Londonderry CAB has consolidated its position through its central geographical position and through merger activity;
- RPA will have a significant impact on the advice services in DCC with the new Council area for the region consisting of DCC and possibly Limavady Borough Council, Magharafelt DC and Strabane DC; and
- DCC has moved from grant aid for advice providers into three year service level agreements with local organisations. This approach is likely to run until the new Council structures come into effect.

6.2.2 The Glasgow City Council Area

Background

Within the Glasgow City Council (GCC) area the development of welfare rights provision, social welfare law, and money advice services has occurred at different stages and through different routes. Although the generic nature of the CAB have been in existence in Glasgow since 1940, the late 1970's and 1980's saw the burgeoning of money and legal advice provision in the city, developing organically in deprived communities where the services were needed most. The result was the emergence of a fragmented and variable picture of provision across the city.

In 2002 and in light of this patchy provision GCC commissioned external consultants to review advice services assessing the existing provision across the city and considering options for future delivery. Overall, the review recommended that GCC, in conjunction with key partners, put in place the infrastructure to enable the development of a strategic system for delivering high quality money and legal advice services.

Following the review a city-wide Strategic Planning Group (SPG) was set up consisting of all the main advice funders across the city, including GCC, Scottish Enterprise Council, the Legal Aid Board and Glasgow Alliance as well as representatives from CABx, Money Advice Agencies and Law Centres. A GCC official explained that the setting up of this group has been instrumental in driving the strategy for co-ordinated advice provision forward.

Co-ordination

Initially, in addition to the city-wide SPG, nine Area Implementation Groups (AIG's) were set up with the aim of bringing all agencies within each area together on a regular basis, to assess supply and demand in their area, to look at gaps in provision and to plan how demand is to be met and gaps filled. These nine AIGs were based on the Council's social work boundaries. These have since been consolidated to five in line with the GCC wide community planning initiatives as follows:

- North Glasgow AIG;
- South West Glasgow AIG;
- West Glasgow AIG;
- East Glasgow AIG; and
- South East Glasgow AIG.

The city centre is included geographically within West Glasgow AIG. In addition to these five geographical areas a city-wide co-ordinating AIG was also established for operational and planning purposes. It is made up of representatives from the lead organisations in each area. Operationally it offers some city-wide service delivery in particular more time-consuming tribunal work. Planning wise the city-wide AIG has the aim of delivering referral protocols, quality issues, management systems, staff training and monitoring procedures. It has the authority to do this planning role as it is made up of lead organisations from each area.

The city-wide AIG links up with one representative from each of the organisations represented on the city-wide SPG and comes together under the guise of Glasgow's Advice and Information Network (GAIN). This acts a brand for the advice service across the city.

Delivery of Advice Services

Within the GAIN brand there are currently 27 money and legal advice and information agencies operating in the voluntary and community sector across the GCC area including CABx, Law Centres, Law and Money Centres and Independent Money Advice Centres. A GCC official explained that although significant, this number of advice providers across the city has been relatively consistent and is unlikely to be consolidated in the near future. These advice providers are all involved in their individual area's AIG and are funded through the AIG's lead organisation.

GCC have a small team within Council dedicated to administering advice service provision. GCC has invested around £2.7 million in the last year to support money and legal advice services in the statutory and voluntary sector. This investment generates returns of approximately £25 million annually directly to individual citizens, by way of benefits and other income claimed, increased, or safeguarded. The current provision of advice and information in Glasgow is wide ranging in terms of its content and context, for example in the type of advice and information provided, the specific issues it aims to tackle (drugs misuse, debt, homelessness etc) and how and where it is delivered.

Details on funding received by each of the AIGs as well as the city-wide AIG can be found in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2

Allocation of advice services funding across GCC 2007-2008

Area Group	Amount funding (£)	Allocation of Funding (%)
North AIG	311,031	11.32
South West AIG	399,012	14.53
West AIG	445,177	16.21
Citywide AIG	659,015	23.99
East AIG	667,908	24.31
South East AIG	264,773	9.64
Total	2,746,916	100.00

Source: Glasgow City Council

A GCC official explained that debt advice, benefits maximisation, income maximisation and negotiating with creditors tend to be the most sought after advice services across the city. To a lesser degree but still of great importance are benefit appeals and individual advocacy which also take up a significant amount of the enquiries in the area. Legal advice is also offered by a smaller number of the organisations but due to the “specialist nature” of this type of advice it tends to be to a lesser degree.

It was recognised during the 2002 review that interpreting and analysing the accuracy of data supplied was a significant issue within the sector. For example, the definition of a client, an enquiry or a case varied from organisation to organisation, as did the methods they use to record the services they provide. In an effort to co-ordinate this GCC paid for and distributed a case management system across all advice providers in the city and provided training in order to promote commonality. This included payment for IT equipment where necessary.

A GCC official commented that this consistent approach to enquiries has made a significant difference to their management of advice services across the city. GCC now have access to the system and therefore can monitor the inputted data centrally. The official noted that this system and the monitoring and evaluation processes are still being embedded (notably this has taken several years since the review). As management information data is built up and analysed GCC will become able to set meaningful targets for providers.

It was noted that the change of system did encounter initial friction. In order to manage this as well as providing financial support to assist transition, GCC have stated that organisations, whilst having to use the new system, could retain their existing system and operate it in parallel.

Key Messages

- Area based collaborative working has been developed;
- As well as the various area groups:
 - there is citywide planning with regard to referral protocols, quality issues, management systems, staff training and monitoring procedures; and
 - there is citywide delivery of time-consuming tribunal work.
- There has been an effort to calculate the financial benefit to the city overall;

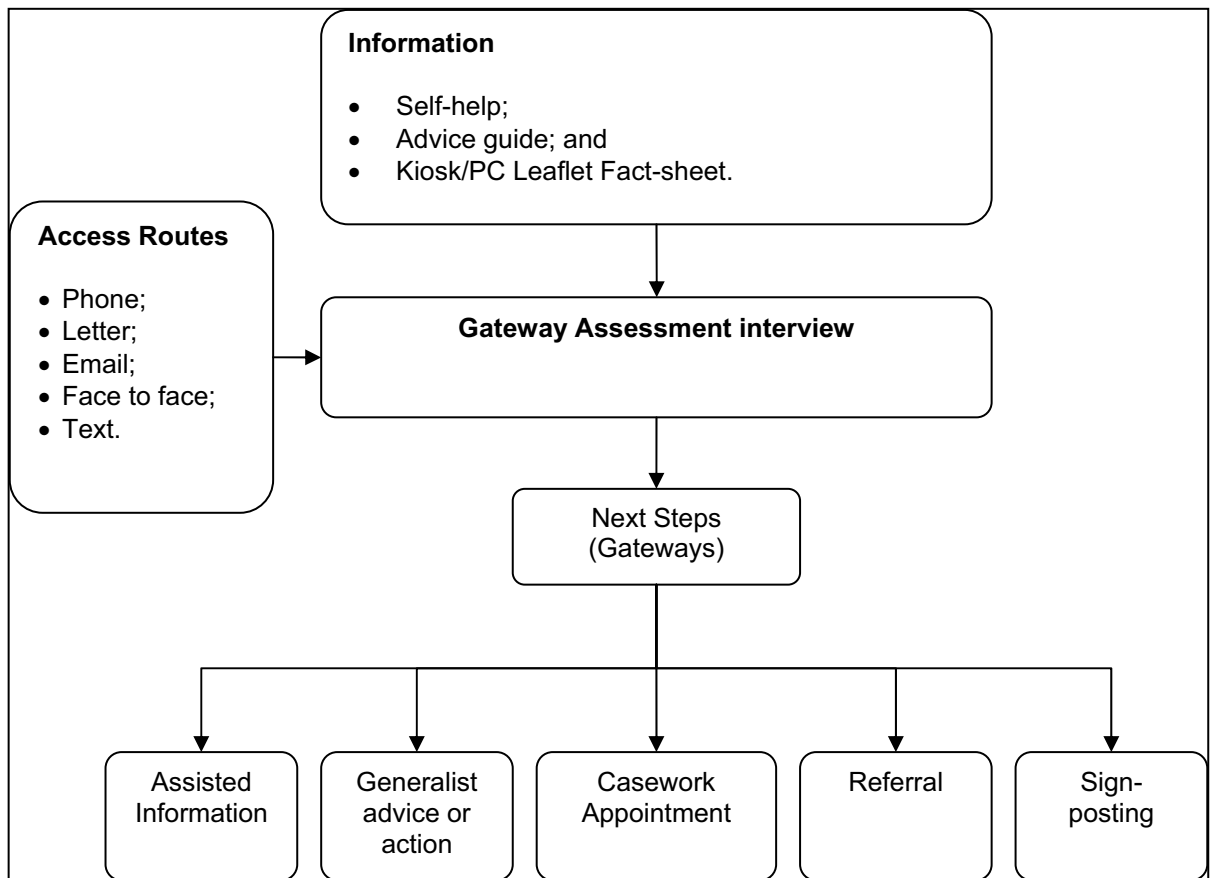
- GCC has implemented a case management system across all advice providers and provided funding for implementation and training to ensure it is used consistently;
- As management information data is built up and analysed GCC will become able to set meaningful targets for providers;
- The implementation of the uniform system has taken several years; and
- GCC have a small team dedicated to overseeing implementation and delivery of advice provision.

6.3 The Gateway Assessment Approach to Service Delivery

During 2006 – 2007 a number of CAB offices in England piloted a ‘gateway’ assessment approach to service delivery. The approach provides a number of clearly defined and integrated routes into the CAB service and, regardless of the route used, allows service users to access information, advice or casework services quickly, efficiently and at an appropriate level.

At the heart of the approach is a gateway assessment interview used to identify the next step that needs to be taken as illustrated in Figure 6.1. This assessment interview is critical to the effectiveness of the process.

Figure 6.1
The Gateway Assessment Approach to Service Delivery



Source: Citizen's Advice

Each 'gateway' provides clients with access to the level of information and advice that is appropriate to them. For instance, those who can help themselves are provided with the resources required to do so, those who need preliminary advice receive it and those who need more detailed advice and / or work carried out on their behalf (casework / tribunal etc) also have this facility available to them.

The approach acknowledges that there are other agencies which are better equipped to deal with particular problems or groups of people and therefore in a number of cases clients will be signposted to the appropriate organisation for advice.

6.4 Good Practice – Partnership Working

Previous Research by Deloitte has found that certain criteria and conditions are required to ensure the effectiveness of partnership working. This is important in the context of a hub and satellite model that could be delivered by more than one organisation. The research suggested that the factors shown in Table 6.1 should be in place from the outset.

Table 6.1

Facilitating factors for implementation of effective partnership working

Facilitator	Explanation
Partnerships should complement and not displace other efforts	Clarity with regard to geographic remit both overall and also in targeting services within areas.
Early identification of goals	So that the partnership can work towards clearly defined, mutually valued, shared goals
Put in place mechanisms by which the partnership can measure progress	So that progress can be measured against the set goals and initiate remedial action when necessary to put the effort back on track. Consistency in case recording processes and systems.
Strong leadership	This recognises the complexities of group working, builds up motivation and trust and resolves conflict as it arises
Sufficient and appropriate resources	Needs to be available from partnership initiation, including skills, guidance and advice

Source: Deloitte

As the partnership develops, Table 6.2 describes facilitators that are considered particularly important.

Table 6.2
Facilitating factors important for development of effective partnership working

Facilitator	Explanation
Positive working relationships	Required to develop mutual support and trust and a sense of shared responsibility
Sufficient flexibility	The organisations that make up the partnership need sufficient freedoms and flexibility to contribute effectively to the partnership. In the advice sector this could include staff with expertise moving from location to location as needed.
Time	Building partnerships and achieving change is time-consuming. It is essential that partnerships are realistic about what they can reasonably achieve in the short-term.
Appropriate incentives	In order to reinforce joint working: high degree of fit between the objectives of the partnership and partner organisations
Recognition of the unique contribution of the different partners	This has been found to be important as this challenges the potential for inequalities when partners have differential access to resources. This has particular importance in areas where a local group has networks / relationships in place that others would be unable to replicate.

Source: Deloitte

Research suggests that the factors outlined in Table 6.1 and 6.2 above, if achieved and implemented, will facilitate a successful genesis for new partnerships and help established partnerships develop and achieve their goals.

6.5 Good Practice Identified in Review of Advice Delivery in Belfast

As discussed a 'context of change' in the advice sector sets an agenda for the sector of restructuring to reduce duplication and gaps in service delivery, demonstrating quality standards and value for money, and developing new ways of working via collaboration and strategic alliances.

In Belfast, there is a spectrum of partnership working across the city. As discussed elsewhere some of this is relatively well developed and some is limited. Nevertheless, the nature of the consortium approach in Belfast across the city has resulted in some good practice examples from existing BCC consortia in both general delivery and partnership working. These include:

- Regular liaison between organisations to identify needs / trends and also to plan future partnership working;
- Review outreach services. Ongoing and strategically once a year to assess coverage of an area and to ensure outreach services provided by the various partners are complementing each other;
- Sharing specialist skills and expertise across the forum (formally and informally);
- Protocols for referrals (where there are insufficient resources available for one organisation to meet the needs of a client refer on to another within the area);

- The provision of advice services from a perceived 'neutral' venue in the City Centre results in a service accessible to all;
- Regularly capturing service recipient feedback;
- Use of the same case recording system, allowing for better consistency of management information and helping increase equity of service;
- Strategic choice of location for service provision. The deliberate location of modern advice centres within health and well being centres in South and East Belfast works both as a model that provides synergies in terms of clients using both health and advice services and also through helping develop a modern high quality facility; and
- The production of joint publicity materials resulting in economic efficiencies for all organisations involved.

7 Analysis

7.1 Introduction

This section considers the key issues for BCC as it seeks to re-position advice services in line with Opening Doors, the new regional strategy for advice service provision.

7.2 Moving from Consortium to Hub Approach - Key Issues

The review of current provision of advice services in Belfast considered in light of the Opening Doors strategy raises questions around the following dimensions:

- Should a hub be a single site?
- Should a hub be a single organisation?
- How can equity of service be ensured?
- How could a hub be best piloted in Belfast?
- How many hubs should there be in Belfast?
- Could services be provided by the private sector rather than the voluntary and community sector?
- What is the role for BCC and how can this be best located within the Council's organisational structure?
- How should the transition from the current situation to the desired arrangement be managed?

These key issues cannot be easily considered in isolation from one another as they often have cross-cutting implications.

7.3 Design Principles

In order to best answer the questions posed the following design principles are proposed. These highlight principles aligned to the Opening Doors strategy and to good practice identified within this research including:

- Services that are accessible to all, and targeted at those most in need;
- Services that can be sustained in the long-term;
- Services that can demonstrate value for money;
- Services that can demonstrate appropriate quality of provision; and
- Transparency of service standards driven by consistency of quality assurance, record management and IT systems.

Taking these good practice principles as criteria we can assess current position and the proposed direction of movement through the various questions posed above.

7.4 Overview of Current Position Assessed against Design Principles

- Services that are accessible to all, and targeted at those most in need;

The key drivers used within the regional strategy for targeting need are deprivation, population and accessibility. BCC has allocated funding on the grounds of population and deprivation analysis. The provision of services within the consortium areas of Belfast is subsequently driven by informal local knowledge relating to deprivation, population and accessibility but also practical reasons such as available, affordable premises.

In particular the current delivery structure in Belfast reflects the fact that several of the providers have arisen out of community organisations. As a result there are several small scale organisations largely based around geographical communities. This is particularly the case in North, West and South Belfast. Several providers are based on main arterial routes (e.g. Ormeau, Falls, Shankill and Crumlin Roads) bringing high levels of accessibility. West Belfast providers commented that there may be too strong a concentration of providers on the (mid) Falls Road. Some of the current facilities whilst accessible by public transport are not all that suitable with regard to their own physical access. For example people visiting the Citizens Advice Bureau on Callender Street in Belfast are required to climb a flight of stairs with no option of a lift available. More recently two newly developed Citizens Advice Bureaux premises, in East and South Belfast, are located within health and well-being centres. This has been a deliberate move which provides modern, high quality facilities but also a strategic location where many people in need of advice will be able to access and will be accessing for other reasons. The multi-functioning venue can disguise where people are going and can remove any stigma, real or perceived, attached to going to advice providing locations.

The more flexible side of targeting includes outreach services and home visits offered by providers in Belfast. Outreach often occurs on a regular scheduled basis (e.g. weekly, fortnightly, monthly) in venues such as community centres, health centres, hospitals, church halls. The venues and needs are established through the extensive local networks of many of the providers.

Some consortia noted that outreach is reviewed annually as needs change. Consultees noted that it was hard to predict how many would come along to a particular venue on a particular day. Therefore whilst annual reviews are needed, improved service delivery data could be used to manage how outreach is planned and delivered more efficiently. Our review has highlighted some concerns with outreach on the periphery of West Belfast (Andersonstown and Suffolk CAB, supported by BCC, having to outreach into Lisburn City Council areas of Twinbrook and Poleglass).

A final customer channel that requires comment is telephone. Research undertaken within the sector by Citizens Advice has shown that there is room for substantial improvement with regard to telephony services. One stakeholder organisation noted that an increase in delivery of advice via the telephone should be viewed more positively by the sector as a way of making the service more accessible. It would also have efficiency and cost saving implications.

- Services that can be sustained in the long-term;

The funding provided by BCC alongside DSD funding is central to the delivery of advice services across Belfast. Several of the providers also noted other funding sources (e.g. Big Lottery, Neighbourhood Renewal, North Belfast Community Action Unit, SSA, DETI), whilst several practitioners are also part of larger voluntary or community organisations.

In several instances the current delivery of services, whilst funded primarily by BCC and DSD, is often tied into a complex cocktail of largely short term funding. Whilst the core of the advice service would not likely be affected, it is apparent that these other funding streams often are on the back of the core funding and do add value to the overall service. In this respect some of the surrounding added-value services are likely to be affected by sustainability challenges.

- Services that can demonstrate value for money;

Currently whilst organisations are asked to provide activity returns these are not assessed at local, consortium and city-wide levels to provide a picture of outputs and outcomes and allow understanding of what value for money BCC is getting. Our analysis (see Section 4 and 5) found that advice providers were providing substantial claw back for clients, including some that indicated substantial financial returns. In addition, there are a number of broader quality of life issues, relating to mental health, housing etc that are very difficult to measure but are vital, especially for those who are vulnerable and most in need of advice and support. Service recipient feedback provided evidence of the importance the advice made, not just financially but sometimes in their state of mind which subsequently improved their quality of life.

The returns that are provided are based on different case recording systems which are acknowledged to be similar but not exactly the same, and also can require some subjective interpretation when inputting data. Therefore in order to ensure that value for money based on this indicator is demonstrated accurately there is a need for more consistent management information practice amongst providers.

- Services that can demonstrate appropriate quality of provision;

This research found that only a minority of organisations have formal quality assurance accreditations. Whilst the review found practitioners to be focused and dedicated, and service recipient feedback to be positive, a one-off review is unable to ascertain the quality of the product across all the delivery organisations. Therefore a gap exists, acknowledged by practitioners, in delivering a quality service and being able to demonstrate quality of service through a formal quality accreditation.

- Transparency of service standards driven by consistency of quality assurance, record management and IT systems.

Across the city the current situation is one of organisations moving towards greater partnership working within their sector of the city. CAB has been involved in this to varying degrees and has also been developing a city wide approach. Unfortunately a Belfast wide advice working group involving providers from all areas was not sustained.

The BCC contractual arrangements have encouraged partnership working at a consortium area level. The level of partnership working has developed further in some parts of Belfast than in others. For example North Belfast has a formal partnership which includes all the delivery organisations. With regard to equity of service they use the same case recording system and undertake training together. They do not however share a standard quality assurance accreditation or a unified management and reporting structure. Our view is that whilst North Belfast is a stronger example of partnership working across the five current consortia areas, there is still likely to be several, perhaps minor, variations across its multi-organisation structure. Within areas and across the city the current model is unable to demonstrate equity of service provision.

7.5 Current Providers' Views on Future Structures

The consistent view from practitioners is that:

- There was a feeling that the consortium approach was bedding-in and having positive impacts in delivery;
- There was support for some further consolidation in that central Belfast could be consolidated so there would be four hubs overall. There was support amongst South Belfast partners for taking on central Belfast. South Belfast also appears to offer the most natural links with the city centre;

- From practitioners there was no support for a move to one hub. One strategic stakeholder, however, saw significant potential in moving to one hub;
- The consistent view was that current consortia / coalitions are best placed to become hubs;
- Current delivery structures have networks and relationships in place. Not just with one another but also with community organisations, health providers etc. through whom clients are referred and through whom outreach services are provided. In several cases, the current delivery structures have been in place for a significant period of time and local residents know what services are available and who to go to for advice; and
- In areas where providers are currently not working in close partnership, the view is that barriers to partnership working can be overcome through a facilitated process.

7.6 Future Position - Options

We put forward the essential characteristics before considering various options, starting with the four hub model referred to in the Opening Doors strategy. All would be supported by satellite, outreach and E-Access provision as per the Opening Doors strategy. Following description of the options, there is a discussion of transitional issues and BCC's role before we put forward our overarching finding.

Essential Characteristics of All Models

All models would include the following characteristics:

- *Convergence* regarding quality assurance standards, customer recording systems and IT systems. This could potentially be driven by BCC (e.g. make it a requirement of funding and potentially financially support it) or by efforts within the wider advice sector. The standards and systems should be comparable, allowing BCC to analyse data on a city-wide basis and for data to be transferred if clients seek to access advice from a different provider;
- Improved management data should assist with *targeting* (e.g. either via permanent or part-time satellites or outreach services). For example particular populations of deprivation such as Shankill and Outer West Belfast will likely require full-time satellites. Improved management data should also be used to *develop meaningful targets*;
- Hub structures should be tailored to meet the need in the area served. Therefore in models with more than one hub, *hub structures may differ*. The differences may be appropriate considering need, geography, networks etc;
- The rationale as to whether the hub is a single site or a single organisation is similar. There are pros and cons of both and it will be up to organisations to make their case, one organisation focused on one site would bring clarity with regard to management structure and processes, and the contractual relationship with BCC. The positive of a multiple organisation hub would be breadth and depth of local knowledge, networks and relationships with community groups, service providers and individual clients;
- There needs to be a lead organisation within a hub structure. Where there is more than one organisation within a hub structure, one needs to be identified as the lead organisation. This should be agreed amongst the delivery organisations and this organisation should take responsibility for managing the contract with BCC;

- A single brand should be applied to strengthen the profile of advice delivery throughout the city; and
- Establishment of a city-wide advice forum with representation from each hub and BCC.

Four Hub Model:

A four hub model could deliver benefits with regard to demonstrating value for money, sustainability, quality of provision and equity of service. The realisation of benefits in this model would be dependent on the improvement and convergence of systems within hubs.

The four hubs should be based in North, East, South and West Belfast ideally on main arterial routes (e.g. Antrim, Newtownards, Lisburn and Falls Roads). The city centre should have a fit for purpose building. This will be important in particular for debt counselling (associated with the need for anonymity), but could also house a tribunal service which could be available for customers from across the city. Whilst South Belfast is considered to have the most natural links with the city centre, the four areas should be given the opportunity to put forward their case for taking on the city-centre service.

The challenge for the four hub model would be to ensure that the model actually did represent a step forward with regard to consolidation and a consistently improved service offered by convergence around heightened standards of quality, case recording, branding and management processes.

In the scenario of a four hub model, a city-wide advice forum with representation from each of the hubs should be developed and sustained to ensure all areas would be served agreement of co-ordination issues especially referral protocols and sharing of knowledge in relation to trends and best practice.

Five Hub Model:

A five hub model would be as per the four hub model described above with the exception of the city centre remaining a distinct hub.

The city centre hub could provide generalist services, in particular debt counselling (associated with the need for anonymity), but could also house more complex and time consuming tribunal service which could be available for clients from across the city. Delivery organisations in other hubs could refer clients to this service. One benefit of the convergence of systems is that the city centre hub should have access to the initial information recorded in the other hub for the person being referred and hence they would not have to retell their situation.

Two or Three Hubs:

The current criteria for assessing demand for advice services are deprivation and population. This highlights the greatest need for services to be in North and West Belfast, Deprivation is evident in East and South Belfast but it is restricted to smaller areas. Considering this the hub areas could be reconfigured to merge South and East Belfast and North and West Belfast or alternatively to merge South and East Belfast but to leave North Belfast and West Belfast separate due to their additional scale of need (Table 5.9 shows that South and East combined in 2006-2007 had similar client numbers and enquiries to North Belfast).

As per four and five hub model a city-wide advice forum with representation from the different hubs would be established.

This model would have advantages with regard to economies of scale and through a reduced number of contracts for BCC to administer.

One Hub Model:

A single hub model would be in a strong position to ensure equity of service across the city as it would bring operational consistency through requiring use of one case recording system and one quality assurance standard. Consistency could also be ensured through a single management structure and processes. The single hub could deliver economies of scale for example with regard to training, marketing, branding, banking, telephony provision etc. A single hub and its satellites and services could also be given a single brand to strengthen their profile throughout the city. The economies of scale could allow the release of more funding for front line service delivery functions.

A concern raised regarding a one hub option in our field work was how accessible it would be to end users. Our view is that a central hub supported by appropriate full-time and part-time satellites and outreach services could also target those most in need and provide high levels of accessibility. An improved telephony service within a single hub model could also increase accessibility and service to the client. Face-to-face advice including through outreach and home visits would still play a critical role for those unable or having difficulty in accessing advice over the phone, by internet or in a central position.

We feel that one hub for Belfast would need to be significantly larger than the scale of hub described in the Opening Doors strategy (which suggested an upper limit of eight providers). The hub should be based in the city centre, with easy access for the public, and have permanent satellites across North, East, South and West Belfast ideally on main arterial routes (e.g. Antrim, Newtownards, Lisburn and Falls Roads).

7.7 Transitional Issues

Key issues needing to be addressed in order to move from the current position to the future structure includes the following.

Pilot Phase

- Piloting – Identifying a potential pilot hub and satellite structure in Belfast. Piloting in order to identify key lessons in advance of full implementation. Ideally all areas of Belfast could be put forward for a pilot phase. We recognise that different areas in Belfast are at different stages within their consortium development and face different challenges for example scale of need, sectarian geography and accessibility issues. Therefore if all proposed hubs were piloted, this would allow learning across all variables, whilst also ensuring all areas created forward momentum; and
- Learning the lessons – an evaluation should take place alongside the piloting phase ensuring that lessons from across the pilots are identified, collated and analysed. At the end of the pilot phase, following completion of the review, a service level agreement (SLA) framework should be developed for the preferred hub approach.

Regional Synergies

- There are significant overlaps in issues critical to Belfast that are central to implementation of the regional strategy. In particular these issues include convergence of systems and standards. The ASA has been tasked with developing and getting agreement on agreed standards of training, quality assurance, case recording systems and IT systems. Working groups have recently been set-up to consider these issues. BCC should keep plugged into these developments and seek to realise potential synergies.

Funding

- Funding – BCC currently provides approximately £1.77 per head of population in the City. Looking forward, the Opening Doors Strategy has recommended that council funding should be increased to a minimum of £2 per capita.¹¹ Through an analysis of current funding allocation across the city it is apparent that in order for £2 per capita to be delivered there would need to be an increase of approximately £70,000¹² from BCC. Early indications are that the funding available from DSD through the Community Support Programme has not been affected by the Comprehensive Spending Review. The budget for next year is still in draft status, therefore whilst this is not guaranteed the funding from DSD to BCC is not expected to vary significantly.
- Additional Costs – There will be costs associated with the moving from the current structure and system to the new one. In particular this will include costs for:
 - Areas where facilitation is required between consortia members, we estimate facilitation services cost up to £1500 per day;
 - Additional BCC staff resource (see following section discussing BCC role). We estimate a dedicated staff member during transition (approx £40,000 per annum for 1-2 years). Post-transition the resource requirement should be maintained at 0.5 of a manager level plus part-time administration support (approx £30,000 per annum);
 - Costs relating to implementing consistent case recording and IT systems across all service providers will result in additional costs including training provision and capital requirements. The total cost of implementing the system will depend on a number of factors, for example what system is chosen, how many organisations need new systems and training requirements. One regional system in Northern Ireland cost over £1.5 million to implement. This highlights that implementation costs across Belfast would likely be considerable when considering the current annual funding for advice providers in the city; and
 - (Potential) adaptation of premises or (potential) purchase / rental of new premises. These changes need not necessarily be included within the short term changes but medium-long term needs should be clearly identified.
- Funding for additional costs - As noted it is not likely that any additional funding will be available from DSD's Community Support Programme. It will however be within BCC's control to use the funding it gets from DSD differently for example to meet these costs, or indeed to increase the funding it inputs from rates. In addition we are aware that there are regional initiatives looking at IT systems, training and quality standards. Whilst we are not aware of any guaranteed funding to assist implementation of such results, we are aware that one regional advice organisation currently is bidding for funding through the modernisation fund to investigate upgrading its case recording system.

Tendering

- Agreeing delivery organisations – the Opening Doors Strategy notes that Treasury guidance requires a procurement process open to competition and leading to a conventional trading relationship under contract. It notes that this will not preclude collaborative bids. BCC will be in a position to develop a SLA on the basis of learning from the pilot phase; and

¹¹ Opening Doors, Page 8

¹² Gap if £2 per head was to be delivered = (£0.23*267,212) = £72,147

- Voluntary and/ or private sector – There has been discussion amongst stakeholders as to whether private sector organisations could bid for advice provision contracts. There has been support for this with regard to the potential of private sector practice to drive up efficiency and value for money. The strategy highlights “a continued key role for the voluntary advice sector¹³” and the “best use of the distinctive approach of the voluntary and community sector¹⁴” whilst Council is committed to contracts that develop community capacity. Therefore our view is that whilst strategic aims may be served by partnership bids from private and voluntary sector organisations, wholly private sector bids would sit uneasily with DSD or Council strategic aims.

Political Will

- Political will – the transition to the hub and satellite model will include some degree of consolidation. Whilst the overall aim of the strategy seeks to improve service delivery to those in need overall, the transition will likely include some pain for organisations within the sector who may not have the capacity to deliver or change sufficiently to deliver within the new arena. There will need to be political will within Council to ensure difficult decisions are taken in line with the overall direction. One option may be to have a panel of councillors (cross-city, cross-party) to oversee implementation.

7.8 BCC Role

It is apparent that BCC need to consider what their role is in the transition, implementation and subsequent delivery of advice services. Currently the role is restricted to process issues including assessing applications, getting monitoring returns and allocating funding. Whilst the role is limited to these process functions, the role is disproportionately time consuming and challenging due to the multiple contractual arrangements and relative incoherence of the delivery organisations (e.g. seven separate returns and funding allocations in West Belfast).

We recognise potential options with regard to BCC’s role to include investing in the relationship in order to realise mutual benefits for BCC and advice delivery organisations, or retaining the status quo. A third potential option could be how DSD can play a greater role in administering and monitoring advice delivery in Belfast (e.g. through protocol arrangements). Thinking around this latter option would have to be developed in liaison with DSD.

Overall we feel BCC’s role should align with the Community Support Plan (2007-2010)¹⁵. The draft Plan states the purpose of the unit is to “*To support and energise communities to become stronger and more confident in order to develop an active, inclusive, safe, and welcoming city now and for future generations.*” The plan highlights sustainable communities, knowing needs, building social capital and objectives including quality of life. All these are connected to the local provision of advice services. The alignment between advice services and overall purpose is reflected in advice services receiving the largest proportion of grant administered through the Community Services Unit. The alignment is not however reflected in the staff structure within BCC. As noted above this role has been restricted to process issues and is currently a small part of one person’s role. We suggest that at this important juncture with advice services looking to make strategic changes this capacity within BCC needs to be enhanced.

There are a range of considerations in the scenario of BCC investing more in the relationship. In the short run (1-2 years) through piloting, implementation of new systems and processes and competitive tendering phases we think there will be need

¹³ Opening Doors, Page 11

¹⁴ Opening Doors, Page 11

¹⁵ At time of writing this is still in draft status.

for a dedicated resource from BCC. In the medium term following transition and assuming the improvements in the sector with regard to standards, convergence of case recording systems and consolidation in the sector with regard to delivery structures, it is anticipated that BCC will have to spend less time on process issues. This will give an opportunity for BCC to invest more in the relationship with regard to reviewing outputs and impact, setting and reviewing targets and ultimately to ensure that quality advice services are being provided and are demonstrating value for money, whilst potentially reducing the resource required to undertake this. Therefore, as noted in transitional funding considerations we estimate a dedicated resource for the period of implementation with 0.5 of a manager level in the longer run, post-implementation.

BCC could convene a city-wide advice forum bringing together hub representatives to ensure good practice and strategic issues were addressed at the city-wide level. Additionally as occurred in DCC, BCC could also consider an Advice Service Panel, bringing together Councillors from across the political parties. This could oversee the implementation of the strategy in Belfast. Political will, is likely to be required as the process will probably include some difficult decisions regarding local providers.

There is also an opportunity for BCC to test how providers could gain from using BCC facilities, for example youth centres, community centres and leisure centres for outreach. This could be tested within a pilot and required within contracts.

Within the new strategy and its implementation there are a great many changes going on within the sector regarding convergence of IT systems, training, quality assurance standards. These are regional issues being co-ordinated by ASA and hence whilst there is merit in BCC remaining aware of changes, and participating where appropriate, BCC should seek to realise synergies available from linking into regional efforts and resources. The timeline for convergence has been set in the strategy as 2009.

7.9 Overarching Finding

Whatever model is taken forward it marks a significant opportunity for the sector and for BCC. In particular it must mark a challenging step-up from the current model which is characterised by significant local variation in partnership working and service delivery.

As a minimum the future model of delivery should take on board the characteristics identified as 'essential characteristics':

- Convergence of standards and systems;
- Use of improved management data for target setting and targeting of resources;
- Tailor hub structure to needs of an area – accounting for pros and cons of number of sites and organisations involved;
- There should be an agreed lead organisation;
- Single brand; and
- Representation from each hub on a city-wide advice forum.

With regard to the number of hubs a range of models were put forward. The two given most consideration by delivery agents and stakeholders were a four hub and single hub model.

Taking into account the current delivery structure within Belfast, most importantly the multiple providers and the networks and relationships that they have in place, alongside the consistent view that there should be four hubs rather than one hub and

the transitional issues that need to be managed, we recognise that to step directly to a one hub model from the current position would be a large and difficult step. This is particularly so, in advance of any learning from a pilot phase.

Our view is that whilst moving to one hub, or indeed fewer than four hubs, may be a step too far at this juncture this should be further tested through the consultation phase on proposed hub locations for the regional strategy and considered through lessons learned in the piloting phase.

If a multiple hub option is taken forward the potential for further convergence to Belfast being served by a single hub should continue to be monitored.

8 Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 Introduction

This section includes conclusions and recommendations based on overall analysis of data.

8.2 Review of BCC's Current Advice and Information Grant Service

The Council's current advice and information service was reviewed with regard to its processes, outputs and outcomes in sections 4, 5 and 7. Key conclusions are:

- the Council model of consortium working has helped move a largely organic and un-coordinated delivery of advice services towards a more strategic rationale network of providers. The new strategy however, marks a key opportunity for delivering a further step up in advice services;
- there are over 20 organisations involved in the delivery of advice services in Belfast across the five sectors of Belfast. This includes a Citizens Advice Bureau presence across each of the five areas, North, South, East, West and Central;
- there is a spectrum of partnership working within consortium areas with North and East Belfast having the most developed partnership working arrangements. The partnership in North Belfast before the BCC contract and has benefited from support from the NB Community Action Unit. The Consortium in East Belfast has benefited from good relations between just two providers, which along with Central is the least number of providers across the Consortium areas. West Belfast providers are making concerted efforts to deepen their working relations, including development of a joint constitution. In South a coalition rather than a consortium has remained with a close relationship between independent organisations, but a limited working relationship between this grouping and CAB organisations. The Central area whilst different in nature demonstrates limited evidence of partnership working between CAB and BURC;
- there are substantial difficulties in assessing performance and comparing performance within and across consortia due to number and range of providers involved and subsequent inconsistencies in recording systems and in monitoring and recording practices. The following indicators can be used to assess an overall picture:
 - the benefit claw back compared with amount of grant funding. This has highlighted significant variation between the areas. East Belfast figures suggest significant success in benefit claw back. All sectors report total benefit claw back of more than double the grant funding. This is indicative only as there are issues with consistency of recording systems;
 - the quantity of enquiries dealt with compared to funding allocation. What can already be ascertained is that South and West record a lower number of enquiries relative to funding than North, East and Central; and
 - whilst relatively small in number compared to overall use of the service, the qualitative service recipient interviews we have undertaken have highlighted positive feedback from individuals who have used the services.
- overall therefore we conclude that current delivery of advice services is making a difference to many individuals in need and evidence suggests value for money for

BCC. We also feel, however there are significant opportunities for improvement both within certain areas and across the city as a whole;

- the regional strategy has been using population, deprivation and accessibility as criteria for allocating funding. BCC's grant allocation process has used an analysis of population and deprivation to decide funding allocations across the city. This is reasonable on the assumption that consortia, with local knowledge and networks in place then implement delivery to target need at the local level and ensure they are easily accessed. This has been worked out differently in different areas – for example in East Belfast there are just two providers one in a health and well being centre located on a key arterial route and one in a more inner city location. North Belfast, in contrast, partly due to its complex sectarian geography has a higher number of providers, several of which are aligned to particular communities.
- Therefore criteria for funding sectors of the city should be based on:
 - Proportion of population living in that area of the city;
 - Level of deprivation in that part of the city; and
 - As the central area does not fit with regard to population and deprivation criteria enquiry numbers should be monitored going forward. If there is a substantial difference between proportion of funding (currently 10 per cent) and proportion of enquiries a funding revision for the central service a realignment of funding should be considered.
- The assessment process criteria provided a reasonable cross-section of requirements relating to delivery of advice services. Going forward there is an opportunity to tighten these criteria in order to align with Opening Doors and the future direction of advice services. The timescale for these criteria changes may need to be aligned with regional efforts to converge standards across the sector. The specific criteria that need to be developed are:
 - Evidence of previous experience and performance of delivering advice services, including evidence of delivering value for money and partnership working;
 - detail of proposed hub, satellite and outreach facilities – specifying:
 - how the consortia can deliver the set of skills and expertise to be available in a primary generalist hub as described in Annex 4 of Opening Doors. (Including dedicated money and debt counselling, tribunal and advocacy work);
 - how areas of need within the area will be targeted. This should include specifics on local populations and levels of deprivation and not rely on informal local knowledge or pre-existing infrastructure. It should also detail existing networks and relationships within the area to be served, and how and where outreach will take place;
 - evidence of accessibility:
 - location (e.g. arterial route, on public transport routes);
 - premises (e.g. physical access);
 - opening hours (e.g. weekend, evening); and

- service delivery options (e.g. use of translation services).
- consistency of systems within the area - quality assurance standards, case recording systems, IT systems. What steps need to be taken to move to consistency and how these will be taken and a timeframe for doing so; and
- how BCC funding could leverage in other funding – and how together these contribute to sustainability of core advice services and any supplementary services.

8.3 Recommended Best Practice Changes

The following best practice changes are recommended:

- With regard to targeting beneficiaries:
 - Use consolidation to bring economies of scale to strengthen joint marketing and branding efforts so that potential beneficiaries are more aware of advice provision in an area;
 - Within consortium areas there should be regular liaison between organisations to identify needs / trends and also to plan future partnership working. This should include setting aims and SMART objectives for service delivery in the area;
 - Review of outreach services. This should be done on an ongoing basis and strategically once a year. It should also use data on number of enquiries coming at various outreach locations to best target demand. Reviews should also assess outreach coverage of the overall area;
 - Use of a range of facilities for both main and outreach service provision. The deliberate strategic location of modern advice centres within health and well being centres in South and East Belfast works both as a model that provides synergies in terms of clients using both health and advice services and also through helping develop a modern well designed facility;
 - Development of potential service delivery channels, in particular more focus on telephony including regular review of telephony service provision and usage; and
 - The provision of advice services from a perceived 'neutral' venue in the city centre results in a service accessible to all.
- With regard to improving consortia working:
 - Facilitative processes are needed to develop relationships in south Belfast between independents and CAB activity. West are also seeking help in developing a Constitution for the West Belfast Advice Forum. In general facilitative processes should work towards the essential characteristics identified for hubs, and in particular make clear a single lead organisation for each area;
 - Skills and expertise should be used strategically on an area wide basis. This will require mapping of specialist skills and expertise within structures and working out practices to allow these to be used flexibly within future structures – even if new hub structures include more than one organisation;

- To ensure the client receives a quality of service protocols for referrals within area structures should be developed and implemented. These should activate where there are insufficient resources available for one element of the structure to meet the needs of a client, or if the client could be better served by the practitioner with responsibility for a particular specialism in an area (e.g. housing, disability, lone parents, older people, needs of ethnic minorities); and
- A city-wide forum should help identify and share good practice between consortia and ensure that where necessary and where possible consortia work well together. This forum should include representatives from lead organisations in each hub and BCC.
- With regard to monitoring and evaluation:
 - Convergence with regard to use of the same case recording system, allowing for better consistency of management information;
 - Convergence around training to ensure consistent processes amongst practitioners with regard to use of case recording systems, calculation of claw back etc.
 - Provision of regular quarterly reports in electronic and hard copy format from consortium to BCC. Consortium should analyse data across and within their area¹⁶ to help plan use of their own resources, whilst BCC should analyse data on both a consortium wide area basis and on a city wide basis.
 - Key Performance Indicators should include:
 - Number and type of enquiries;
 - Breakdown of enquiries undertaken face-to-face in the main office, via telephone, outreach and E-Access;
 - Scale of claw back;
 - Service recipient feedback and satisfaction levels;
 - Scale of funding leveraged on the back of the core BCC funding;
 - Staff training undertaken; and
 - Quality standards in place / update on progress to gaining quality standard.
 - The collation and analysis of comparable and consistent data will allow for meaningful target setting with regard to enquiries.

BCC should take the opportunity the regional strategy affords and seek substantial improvements in advice service delivery in Belfast. With this in mind the good practice highlighted should be applied through out the city going forward.

8.4 Recommendations with regard to Role, Regional Strategy and Piloting

BCC Role:

¹⁶ This would require Suffolk and Andersonstown CAB to attribute a certain enquiry level to South and a certain level to West Belfast.

We identified three options – status quo, develop role or investigate DSD undertaking a greater lead in the role.

We suggest that at this important juncture with advice services looking to make strategic changes this capacity within BCC needs to be enhanced.

There are a range of considerations in the scenario of BCC investing more in the relationship. In the short run (1-2 years) through piloting, implementation of new systems and processes and competitive tendering phases we think there will be need for a dedicated resource from BCC. In the medium term following transition and assuming the improvements in the sector with regard to standards, convergence of case recording systems and consolidation in the sector with regard to delivery structures, it is anticipated that BCC will have to spend less time on process issues. This will give an opportunity for BCC to invest more in the relationship with regard to reviewing outputs and impact, setting and reviewing targets and ultimately to ensure that quality advice services are being provided and are demonstrating value for money, whilst potentially reducing the resource required to undertake this. Therefore, as noted in transitional funding considerations we estimate a dedicated resource for the period of implementation with 0.5 of a manager level in the longer run, post-implementation.

BCC could also consider an Advice Service Panel, bringing together Councillors from across the political parties. This could oversee the implementation of the strategy in Belfast, and potentially help to sustain the momentum of the process when difficult decisions are required.

Opening Doors regional strategy:

The Opening Doors regional strategy marks a significant opportunity for the sector and for BCC. It is an opportunity for a challenging step-up from the current model which is characterised by significant local variation in partnership working and service delivery.

As a minimum the future model of delivery should take on board the characteristics identified as ‘essential characteristics’:

- Convergence of standards and systems;
- Use of improved management data for target setting and targeting of resources;
- Tailor hub structure to needs of an area – accounting for pros and cons of number of sites and organisations involved;
- There should be an agreed lead organisation;
- Single brand; and
- Representation from each hub on a city-wide advice forum.

With regard to the number of hubs a range of models were put forward. The two given most consideration by delivery agents and stakeholders were a four hub and single hub model.

Taking into account the current delivery structure within Belfast, most importantly the multiple providers and the networks and relationships that they have in place, alongside the consistent view that there should be four hubs rather than one hub and the transitional issues that need to be managed, we recognise that to step directly to a one hub model from the current position would be a large and difficult step. This is particularly so, in advance of any learning from a pilot phase.

Our view is that whilst moving to one hub, or indeed fewer than four hubs, may be a step too far at this juncture this should be further tested through the consultation

phase on proposed hub locations for the regional strategy and considered through lessons learned in the piloting phase.

If a multiple hub option is taken forward the potential for further convergence should continue to be monitored.

With regard to piloting:

All areas of Belfast should participate in a pilot phase. We recognise that different areas in Belfast are at different stages within their consortium development and face different challenges for example scale of need, sectarian geography and accessibility issues. Therefore if all proposed hubs were piloted, this would allow learning across all variables, whilst also ensuring all areas created forward momentum; and

An evaluation should take place alongside the piloting phase ensuring that lessons from across the pilots are identified, collated and analysed. At the end of the pilot phase, following completion of the review, a service level agreement (SLA) framework should be developed for the preferred hub approach.

8.5 Overview of Recommendations

The table below summarises the recommendations highlighting who has lead responsibility and what the indicative timescale for the recommendation is. The indicative timescale is based upon the time line put forward in Opening Doors (Annex 7). This may be subject to change depending on progress with certain work streams.

Table 8.1
Overview of Recommendations

Recommendation			Responsibility	Indicative Timescale
Best practice changes	Targeting beneficiaries	Joint marketing / branding	Consortia	Within 1 year
		Local monitoring / planning /targeting		
		Review of outreach		
		Strategic premises	DSD / BCC / Consortia	Within 2-3 years
		Development of service delivery channels	DSD / Consortia	Within 2 years
	Improving consortia working	Facilitative work to develop consortia	Consortia	Within 1 year
		Co-ordinating skills		
		Referral protocols		
		Implement city-wide forum	BCC / Consortia	Within 1 year
	Monitoring and evaluation	System Convergence	DSD / regional working groups BCC / Consortia	Within 2 years
		Training convergence		
BCC Role	Implement dedicated staff member for implementation / transitional period and 0.5 of a Manager role for longer term		BCC	Within 1 year
	Develop an Advice Service Panel of Councillors to oversee implementation of strategy in Belfast		BCC	Within 1 year
Regional Strategy & Piloting	Adopt essential characteristics for future model		BCC, Consortia, DSD	Within 2 years
	Move to a four hub model in Belfast		BCC	Within 1-2 years
	Pilot across all four hubs		BCC, Consortia	
	Undertake an evaluation of pilot phase		BCC	
	Develop and implement a service level agreement for preferred hub approach		BCC	Within 2 years

Source: Deloitte

Appendix I

Stakeholder Consultations

Project Steering Group

- Ms. Ann-Marie Campbell, Belfast City Council
- Ms. Karen Anderson-Gillespie, Belfast City Council
- Ms. Catherine Taggart, Belfast City Council
- Mr John Nelson, Belfast City Council
- Ms. Nichola Kennedy, Project Director, Deloitte
- Mr Colin Mounstephen, Project Manager, Deloitte

Stakeholder consultations

- Mr Derek Alcorn, Citizens Advice Bureaux
- Mr Bob Stronge, Advice Northern Ireland
- Ms. Janine Fullerton, Department of Social Development

Focus Groups

- North Belfast Advice Partnership
- West Belfast Advice Partnership
- South Belfast Independent Advice Working Group
- Citizens Advice Belfast
- East Belfast Advice Partnership

Comparative Research

- Derry City Council
- Glasgow City Council

Appendix II
Grant Assessment Information

	Element	Essential	Maximum Score	Threshold Score	Score Awarded	Comments
1.0	Organisation					
1.1	Does the Consortium include all advice providers seeking Council funding	No	5			Points to be awarded according to the extent to which the consortium is representative of the sector in the area in question
1.2	Does the Consortium include independent providers and CABx	No	5			Consortia are preferred but not essential
1.3	Evidence of a 'Well Run Community Organisation as defined by BCC.'	Yes	Yes	Yes		
1.4	Coverage / Geography	Yes	Yes	Yes		Need boundaries of the area to be served
2.0	Submission. This is the actual document submitted in support of any bid for Advice funding and must include the following:					
2.1	Defining the need for advice services in the area served	Yes				This may include statistical information
2.2	Track record of the applicant in advice services provision including current level of services offered	Yes				Evidence of the history of the organisation in respect of generalist advice services provision
2.3	Is there evidence of sufficient resources to deliver the level of services proposed	Yes				Does the application demonstrate that advice need in the area of operation can be met?
2.4	Is there a suitable information recording system	Yes				An indication of compliance from the appropriate regional organisation will be required
2.5	Does the level of provision meet	Yes				Evidence required

	ASA standards					
2.6	Staff / volunteer training	Yes				Have all advice giving staff / volunteers received at least recognised basic training
2.7	Is there a means of obtaining customer feedback	No				Desirable but not essential
2.8	Robustness of submission (aims / objectives / delivery / timescales)	Yes				Clear, realistic and achievable proposals
2.9	Clearly defined outputs / outcome and impact measures	Yes				As above
2.10	Sustainability of the proposal	No				How reliant is the proposal on BCC funding
3.0	Other Criteria					
3.1	Contribution to BCC objectives	Yes	15	9		State relevance to specific objectives / KPIs
3.2	Appropriateness of the community support grant	Yes	10	6		Why BCC is the appropriate funder. What other efforts have been made to attract funding
3.3	Value added and Additionality	Yes	15	9		This should either build on existing work or demonstrate additional benefit to the community
3.4	Leverage	Yes	10	6		Show how council funding has attracted or is expected to attract additional financial support from other sources
	Total. Applicants must achieve an overall minimum score of 60% which is equivalent to 120		200	120		It is not enough to achieve threshold scores in every category. Applicants must also achieve a total score of 120.

Appendix III
Glossary of Abbreviations

DRAFT

Glossary of Abbreviations	
AIG	Area Implementation Group
ASA	Advice Services Alliance
BCC	Belfast City Council
BCF	Ballysillan Community Forum
BLF	Big Lottery Fund
BRO	Belfast Regeneration Office
BURC	Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre
CAB	Citizens Advice Bureaux
CEP	Community Empowerment Partnerships
CRC	Community Relations Council
DCC	Derry City Council
DETI	Department of Enterprise Trade and Industry
DSD	Department of Social Development
EBIAC	East Belfast Independent Advice Centre
EFQM	European Foundation Quality Model
GAIN	Glasgow Advice and Information Network
GCC	Glasgow City Council
GTLRA	Greater Turf Lodge Residents Association
IIP	Investors in People
IT	Information Technology
LCF	Local Community Fund
LGD	Local Government District
LIA	Ligoniel Improvement Association
LNBBCC	Lower North Belfast Community Council
MDM	Multiple Deprivation Measures
NBAP	North Belfast Advice Partnership
NDA	Neighbourhood Development Association
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
PQASSA	Practical Quality Assurance Systems for Small Organisations
RPA	Review of Public Administration
SBIAWG	South Belfast Independent Advice Working Group
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SOA	Super Output Area
SPG	Strategic Planning Group
VCS	Voluntary and Community Sector

**Belfast City Council**

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Support for Sport – Event Funding
Date:	11 November 2009
Reporting Officer:	Shirley McCay/Tim Husbands, Interim Co-Directors of Development
Contact Officer:	Gerry Copeland, City Events Manager, ext 3412

Relevant Background Information

The Support for Sport Scheme has funded clubs and organisations for the past six years. The scheme has four main elements, Development Grants, Large Development Grants, Hospitality funding (all of which are allocated by the Sports Development Unit through the Parks and Leisure Committee) and Events Funding which is allocated by the Events Unit through the Development Committee.

The Support for Sport Scheme (Events Funding) totals £85,000 and is allocated to sports events being organised in Belfast.

Key IssuesSupport for Sport Scheme

A number of Events Funding applications have now been received. These applications refer to events taking place during the period December 2009–March 2010. The applications have been assessed by officers using the assessment criteria agreed by the Development Committee in March 2008 (see Appendix 2). A list of the applications together with summary information and officer recommendations for funding is attached as Appendix 1.

Resource ImplicationsFinancial

The total Support for Sport Scheme (Events Funding) for 2009/2010 is £85,000.

In January 2009 the Development Committee agreed funding of £43,350 for events in 2009/2010 (first instalment) and, in May 2009, agreed funding of £19,880 for additional

events in 2009/2010 (second instalment). In August 2009 the third instalment allocated £4,699.25 leaving a balance of £17,070.65.

The officer recommendations for Events Funding for events in 2009/2010 totals £13,477.

Recommendations

Members are asked to agree the officer recommendations for Events Funding and approve the payments totalling £13,477 as detailed.

Decision Tracking

Officers will monitor funding and evaluate outcomes post-project delivery. These outcomes will be presented to Members as part of the City Events Unit key performance indicators.

Time frame: Post April 2010

Reporting Officer: Tim Husbands

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – Table of Events Funding applications with officer recommendations

Appendix 2 – Agreed Assessment Criteria

Appendix 1

Nov-09							
ORGANISER/EVENT	REF	EVENT DATE	SUMMARY	TOTAL COST	AMOUNT REQUESTED	RECOMMENDATION	REASON
PeacePlayers International - Northern Ireland		12 December 2009	Cross Community Basketball Competition to be held at the Ozone. Event to involve 150 players aged 10-14 years from twinned primary schools and community centres within Belfast.	£4,500	£1,000	Offer support of £972	Score 48
Ulster Karate Council		13 March 2010	Titanic International Open Karate Cup will be held at Queen's PEC and anticipates 200 participants from the Province, Republic of Ireland, Great Britain, Europe and Eastern Europe. The event will be a practice run for the Children's World Championships held in Venice in October 2010 and will form part of the bid for the World Championships to be held in Belfast in 2012.	£10,330		Offer support of £2,505	Score 55.5
Athletics Northern Ireland		6-7 February 2010	This will be the 6th year this event has been held at the Odyssey. It has grown in size over the years, attracting a number of high profile athletes including Olympic and World Champions. In addition, the event includes Youth Championships and Primary School Competitions.	£75,000	£10,000	Offer support of £10,000	Score 72

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Appendix 2

Event

Amount requested

Media Coverage (Weighting 25%)	Score	Description
Live international TV coverage	100	Inc live broadcasting on Sky Sports, Eurosport, international Television channels.
International TV highlights	80	Highlights on the above channels.
Dedicated TV Coverage	70	Half an hour/1 Hour special on local TV
Local TV dedicated show	60	Short Clip on BBC/UTV news. Season Ticket/UTV Life
National Press	50	National Newspaper Coverage
Local Radio	40	BBC Ulster, Cool FM, Citybeat
Local Press	30	Local Newspapers and magazines

Value

Joint Marketing (Weighting 20%)	Score	Description
Level 7	100	Title Sponsor (Belfast in title) and BCC recognised + LEVEL 6
Level 6	80	Logos on clothing (volunteers/athletes+event material e.g.Race Nos) + LEVEL 5
Level 5	60	Use of players prior, during and post event + LEVEL 4
Level 4	50	Prominent Branding at Venue beyond other sponsors + LEVEL 3
Level 3	40	Branding at venue equal to other sponsors, free advert + LEVEL 2
Level 2	30	Logos on Letterheads, Programmes, Posters + LEVEL 1
Level 1	20	Basic PR - Photoshoot stating BCC support

Value

Number of Spectators (Weighting 15%)	Score	Description
10,000+	100	This is the total number of Spectators over the duration of the event!
7500+	90	
5,000+	80	
2500+	70	
1,000+	60	
750+	50	
500+	40	
250+	30	
100+	20	

Value

Economic Benefits (Weighting 10%)	Score	Description
£500,000.00	100	This is only calculated on the event spend (suppliers, services, equipment, venue etc) in Belfast
£200,000.00	80	
£100,000.00	60	
£50,000.00	50	
£25,000.00	40	
£10,000.00	30	
£5,000.00	20	

Value

Total Bednights (Weighting 10%)	Score	Description
2,000	100	The Number of Spectators and Participants who are staying in a Belfast Hotels.
1,000	80	
500	60	
250	40	
100	20	

Value

Event Development (20% includes below)	Score	Description
Event History (5%)	Score	Description
1st Year of Event	100	
2nd Year of Event	80	
3rd Year Of Event	60	
4th Year of Event	40	
Event 5 years or over	20	
Event Sustainability (5%)	Score	Description
41%-50% of event budget from private sector	100	

31%-40% of event budget from private sector	80	
21%-30% of event budget from private sector	60	
11%-20% of event budget from private sector	40	
5%-10% of event budget from private sector	20	
Sports Development (10%)	Score	Description
The sport is one which has a club structure	20	Must be within City Of Belfast
Event organised by a Sports National Gov Body	20	As recognised by Sport NI/BCC or club affiliated to a National Governing Body
The NGB/Club has an active development plan	20	Benefits of event for identified within the plan (a copy of the plan should be provided
There is an opportunity for the young people	10	From Belfast to participate in development activities as part of the event
The sport has a clear competition pathway	10	Opportunities to compete at local, provincial, national and international levels
The event will leave a legacy	10	Providing opportunities for the citizens of Belfast to participate in the sport in the future
Inclusive pricing structure	10	To encourage people to attend
Sports Development Score		Out of 100
Development Value		

Overall Score

% of requested amount available
Recommended amount of support

(80-100 = 100%, 70-79 = 90%, 60- 69 = 80%, 50- 59 = 70%, 40-49 = 60%, no grants awarded for events scoring less than 40)

**Belfast City Council**

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Cycling Tour Series – City Centre Grand Prix Races
Date:	11 November 2009
Reporting Officer:	Shirley McCay/Tim Husbands, Interim Co-Directors of Development
Contact Officer:	Gerry Copeland, City Events Manager, ext 3412

Relevant Background Information

In October 2009 Members requested that details of the UK Cycling 'Tour Series' budget be presented in order for the Committee to assess whether the event should receive funding from BCC. Therefore the purpose of this report is to present Members with details of the event budget and to seek approval for Belfast to become one of sixteen UK and Irish cities to host this international city centre cycling event, which will be organised in conjunction with British Cycling and Cycling Ireland.

Members are reminded that the event, known as the 'Tour Series', is organised by Sweetspot, a UK based sports events company with experience in the management and delivery of events such as the Tour of Britain cycling event and the Tour de France 'Grand Depart' in London 2007. Sweetspot approached BCC's officers in September 2009 in order to ascertain whether Belfast could become a host city in May 2010. The format for the event, which is normally supported by the host city, is free to attend and based normally in the main city centre area – the proposed six lap circuit would be around Donegall Square, City Hall and the main shopping areas of the City centre. The organisers design the course to create a carnival atmosphere, with the event being televised on the ITV network. The races are sixty minutes in duration, with the option to run amateur, youth and fun-based cycling 'races' during the evening.

The proposed 2010 programme would start in Dublin, followed by Belfast, after which the event would move to Scotland – heading to Dundee and Perth. These races would then be followed by a series of events running through England and Wales. All the races would be covered by the ITV network and broadcast to an average television audience of 150,000 for the main event, with a re-run programme generating up to 78,000 viewers. It is estimated that the value of the television broadcast would be in the region of £250,000 to £350,000.

Key IssuesBudgetary Breakdown

Members may recall that the total cost to stage the event would be £85,000. As Members requested, the breakdown of these costs is indicated below and is inclusive of the following:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Event Infrastructure	£15,600
Signage Branding	£ 1,100
Vehicles	£ 1,150
Teams and Fees	£ 9,500
Hotels and Travel	£ 4,300
TV Infrastructure	£11,000
Publicity and Marketing	£13,200
Administration	£ 2,800
Event Mgt Fee	£10,670
Stewarding Costs	£ 7,000
Health and Safety	£ 4,880
Cleansing/Waste	£ 800
<u>Insurance</u>	<u>£ 3,000</u>
TOTAL	£85,000

'Tour Series'

The rationale for staging the 'Tour Series' is to present Belfast as a City capable of hosting major sports events and as a key tourism destination. If successful, the event will indicate that Belfast has the capacity to host an international class event. Key benefits to Belfast would include:

- UK & Irish television exposure via ITV (Sweetspot do not pay or get paid by ITV for this input)
- Economic benefit to the host cities in 2009 is estimated on average at £490,000 for each participating city
- It is also estimated, based on 2009 figures, that an average day time visitor would spend around £34.39 at the event, while an overnight visitor's spend would be an estimated £55.35
- An average event audience of 10,000
- Bringing a high profile international class sports event to the City
- Belfast City Council branding throughout the event
- Potential for positive coverage of Belfast portrayed through a multitude of publications and websites across the UK and Ireland
- Promotion of health and sporting activity that can be linked to Belfast and NI cycling clubs. With potential connections to the City's leisure centres
- Allowing Belfast to be considered for future major cycling events, such as the Tour of Britain and the Tour of Ireland, and, if developed, to bid for the Tour De France's 'Grand Depart' which has been staged previously in England and Ireland.

Resource Implications

The staging of any international sports event requires a high level of support funding. The maximum level of funding required to host a leg of the 'Tour Series' is set at £85,000. If approved, officers would actively pursue other funding opportunities, both commercially and within the public sector, in an effort to stage this event.

Members are asked to note that based on current budgets only £60,000 of this amount is available within the existing Events bidding stream of Department's finances. Therefore, the City Events Unit would seek funding from other sources to make up the additional £25,000. These sources would include DCAL, NITB, DSD, Sport NI and the private sector. Contact has been made with the public sector organisations, but there will be no formal commitment by the public sector funders until full funding applications are submitted. Members should note that the event would not proceed unless the shortfall of £25,000 can be sourced from these and other organisations.

Recommendations

Members are asked to agree, subject to appropriate additional funding being secured, to the staging of the cycling 'Tour Series' in Belfast in May 2010.

Decision Tracking

Further to approval a progress report would be brought to committee to update Members on the bid process with regard to additional funding and resources.

Time frame: January 2010

Reporting Officer: Tim Husbands

Key to Abbreviations

NITB – Northern Ireland Tourist Board
 DCAL – Department of Culture, Arts & Leisure
 DSD – Department of Social Development

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Quarterly update of the Departmental Plan (Q2)
Date:	11 November 2009
Reporting Officer:	Shirley McCay/Tim Husbands Interim Co-Directors of Development
Contact Officer:	Barbary Cooke, Policy and Business Development Manager, ext 3620

Relevant Background Information

The Development Department's Departmental Plan 2009-2010 was approved at Development Committee on the 13 May 2008 with agreement that quarterly update reports would be presented to Committee at later dates. This update is for the second quarter of 2009-2010, the period 1 July to 30 September 2009. Members will be aware that the last quarterly update for quarter 1, 1 April 2009 to 30 June 2009, was approved at Committee on the 16 September 2009.

Key Issues

Service and Unit Managers were asked to provide a list of key achievements in the first quarter of 2009/10 which are presented in this report. The Unit Managers were also asked to provide updates on the status of their Unit's projects and initiatives under each of the strategic aims of the Departmental Plan, providing commentary if necessary. The classifications used to provide updates are outlined below and progress is monitored using the flagging system:

- Complete – the action is complete and targets met;
- On Target – action has begun but is not yet complete;
- Delayed – project is delayed.

The commentary for each has been provided.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the update of Development Department's Plan for the period 1 July – 30 September 2009.

Decision Tracking

There is no decision tracking as the report is for notation only, however a further quarterly report for quarter 3, 1 September to 30 November will be taken to Committee.
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Time line: December 2010

Reporting Officer: Director of Development
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Documents Attached

Appendix 1: Departmental Plan Update

Departmental Plan Update

For the period of **June 2009 – September 2009**, could you please provide an update on the status of your unit's projects/initiatives and events under each of the strategic aims indicating and providing commentary if necessary. The classifications used are as follows:

- **Complete** – the action is complete and targets met;
- **On target** – action has begun but is not yet complete. Please provide new completion date if different from target date and commentary;
- **Delayed** - project is delayed. Please provide commentary.

Theme : Leadership:- Corporate Theme: “Better Leadership – Strong Fair together”

Corporate Objective	Departmental Objective	Key Actions	Lead Officer	Quarterly Update Status Please indicate status of project/initiative or event: • Complete • On target • Delayed	Please provide a more detailed commentary for each project/initiative or event
Established our place shaping role by better use and planning of the cities assets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead and influence the development of the city. • Promote Belfast's position as the capital city and an engine of regional growth • Develop effective partnerships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and review Belfast SOTC process 	Barbary Cook	On target	A two year plan for SOC has been developed and will go to the next Committee
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide quality research and develop evidence base 	Barbary Cook	On target	Research plan for the department being implemented. Flow of capital research is finalised.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and adopt a city 	Barbary Cook	Delayed	Awaiting on

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and enhance Belfast's unique proposition and experience. 	development plan			Belfast Masterplan update and City Investment strategy to progress
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build key relationships with NR partnership boards 	Siobhan Watson	On target	Work is on-going to build relationships with each of the 12 NRP's. Work has now commenced on developing a pilot approach to NR delivery with Lenadoon NR Area.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further implement a Belfast Brand strategy and Marketing Process 	Shirley McCay	On target	Brand manager has been appointed to further implement the Belfast brand
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a council's 'Children and Young People' strategy 	Catherine Taggart	On target	<p>Initial research and evidence gathering complete. Internal audit of services collated and with PBDU for analysis.</p> <p>Additional post agreed to support and co-ordinate the development of a C& Y People Strategy. Post-holder in place Sept 09. Work is</p>

					ongoing.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a Community Development Action Plan in partnership with key stakeholders 	Catherine Taggart	On target	Working to agree a project plan. The plan will go to committee for consideration in the new year.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and extend the Community Support Plan for a one year period to 2011 	Catherine Taggart	On target	DSD have now outlined their requirements for the 1year CSP extension. Draft Plan will be tabled for committee for January 2010.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of a capacity building and practical skills programme to community sector organisations 	Catherine Taggart	On target	2 Capacity Building pilot projects currently live.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop network support within and between communities 	Catherine Taggart	On target	Representation on all NRPs, Community Centre Committees and a range of forums throughout the city
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with relevant stakeholders to ensure the efficient transfer of traveller site responsibilities related to RPA 	Catherine Taggart	On target	<p>The challenge to reverse the transfer of sites under the RPA is progressing</p> <p>The TLO in partnership with LGP / NILGA</p>

					continue to lobby the DSD Minister to secure a positive outcome for BCC and all Councils.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure BCC understands and meets its statutory obligations in relation to Child Protection Policy and Procedure 	Catherine Taggart	On target	Policy reviewed and revised to incorporate best practice improvement and revised legislative requirements.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure DSD grant leverage 	Catherine Taggart	On target	Progress Reports 08/09 completed and Funding of £1,584,286 secured for 2009/10.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure DSD grant leverage under Integrated Development Fund for Renewing the Routes 	Shirley McCay	On target	Revised yearly target of £2million, claimed so far £0.5 million
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-ordinate activity in relation to the engagement in the Regional Development Strategy Fundamental 10 Year Review that provides the context for development of the city within the region. The development of the case for the continued development of the city as the driver for the region within the spatial planning context. 	Shirley McCay	On target	Engagement with DRD working group completed. Formal consultation awaited
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued refinement and 	Shirley McCay	On target	Final publication of plan still

		development of Council position on the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan in relation to the potential adoption and strategic site developments within Belfast and the city region.			awaited (anticipated Spring 2010).
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of policy and responses as the basis for intervention or engagement in strategic sites, private sector development proposals in proposals for the city and Belfast region including Titanic Quarter. 	Shirley McCay	On target	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To co-ordinate responses for the Council on strategic planning and transport policies / issues. The proposed activity to include responses to the review of the Regional Transport Strategy and proposed Planning Policy Statements to be published in 2009/10. 	Shirley McCay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delayed Ongoing 	Publication of DRD strategy delayed due Autumn / Winter 2009/10
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the applicability of the Belfast Masterplan and if appropriate refresh the document to reflect the current economic, social and physical environments within the city. 	Shirley McCay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delayed 	Project now commenced following Council approval of revised budget.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance Belfast Waterfront and re-launch the Ulster Hall as cultural landmarks in the 	Tim Husbands	On target	Work is ongoing to review and monitor

		City			programming strategy to ensure that programming at both venues continues to become more co-ordinated, thematic and targeted. Both venues are now contributing to Cultural Tourism/ Sunday in Belfast products.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidate the relationship with the Ulster Orchestra as the main tenant within the Ulster Hall 	Tim Husbands	On target	The Ulster Orchestra is now established as 'resident' in the Ulster Hall and offer open rehearsals to the public. Currently working with the Ulster Orchestra management through joint educational initiatives to enhance our partnership arrangement.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceed internal and external client expectations in relation to operational service delivery of Waterfront and Ulster Hall 	Tim Husbands	On target	As part of the UK Benchmarking Group and other industry research, against the background of the economic recession, work is

					ongoing to identify and incorporate new product ranges and services, and operational improvements.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase overall external funding/sponsorship income for the Waterfront and Ulster Halls 	Tim Husbands	On target	The Halls' current strategy for the generation of sponsorship and funding income is being reviewed in order to represent the offer available, including preparation of an associated public tender opportunity.
			Laura Leonard		Attendance Secured 25-28 November 2009- A) EDF – Contributed to creative clusters Lead EU Study – Held EU Business Event for Belfast companies with

		well as the Cooperation Platform			<p>EU commission rep</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Linking open cities work to economic migration working group - Assisting on EU task force on recession and recovery <p>B) SAF- Made funding application under 2010 anti-poverty fund</p> <p>C) KSF Made ISR entry into forum to develop new project activity</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage Belfast QEC Network <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contribute annual subscription fee ○ Facilitate 20th Anniversary event in Belfast ○ Attend Executive Bureau and AGM meetings 	Laura Leonard	<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Event held on 18 Sep. High publicity gained & ministerial attendance</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver Irish Sea Partnership 	Laura Leonard	Ongoing	<p>Funding Application made & awaiting decision</p> <p>Event planned for 16 Nov 2009</p>
		Lead Comet Partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contribute to annual Service Level Agreement ○ Provide Secretariat for Comet 	Laura Leonard	Ongoing	<p>New work plan underway</p> <p>Funding bid made for creative industries funding</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showcase Belfast in Europe 	Laura Leonard	Complete	Facilitated Belfast Intereg event x 2 in Brussels
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host 5 inward visits 	Laura Leonard	Ongoing	Hosted Lyon inward HR study visit
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deliver Diversity EU Week for 2010/2011 	Laura Leonard	Ongoing	Planning underway
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure and deliver Power of Possibility Project 	Laura Leonard	Ongoing	Submission for funding made & await decision
Theme: Economy, Physical and Infrastructure					

“Better Opportunities for success across the city”					
Corporate Objective	Departmental Objective	Key Actions	Lead Officer	Quarterly Update Status Please indicate status of project/initiative or event: • Complete • On target • Delayed	Please provide a more detailed commentary for each project/initiative or event
Stimulate growth and competitiveness in key sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase innovation and enterprise levels, skill levels and employment levels. • Enhance the physical regeneration of the city. • Grow competitive sectors. 	Engage key partners in development of an agreed employment and skills strategy and associated action plan, including short-term action plan to address economic downturn	Shirley McCay	On target	Belfast Employment and Skills Board established May 09. Group meets every six weeks. An agreed Employment and Skills Strategy and Action Plan will be in place, Jan 10.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a programme of support for the creative industries sector 	Shirley McCay	On target	Activities include: Creativity Thirst, Dare to be Digital, SXSW, Thimble, Blick business incubation, Creative Connections export programme and the Creative Entrepreneurs Club
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a programme of support for the environmental 	Shirley McCay	Delayed	Programme has been delayed due

		industries sector			to the lengthy process required to source match funding.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a programme of support for the advanced manufacturing sector 	Shirley McCay	On target	Three year programme in partnership with Lisburn City Council launching on 24 November.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a programme of support for the independent retail sector 	Shirley McCay	On target	Activities in development include: Retail Therapy, masterclasses, marketing campaigns for trader groups, web portal for independents, Craft on the Concourse, shop improvements, HARTE, evening economy initiative, market sites and festive lighting.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximise opportunities for student placements within business 	Shirley McCay	Delayed	Programme has not proceeded due to similar initiatives being offered by key stakeholders, and uncertainty around eligibility for funding.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support networking and mentoring initiatives for hi-tech 	Shirley McCay	Delayed	NISP currently finalising details

		businesses, in collaboration with NI Science Park			of new membership structures – awaiting clarification Programme has not proceeded further due to waiting response from DETI regarding funding from the EU to help support this programme. Economic Appraisals have been completed and decisions to be made in November 2009.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Sales Growth programme 	Shirley McCay	On target	Tenders currently being appraised. Delivery to begin November.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Strategy in Business programme 	Shirley McCay	On target	Tendered in September 09. Consultant appointed. Delivery to begin November.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver Franchise programme (in collaboration with Lisburn City Council) 	Shirley McCay	On target	Launch 29 Oct & recruiting commenced 1 September
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver membership services and events programme for World Trade Centre Belfast (budget approved by January 09) 	Shirley McCay	On target	Activities undertaken to date include: - Launch of WTC website

		Development Committee)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Futurlia Trade Mission - 2 Global Sourcing Workshops - 3 Networking Events <p>DETI funding application is currently being reworked for remainder of activities.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deliver initiatives to support enhanced access to public and private procurement opportunities 	Shirley McCay	On target	<p>Local Sourcing Initiative programme has been delivered culminating in a Meet the Buyer event in the Waterfront Hall on 4th June 2009. 29 suppliers met with 5 large public sector buyers including NIHE, Translink, Central Procurement Directorate, BT & Bombardier. This meetings have resulted in suppliers securing in the region of £100,000 worth of orders in the short term. Further follow up</p>

					will be conducted with the suppliers early in the new year in order to assess the long term benefits of the programme.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in and promote access to the NI Rural Development Programme 	Shirley McCay	On target	5 of the 6 Funding measures have been open for applications. To date one funding application has been received from the BCC area.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximise opportunities arising from international linkages e.g. USA, China 	Shirley McCay	Delayed	Limited activity to date.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support delivery of Belfast Business Awards 	Shirley McCay	On target	Council leading development of the Awards. Call for Sponsors took place 21 Sept, official launch will be held on 10 Nov and Awards Ceremony on 29 April, 2010. 19 award categories on offer.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support development and delivery of enterprise plan focusing on pre-start, start-up and new business support (including social economy), in 	Shirley McCay	On target	Current progs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Enterprise Programme

		conjunction with partner organisations			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted community enterprise Programme • Adventure Pre-entreprise Social Economy Programme • Enterprise Workshops & mentoring • Finance your business conference • Young entrepreneurs networking event • Belfast Entrepreneurs Network
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deliver HARTE (Hospitality and Retail Training for Employment) project 	Shirley McCay	On target	<p>Year 2 targets already exceeded. 100 delegates enrolled on programme against annual target of 90. 210 core qualifications achieved to date. 30 participants accessed employment. A jobs fair delivered with 18 employers</p>

					exhibiting, and 72 HARTE graduate and 100 others attending.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market Intelligence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake survey of 500 businesses Commission and produce quarterly research updates on economic conditions and forecasts Include editorial in Business Eye and other appropriate business magazines 	Shirley McCay	On target	<p>Business survey scheduled to take place late 2009 with final report due January 2010.</p> <p>Quarterly research updates currently being completed by Oxford Economics.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out feasibility work on key business locations (Giant's Park; Paint Hall; World Trade Centre) and business incubation support 	Shirley McCay	On target	Business Accommodation and Incubation research completed.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop appropriate promotional material to raise the profile of Belfast 	Shirley McCay	On target	Invest in Belfast Guide currently being updated.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in focused external promotional activity by attendance at MIPIM and MAPIC 	Shirley McCay	On target	MIPIM preparation underway.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through outreach support, facilitate programmes which enhance the skills and knowledge of communities in order to improve employment opportunities 	Catherine Taggart	On target	Ongoing support through volunteer development to enhance local skills and knowledge.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the Waterfront and Ulster Hall position as premier 	Tim Husbands	On target	Working in conjunction with

		conference and meetings venues by developing a comprehensive business sales and marketing strategy			ISB and Corporate Communications, to further develop the section's digital marketing strategy to support the development of CRM at both venues
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework for Belfast and commence implementation. Framework including action plan to be approved by Committee. Tourism Product Development - development of an innovative range of special interest and niche products; conference subvention; monitoring and evaluating the economic impact of tourism; provision of a comprehensive visitor management scheme; community tourism initiatives 	Shirley McCay	On target	<p>This has slipped slightly however aim is to finalise plan and Launch in March 2010.</p> <p>Plan highlights key product development opportunities over next 5 – 10 years</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Tourism Visitor Management Plan – continue to provide tourism interpretative signage as part of the CTVMP Plan which has been approved by committee and procured via European tender and also implement programme of cleaning and maintenance of existing signage 	Shirley McCay	On target	12 month contract on going

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop C S Lewis Infrastructure 	Shirley McCay	On target	On target regarding overall literary tourism; CS Lewis will be developed in partnership with NITB
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure and Deliver Open Cities migrants project 	Laura Leonard	On target	Project under delivery
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Comet Interreg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Including overseeing delivery of at least seven Comet projects Including provision and management of Secretariat (3 staff) 	Laura Leonard	On target	Delivery underway with delays due to SEUPB processes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver RDP Transnational Programme 	Laura Leonard	Delayed	Await Cluster go ahead to deliver
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure Environmental Industries Project 	Laura Leonard	Delayed	Postponed at 2010 at comet
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop EU Day of Entrepreneur Initiative 	Laura Leonard	Complete	Event decision successful
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Titanic tourism product and infrastructure. 	Shirley McCay		
Developed a strong cultural and tourism experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a strong cultural experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open Lock Number 1 of the Lagan canal. 	Shirley McCay	On target	Economic appraisal completed. Funding to be sought
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the Integrated Cultural Strategy. Funding for 5 schemes Multi Annual Funding, Annual Funding, Development & 	Shirley McCay	On target	2009/2010 Multi Annual and Annual funding clients – mid term evaluations underway

		<p>Outreach, Rolling Programme, Community Festivals Fund</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training in new skills across Culture and Arts Funding Initiatives. • Tests drive the arts initiative with Audience N.I. • Commission research through Art in the Community • Implement communication strategy • Networks and partnerships • Commission Barriers to access research • Festival action plan • Delivery of City Carnival 			<p>Community Festivals Fund – 7 festivals awarded £29,000 funding during Jan – March 2010. Additional £8,500 secured from DCAL for CFF support up to 31st March.</p> <p>Creative Legacies programme – applications assessed and 10 recommended for funding. Total funding £250,000.</p> <p>BCC in partnership with Arts & Business ran a sponsorship workshop ‘give and take’ on 8th October for Festivals. 50 participants.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Public Arts strategy and programme. 	Shirley McCay	<p>On target</p> <p>Delayed</p>	<p>A public art framework has been written.</p> <p>Rise Public Art</p>

					Piece at Broadway delayed due to shortfall in funding of £36,000. Options being considered to meet this funding gap.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop existing city markets 	Shirley McCay	On target	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conference Subvention – continue to implement the conference subvention scheme through supporting national and international conferences 	Shirley McCay	On target	Conference Subvention fund has been reviewed. Requests currently with Invest NI and NITB to secure an integrated fund for Belfast and NI
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Tourism – Continue to develop and support the cultural tourism offer and work in partnership with NITB and ACNI, including Belfast Music Tour, Literary tourism and Cathedral Quarter through product development and promotion of the cultural tourism product. 	Shirley McCay	On target	BCC successful in first stage of NITB Innovation Fund for music tourism, literary tourism. This will potentially secure an additional £300k to implement programmes before the end of March 2010
				Completed	Pilot Summer

					Sundays programme completed – currently being evaluated
		Retail Gap Study to be undertaken with BCCM	Shirley McCay	Delayed	Not appropriate in the current market
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare an Integrated City Events Strategy for consultation in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify more customer focused delivery - Identify new sources of funding - Seek new partners to assist in delivery 	Tim Husbands	On target	Membership of Internal Consultation Group has been established, and outline draft strategy in preparation. Benchmarking research being undertaken against other comparable key UK/European tourism destinations.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deliver and integrated events/festivals programme including Tall Ships and large park events 	Tim Husbands	Complete	Highly successful Tall Ships event held from 13-16 August attracting an estimated 800,000 visitors to the city and generating some £15 million for the local economy. Successful liaison with Parks Department

					helped to deliver a number of other large outdoor events over the summer.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evening Economy – continue to develop the evening economy in Belfast 	Shirley McCay	On target	BCC successful in the first stage of evening economy plan. This will secure an additional £110,000 towards animating the city, developing food tourism and supporting retailers.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a vibrant and inclusive programme of events and services in Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall 	Tim Husbands	On target	Key recent successes include the Waterfront Comedy Club, the summer Urban Arts Academy/Trans event programme, and the partnership working with the Belfast Festival at Queens, all of which have raised the profile of the Hall and broadened its audience appeal.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create sustainable catering and bar offering facilities at the Waterfront Hall. 	Tim Husbands	On target	Currently on the fourth year of a five year contract

					with Mount Charles Catering Ltd. A new tendering process and preparation of associated tender documentation will commence early next year.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure Culture Bid 	Laura Leonard	On target	Ongoing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Opportunity Europe 6 	Laura Leonard	On target	Planned 20-21 Oct 2009
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop year 2010 campaign 	Laura Leonard	On target	Funding submission made & await decision
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop EU Youth programme 	Laura Leonard	On target	Funding submission made and await decision
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of Integrated Development Fund local regeneration projects for the £4.1m funding in respect of the agreed local Area action plans developed for Crumlin, Falls, Springfield and Shankill areas (£1,8m IDF for 2009/10). Working with the various partners and communities, to carry out a range of integrated 	Shirley McCay	On target	First claim slightly under target but overall projection to meet targets within current year.

		regeneration work under the four broad headings of: Commercial Property Improvements; Public Realm Enhancements; Environmental Improvements; Heritage Property and Tourism Developments.			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership activity and support with external agencies to develop environmental improvement schemes in support of IDF and other renewing the routes local regeneration projects. Develop complementary activity with other local regeneration initiatives e.g. N'ards 2012, SNAP/NR/Enterprise Council. 	Shirley McCay	On target	Committee approval to explore partnership with BRO for NR2012
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the development of the Belfast European Brownfield Initiative by securing additional INTERREG IVC resources (€2m) towards the development of the BTeam network project proposal. The BTeam experts network proposal to support the development of local regeneration sites based on the exchange of experience and the development of local expertise. 	Shirley McCay	Delayed	Revised timetable for decision now Autumn 2009
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of the implementation activity associated with the 11 public arts projects across the city as part of the Re-imaging Communities Programme 	Shirley McCay	Delayed Ongoing	Artwork completed. Delay to installation due to finalisation of consents and maintenance.

		funded by the Arts Council. Completion and / or installation of the completed art pieces in neighbourhoods working in partnership with the local communities.			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development and implementation of additional public realm / local environmental enhancement works for target regeneration areas- in partnership with DSD. 	Shirley McCay	Complete	Ongoing projects to be completed by BRO
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted, PEACE III funded, schemes complementing the broader Renewing the Routes framework is to bring new energy and renewed focus to producing positive change to interface areas on these routes. The development of four pilot schemes to address the differing local circumstances through distinct individual projects that seek to respond to the unique local physical and perceived environments. Development and initiation of implementation for the enhancement of the public realm along arterial routes. 	Shirley McCay	Delayed Ongoing	Economic appraisal approved by SEUPB – project development works commenced.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued Council involvement in Sufalnet 4EU Interreg 4C Project to exchange knowledge of developing former landfill sites ie North 	Shirley McCay	Delayed	Awaiting decision from EU on funding application

		Foreshore			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership involvement in a new Interreg 4C project application, BRAVO – Eco Regions. Opportunity to showcase as best practice, the North Foreshore environmental regeneration initiative 	Shirley McCay	On Target	Funding Application submitted October 2009
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Phase 1 of the North Foreshore Plan. Finalising the draft integrated North Foreshore master plan and business planning Promotion, information signs and publication / launch of the North Foreshore Master Plan and regeneration initiative to inform the public and potential investors Complete North Foreshore Giants Park Landscape and Public Realm / Urban Design Strategies Commence the technical / planning work for North Foreshore phase 1 access infrastructure projects 	Shirley McCay	On target	<p>LFG Electricity Generation Project completed and operational.</p> <p>Site Closure works progressing well in north west area of site. Consolidation works in south west of site completed.</p> <p>Reviewing Master Plan.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Complete Gasworks northern fringe master plan.</u> <p>Design team working towards submission of planning application, subject to satisfying</p>	Shirley McCay / Pamela Davison	On target	Presentation to Committee Nov 09. Issues with NIEA and contamination legislation to be

		NIEA and community payback. Report to Committee will be taken before submission of planning application.			resolved.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Complete Gasworks northern fringe master plan.</u> <p>Design team working towards submission of planning application, subject to satisfying NIEA and community payback. Report to Committee will be taken before submission of planning application.</p>	Shirley McCay / Pamela Davison	On target	Presentation to Committee Nov 09. Issues with NIEA and contamination legislation to be resolved.
Theme: Environmental Sensitivity and Transport & Connectivity “Better care for Belfast’s environment – a clean green city now and for the future”					
Corporate theme and Objective	Departmental Objective	Key Actions	Lead Officer	Quarterly Update Status Please indicate status of project/initiative or event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete • On target • Delayed 	Please provide a more detailed commentary for each project/initiative or event

Reduced the city's impact on climate change and improved air quality;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and influence the creation of a modern transportation and electronic infrastructure. Reduce departmental carbon footprint. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of the Transport Policy review incorporating the operational transport aspects for the Council and the relationships to other corporate objectives. Adoption of the reviewed policy as the basis for the Council position in respect of transport policy development for the city and wider region. 	Keith Sutherland	Complete	Reviewed Policy currently being printed.
Protect, promote and enhance the city's natural & built heritage and open spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect and promote the city's built heritage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The coordination of Council responses in respect of strategic transport policies and issues. Engagement in the processes for the review of the Regional Transport Policy and projects for physical infrastructure projects including the proposals for transport system changes such as Rapid Transit. 	Keith Sutherland	Delayed Ongoing	Consultation delayed by DRD. Other policy work ongoing.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development and implement pilot actions identified in the review of the Council Transport Policy and the parallel monitoring of transport initiatives or actions carried out by other agencies. 	Keith Sutherland	Delayed Ongoing	Subject to the resolution of internal plan and resources.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work in partnership with DRD on the implementation of the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan & other transport initiatives. Participate in the City Centre Change Working Group & other transport groups to ensure the 	Keith Sutherland	On target	Further reports to be brought before Committee for comment.

		engagement and influence of the Council			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a green strategy for the Waterfront and Ulster Hall 	Tim Husbands	On target	An Environmental Strategy and associated processes is being prepared to assist the Hall to both minimise operational costs and conserve energy, including the recycling of waste.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support environmental projects at neighbourhood level such as recycling, park murals, community clean ups and waste week activities 	Catherine Taggart	On target	Environmental Initiatives ongoing or planned at all 22 sites many occurring during summer scheme programmes.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to implement Environmental Management System in the Department 	David Orr	On target	Various initiatives ongoing throughout the year
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Interreg Carbon Footprint project 	Laura Leonard	On target	Letter of offer received
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Irish Sea Carbon Card project 	Laura Leonard	On target	Funding submission made await decision
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue delivery of Urban Matrix project 	Laura Leonard	On target	Project coming to conclusion
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an 'access to heritage strategy for the Ulster Hall, in order to maximise the education and outreach opportunities available. 	Tim Husbands	On target	The established Community, Education and Outreach programme is ensuring wide

					access to the Ulster Hall and is complemented by its contribution as a key cultural tourism product for the city.
Theme: Social Inclusion and Social & Cultural “Better support for people and communities”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver heritage community programmes. • Run community archive projects across the city in collaboration with PRONI and Community Archive Network • Methodology for community Archive • Deliver training in Heritage as a Social and Cultural Developmental Tool • Develop awareness and capacity with young people to engage with heritage • Provide access to heritage resources • Deliver Place, Position and Ownership project with University of Ulster. 	Shirley McCay	On target	<p>Second stage application to NITB's Tourism Innovation Fund submitted to further support Community Archive Work</p> <p>Training delivered by Arts organisations considering heritage projects ongoing</p> <p>NIEA publication of archaeological history of Belfast – copy completed Final application to HLF being prepared</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver heritage community programmes. • Run community archive projects across the city in collaboration with PRONI and Community Archive Network 	Shirley McCay	On target	<p>Second stage application to NITB's Tourism Innovation Fund submitted to further support</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methodology for community Archive • Deliver training in Heritage as a Social and Cultural Developmental Tool • Develop awareness and capacity with young people to engage with heritage • Provide access to heritage resources • Deliver Place, Position and Ownership project with University of Ulster. 			<p>Community Archive Work</p> <p>Training delivered by Arts organisations considering heritage projects ongoing</p> <p>NIEA publication of archaeological history of Belfast – copy completed Final application to HLF being prepared</p>
Theme: Social Inclusion and Social & Cultural “Better support for people and communities”					
Corporate theme and Objective	Departmental Objective	Key Actions	Lead Officer	Quarterly Update Status Please indicate status of project/initiative or event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete • On target • Delayed 	Please provide a more detailed commentary for each project/initiative or event

People enjoy living in a vibrant, shared and diverse city	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote good relations and reduce division and polarisation of communities Increase the levels of confidence, participation and engagement of citizens. Increase the capacity of citizens to make informed decisions about their neighbourhoods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver city wide community programmes and services in high quality venues. 	Catherine Taggart	On target	Ongoing programmes, projects and service delivery at all 22 sites including Play Centres Mid term usage figures on course to meet annual targets.
Health and Social	Reduce deprivation and poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a support programme for traveller and other ethnic minority communities. 	Catherine Taggart	On target	The TLO, in partnership with Community Development,

					have developed a support programme for the Traveller community.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and define the Council's method of community development intervention. 	Catherine Taggart	On target	CENI /CFNI have facilitated a series of workshops with front line staff, SNAP and PBDM, to develop a social assets model to inform and support community development intervention.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver premier city wide children and young peoples programme. 	Catherine Taggart	On target	Programmes of activities for children & young people at 28 council sites including successful summer scheme programme at all centres which reflected 120 weeks of activities for children and young people aged 5 – 18. Funding over £163k to support 81 further schemes

					<p>managed by the community sector.</p> <p>Successfully implemented 3 themed central events C&Y people exploring cultural diversity, time for play and teenage interests.</p> <p>Secured additional £100k from the thematic programme budget to bolster C&YP services including additional £60k for community programmes in partnership with NRPs, extended city programme in association with WFH and planned participation events during the re launch of the City Hall.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support delivery of Neighbourhood Economic Development projects (budget previously approved by Committee) 	Shirley McCay	Complete	NED projects complete.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In conjunction with other public agencies and partners, develop a strategy that addresses anti-social behaviour on Lanyon Place 	Tim Husbands	On target	Waterfront staff work in conjunction with the Council's ASB officer in order to contribute to the work of Belfast's four key ASB Forums.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administer the Grant Aid Support programme to Community and Voluntary organisations across the city. 	Catherine Taggart	On target	<p>On going administration of Grant Aid Programme with £1.77m distributed to 248 groups to date.</p> <p>Preparing to implement revised Community Grant Aid programme for 20010/11 in line with Dept Grant Aid review.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The administration of financial support to 5 independently managed centres 	Catherine Taggart	On target	<p>Continuing to support and administer independently managed centres.</p> <p>Agreed that Hammer Pavilion will be independently managed by Shankill Football Club.</p>

					<p>Successful launch of extended recreational leisure facility at Roden St centre.</p> <p>Ongoing project management of capital investment levered at Shaftesbury.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the Council's poverty policy and implement actions. 	Barbary Cook	On target	A paper outlining the process has been sent for the approval by Committee
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a programme of events and related activities aimed at children and young people in conjunction with partners and sponsors (e.g. Trans/UAA project). 	Tim Husbands	On target	Partnerships have been established with a number of arts and educational organisations aimed at increasing and improving programming for CYP (e.g., Belfast Children's Festival, Urban Arts Academy, and Trans programme, Musicworks NI and Youth Theatre).

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify innovative ways to promote citizens engagement 	Siobhan Watson	On target	Work is on-going to develop a matrix of engagement options as part of the My Neighbourhood Engagement programme across each of the city places.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide venues for people to gather, meet, participate, share information and celebrate 	Catherine Taggart	On target	22 high quality accessible venues provided for local residents to meet and share information Mid term average usage of centres 61%
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted services for children and young people 	Catherine Taggart	On target	Afterschools clubs and youth projects at 22 sites. Summer scheme programmes delivered as outlined above.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To foster greater civic responsibility 	Catherine Taggart	On target	Supporting and developing volunteers to contribute to their local communities. Over 39,000 volunteers hours supported across the services.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage, support and recognise voluntary activity including the identification of an appropriate quality standard for volunteering, developing related policy and practice and organising 4 area and 1 thematic volunteer celebration events. 	Catherine Taggart	On target	<p>Formulated response to DSD Volunteer policy. Support for high profile Volunteer conference in partnership with DSD, and VSB.</p> <p>Planned series of Volunteer area support events.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to improve consultation and involvement with youth Via the BCC Youth Forum and related activity 	Catherine Taggart	On target	<p>Youth Forum continuing to develop. Work ongoing on induction pack and review of governance.</p> <p>Developing citywide and cross border links.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote community cohesion and support communities to live and work safely together 	Catherine Taggart	On target	Ongoing work in centres and local neighbourhoods
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a traveller outreach office & assist the traveller Community 	Catherine Taggart	On target	The outreach work has been successful and the TLO continues to expand this

					initiative .
Theme: Services					
Corporate Objective	Departmental Objective	Key Actions	Lead Officer	Quarterly Update Status Please indicate status of project/initiative or event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete On target Delayed 	Please provide a more detailed commentary for each project/initiative or event
Provide a range of services which respond to local needs and are easily accessible by all citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure local services can respond to local needs Make sure citizens can easily and effectively access information and services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop forms of citizen intelligence system 	Siobhan Watson	On target	21 draft area profiles have been created, Work is also on-going to develop citystats
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designing services based on citizen requirements 	Siobhan Watson	On target	Work is on-going in this area and following the completion of the My Neighbourhood Engagement programme there will be a better understanding of key issues and

					priorities at a local level. In the meantime work is on-going with the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships and the delivery of service priorities within their action plans.
		• Implement a customer services framework	Tim Husbands	On Target	Established Departmental Customer Focus Group to audit standards level and quality.
		• Increase the participation of communities	Catherine Taggart	On target	April to Sept average % use of centres city wide 61%.
		• Review Community Centre Management roles and responsibilities	Catherine Taggart	On target	New Facilities Unit agreed with implementation in Spring 2010.
		• Ensure that the activities provided at the Waterfront and Ulster Hall are fully accessible to all sections of the Community	Tim Husbands	On target	The Halls operate a community access policy which includes community ticketing, venue tours and community usage of space, which is advertised through the Community Arts Forum and Voluntary Arts

					Ireland websites and other digital media to ensure equality of access. The Café Grand Dame is now located in the front foyer of the Ulster Hall and is increasing visitor numbers to the building.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish EU Regional Forum 	Laura Leonard	On target	Initiative launched 18 Sept 2009 with Assembly support
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce 4 EU Bulletins and funding alerts (EU communication plan) 	Laura Leonard	On target	Bulletin produced Sept 09
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold 1 EU Consul event 	Laura Leonard	On target	Event planned 5/11/09
People and Processes “Better value for money – a can-do, accountable, efficient council”					
Corporate Objective	Departmental Objective	Key Actions	Lead Officer	Quarterly Update Status Please indicate status of project/initiative or event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete On target Delayed 	Please provide a more detailed commentary for each project/initiative or event
Ensuring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use financial and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the 	David Orr	On target	Categorisation

resources are fully aligned to corporate priorities Ensuring we deliver value for money services Attracting and developing our people	human resources in the most effective way • Improve departmental processes and systems • Increase departmental efficiencies	recommendations of the BIS structural review			process ongoing and recruitment initiated where appropriate. Recruitment held in Business Support and Community with ongoing VR exercise. Consultation under way re job descriptions in Community Services.
		• Implement and manage the corporate attendance policy in the department	David Orr	On target	New policy is currently under consultation between Trade Unions and Management
		• Prepare Department for IIP new standards	David Orr	On target	Implementation of improvements and best practice throughout the process ongoing. PDP completion in Community Services ongoing. Liaising with CIT re: departmental mock assessment. Scheduled for November 2009.
		• Complete and communicate capital and revenue estimates	David Orr	On target	Preparation complete and action plan

					agreed. Historic information compiled and distributed. Templates issued to all budget holders. DDMT approval obtained and information input to SAP for deadline 16 October 2009.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement recommendations from a strategic departmental grant review 	Barbary Cook/David Orr	On target	Implementation plan agreed. Application and award criteria being finalised, workshops held on criteria and impacts definition and the Central Grants Team being set up.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop communications strategy for the department 	Barbary Cook	On target	Draft currently being finalised
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a new organisation structure for Community Services, that provides for grater integration within the Development Department 	Catherine Taggart	Delayed	Ongoing consultation with TUs. Finalising management position in response to feedback with a view to implementation from Jan-Mar 2010.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a new organisational 	Tim	On target	Implementation of

		structure for the Waterfront and Ulster Hall, that provides for greater integration across the Development Department.	Husbands		the new structure is almost complete.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and extend all appropriate licence or lease arrangements in respect of community premises in line with BCC Asset Management Group procedures. 	Catherine Taggart	On Target	Grosvenor Lease extended until 2014.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuously review SAP and train staff in preparation for phase two 	David Orr	On target	Draft implementation plan to move Economic Initiatives and Directorate Units to Phase 2 SAP implementation – scheduled for Oct 2009 – Dec 2009. Currently designing training course with Corporate Services and CIPFA. Scheduled for mid October 2009.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to implement improvements by STEPS and prepare department for the next submission 	David Orr	On target	Various continuous improvement initiatives ongoing.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure effective maintenance systems for key mechanical and electrical systems at the Waterfront and Ulster Hall. 	Tim Husbands	On target	An extensive planned and preventative maintenance programme is in

					place and an operational review of all processes is underway.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish terms of reference for, and carry out a review of, Artifax Event and Contact Management System at the Waterfront and Ulster Hall. 	Tim Husbands	On target	Terms of reference have been established, and work on these reviews is now ongoing.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 			

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Position Paper on a Proposed Council Strategy to Tackle Poverty and Inequalities
Date:	11 November 2009
Reporting Officer:	Shirley McCay/Tim Husbands, Interim Co- Directors of Development
Contact Officer:	Barbary Cook, Policy and Business Development Manager, ext 3620

Relevant Background Information

Late last year the Development Department commissioned Dr Mike Morrissey to research poverty in Belfast and assess the level of poverty in the City and recommend a set of anti-poverty initiatives that the Council could take forward in the short and medium term.

Drawing on the research findings, a number of workshops were held with Members and several key Council decision-makers leading to the recommendation that BCC should develop a poverty strategy/action plan for the Council. However, due to internal restructuring, this process was delayed.

Key Issues

It is now proposed to move this initiative forward as it is believed it will contribute significantly to the corporate and departmental goals in terms of:

Fulfilling existing obligation under the Corporate Plan:

The Council's strategy for tackling poverty and inequalities would make a substantial commitment to fulfilling the strategic objective to reduce health and social inequalities under the 'Better Support for People and Communities'.

Fulfil the action of the current Departmental Plan 2009/10 which was accepted by the Committee on 13th May 2009

Fulfilling existing obligation under the Community Support Plan:

Objective 1.1 in the Community Support Plan has a specific action 'to develop a Council policy on poverty' - as confirmed by the Department for Social Development, commits the Council to developing a poverty strategy.

Supporting the Council's work on improving health and tackling health inequalities:

In particular support the work of the Interdepartmental group for Health and Wellbeing.

Responding to legislative drivers:

The new Child Poverty Bill 2009 will oblige the Government to eradicate child poverty by 2020. Its stated purpose is to give new impetus to the Government's commitment and to drive action across Departments - Local Government will be expected to support this process.

Improving Belfast's competitiveness:

Evidence shows (by Prof. Parkinson) that economic inequalities across the City inhibit Belfast's increasing competitiveness.

Enhancing civic leadership:

By developing and implementing the anti-poverty strategy for the City, Belfast City Council would show leadership in an area in which there has been limited success so far. This strategy would also offer an opportunity for the Council to engage more closely with its citizens in greatest need and a wider range of stakeholders.

There are three main ways in which Council could successfully implement an anti-poverty strategy:

1. Improving access to and delivery of our services

Given the fact that people in poverty usually have poorer access to services, it is an area of the Council's work where most changes could be made.

2. Bending the budget

The strategy would focus on the more sustainable option of finding ways to better target our existing budgets.

3. Monitoring and research

With the Council's sophisticated small area statistics system, Belfast Citystats, and the Corporate Performance Management system, CorVu, it will be possible to monitor the levels of poverty at a neighbourhood level and therefore the Council's achievements with the implementation of the anti-poverty strategy.

Process for the development of the strategy:

- Work closely with Members and Council Officers as key stakeholders
- Consult with other key stakeholders
- Prepare by March 2010 a draft strategy with an outline of the priorities and actions which would go to COMT and Development Committee for approval
- By May 2010 – commence official public consultation
- By October 2010 – launch the strategy

Resource Implications

There is £12,000 in the first year 2009/10. It is anticipated that an additional £20,000 will be required for 2010/11 to cover the costs of:

- Consultation workshops
- Production of a draft strategy
- Design and production of a final strategy
- Necessary translations of the document
- Strategy launch

Recommendations

Committee are asked to:

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the content of this report; and 2. Approve the process as outlined |
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Decision Tracking

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Further to approval regular update reports will be brought to Committee.
Timeline: January 2010 | Reporting Officer: Barbary Cook |
| 2. Commence Public Consultation:
Timeline: May 2010 | Reporting Officer: Barbary Cook |
| 3. Launch Strategy
Timeline: October 2010 | Reporting Officer: Barbary Cook |

Key to Abbreviations

COMT – Chief Officers Management Team

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