



<b>Subject:</b>	Belfast Citywide Tribunal Service
<b>Date:</b>	24 March 2017
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Nigel Grimshaw, Director City & Neighbourhood Services Department
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Cate Taggart, Community Development Manager Brian Kelly, Community Services Unit Manager

<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	At the request of committee, to present a funding proposal made by Belfast Advice Group requesting £100,000 to support the continued provision of a citywide tribunal service 2017/18.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Note the update on the Citywide Tribunal Service and that the Belfast Advice Group have confirmed that they have not secured additional funding for the delivery of the Citywide Tribunal Service for 2017/18.</li></ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
3.1	In February, Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed a potential funding allocation of £100k, from the forecast capital financing underspend, towards a City Wide Tribunal Service for 2017/18. Committee indicated that <i>'the payment of the £100k to the group would be subject to a further report to the Committee on the receipt and assessment of an application for funding which would detail the achievements to be delivered as well as the plans in place to attract levered funding'</i> .
3.2	The Belfast Advice Group has presented a funding proposal for committee's consideration, which is attached as Appendix 1.

<p>3.3</p> <p>3.4</p> <p>3.5</p> <p>3.6</p>	<p>The proposal details the total cost to provide the service in 2017/18 as £224,997 and seek to secure £100k from Council with a further £124,997 yet to be secured.</p> <p>The group has presented its proposed expenditure over the 12 month period outlining the total cost of the service (Page 8 of the proposal). Based on this information Council will contribute 43% towards the salary costs of seven staff and 51% towards running costs.</p> <p>Having considered the proposal, officers sought clarification from the Belfast Advice Group in relation to expenditure and the plan to attract additional funding. Officers met with group representatives on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March.</p> <p>The Belfast Advice Group confirmed they have not secured additional funding for the delivery of the Tribunal service in 2017/18. The group has made initial steps to develop and seek funding for a regional tribunal service incorporating advice groups across all eleven council areas. In the absence of secured additional funding the service will not be viable over a 12 month period.</p>
<p>3.7</p>	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>In assessing the proposal and feedback from the meeting with the representatives, officers would note the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current period of extended funding is due to end 31 March 2017.</li> <li>• There is no detailed plan in place to attract and secure the additional funding to provide the service over the 12 months. At the meeting with the representatives, BAG stated that progress had been made with MLAs and DfC officials prior to the recent Assembly election and that they were in the process of re-engaging with all political parties at Stormont.</li> <li>• In response to council correspondence, the Minister for Communities indicated there position on funding of the Belfast citywide tribunal service that is, that tribunal services should be incorporated as an element of generalist advice services for which the advice sector is already in receipt of funding. BAG have indicated that recent engagement with officials confirmed there is no additional budget to support the Belfast service outside of their Generalist Advice grant as part of the Community Support Programme to local government. Any potential funding would be dependent upon identification of need and that the service must be delivered at a regional level.</li> <li>• The Belfast Advice Group has indicated that it has taken on board the information from DfC and has started a process to build support for the development of a regional service.</li> </ul>

<p>3.8</p> <p>3.9</p>	<p>The group has contacted Council funded advice services across all eleven Councils. The first meeting with these organisations to discuss a proposed regional service is planned for Friday 24 March.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The group has also contacted the Big Lottery and are planning to make an application for the regional tribunal service.</li> <li>• In the absence of secured additional funding for the project, there is significant risk to its viability over the 12 month period.</li> </ul> <p><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u> Request for funding of £100K from Belfast City Council for 2017/18</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> None</p>
<p><b>4.0</b></p>	<p><b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b></p>
	<p>Appendix 1: Proposal for the Belfast City Wide Tribunal Service, from Belfast Advice Group</p>