



<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	BCC & COMET Response to NILGA Consultation
<b>Date:</b>	25 <sup>h</sup> January 2013
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<b>1.0 Background</b>	
<p>1.1 Members will be aware that the current round of EU funding terminates in 2013. To this end, the consultation process regarding the next 7 year Programme Period (i.e. 2014-2020) is ongoing. This process centres on the draft legislation published in October 2012 and which outlines the aims, objectives and mechanisms for delivering the future Structural Funds Programmes.</p> <p>1.2 Members will also be aware that the Councils of the Metropolitan Region (COMET) have developed an urban position regarding maximising the opportunities for local authorities within the metropolitan area. This focuses on the creation of an Integrated Territorial Investment which would allow Councils to develop an Integrated Urban Strategy to maximise the impact of EU investment whilst also reducing the bureaucracy associated with securing EU funds. This position paper was endorsed by SP&amp;R Committee in December 2012.</p> <p>1.3 In parallel, NILGA have also sought the opinion of all 26 Local Authorities in relation to the draft EU legislation. A copy of the proposed NILGA model of Eu funding delivery is attached as appendix one of this report , along with a copy of the draft BCC response.</p>	
<b>2.0 Key Issues</b>	
<p>2.1 In order to maximise the opportunities for Councils in the next Programme Period, local authorities need to influence the decision making process to enable changes to the way EU monies will be delivered in 2014-2020. It is critical therefore that there is an agreed Local Government position on its role in the future delivery of EU funds. In an effort to achieve this objective the attached response has been agreed with SoLACE and Liam Hannaway has circulated a copy to the CEOs of all 26 Councils encouraging them to propose to their Councils that they make a similar response.</p> <p>2.2 Members will note from the attached response that, in general, BCC welcomes the opportunity to work with NILGA and all the other Councils to obtain agreement from relevant Ministers for the devolution of a proportion of EU funding to a local government level in order to support the delivery of “place based” development plans.</p>	

2.3 Whilst the response states that BCC is in favour of devolving the administration of EU funds to Local Government it does raise issues with respect to NILGA's proposal for a "Local Government Regional Investment Group (LGRIG)". The proposed function of this LGRIG is not clear from the Consultation Paper. SoLACE would agree that this is unnecessary and should have no administrative or decision-making role in the delivery of funds. If such a group should exist then its role should be limited to supporting collaboration and the exchange of best practice between the Councils/Council clusters involved in delivering EU funds.

2.4 Upon Committee approval, the attached response will be submitted immediately to meet NILGA's consultation deadline.

2.5 In addition, should all 6 COMET Councils endorse this paper, the Council's EU Unit will undertake to submit a collective COMET response to NILGA.

### **3.0 Resource Implications**

No fiscal or human resource implications are associated with this issue.

### **4.0 Equality and Good Relations**

None at present

### **5.0 Recommendations**

Members are requested to agree the Council's consultation response, contained in Appendix 1.