

Document Pack

**Democratic Services Section
Chief Executive's Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**



15th January, 2015

MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room (Room G05), City Hall on Tuesday, 20th January, 2015 at 4.30 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. **Routine Matters**
 - (a) Apologies
 - (b) Minutes
 - (c) Declarations of Interest
2. **Request to Address the Committee - Invest NI re: Foreign and Direct Investment**
3. **Reconsidered Item - Wheelworks Art Cart (Pages 3 - 16)**
4. **Support for Business Improvement Districts - Update (Pages 17 - 24)**
5. **Presentation to Culture, Arts and Leisure Committee re: European Funding (report to follow)**
6. **Markets Rights Policy - Clarification (Pages 25 - 28)**
7. **Delivery of Generalist Advice Services - Consultation (Pages 29 - 48)**

Extract from minutes of –

MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

16th December, 2014

“Wheelworks Art Cart

The Committee was advised that a request had been received from Wheelworks, a youth arts group based in Belfast, seeking financial assistance to oversee the replacement of its purpose-built mobile arts hub, that is, the Arts Cart. The Director reported that the Arts Cart was used by Wheelworks to bring high-quality arts provision to communities in which there existed a lack of arts infrastructure and where levels of engagement were below average. The current Arts Cart was 14 years old and it was deemed necessary to acquire a replacement. He indicated that the total cost of the project would be £212,000, with the Arts Council providing £200,000 of that amount. Accordingly, the Director indicated that the Council had been requested to fund the projected shortfall of £12,000, provision for which existed within current departmental budgets.

The Committee agreed to provide £12,000 to Wheelworks for the purposes outlined.”

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Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Support for Wheelworks ArtCart
Date:	20 January 2015
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Brian Johnston, Tourism, Culture, Heritage & Arts Manager, ext 3586

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	As Members will be aware, a decision was taken at the January meeting of the Council to refer a request for funding towards a new Wheelworks “ArtCart” back to the Development Committee in January. Members were seeking additional information on the current programme of work undertaken by Wheelworks and the activity that would be made possible through this grant.
1.2	Belfast City Council provides revenue funding to 52 core-funded arts and heritage organisations to support the delivery of their annual programmes of activity. This includes £10,000 per year for three years to Wheelworks, a Belfast-based youth arts organisation.
1.3	Wheelworks is the 2014 winner of the Allianz Arts and Business Awards Young People Award. Its programme of activities includes “multiple realities”, which uses digital and traditional arts to address issues facing marginalised and at-risk young people; and “dealing with difference”, a training programme for youth workers and arts facilitators promoting diversity and disability awareness. Wheelworks’ Multiple Realities programme was included as a case study to accompany the Cultural Framework for Belfast 2012-15 and this is included in appendix 3.
1.4	A key tool in Wheelworks’ repertoire is also the ArtCart, a purpose-built mobile arts hub fitted with a darkroom, sound recording studio, stage and workstations. As well as taking part in festivals and events such as Culture Night, Disability Pride and Belfast Day, the ArtCart enables Wheelworks to bring high-quality, cutting-edge arts provision to areas and communities that lack arts infrastructure and where levels of engagement are below average.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The original ArtCart is now 14 years old and needs to be replaced. Wheelworks has received an offer of £200,000 capital funding via the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI) from Together: Building United Communities. This funding is subject to delivery of the project by March 2015. However some partnership funding is required in order to lever the ACNI resources.
2.2	This funding is considered necessary to ensure continuation of the ArtCart's unique portability and year round work in frontline communities, interface areas and with cross community groups. Currently, approximately 3245 participants engage with the ArtCart each year in a range of art forms and projects from graphic design to comic performance. Through an outreach taster programme, Wheelworks is starting to explore and build new relationships with a diverse range of community groups and the launch of the new vehicle will be an opportunity to establish new partnerships across the city with groups that have not previously accessed the ArtCart.
2.3	Wheelworks has 2.5 full-time equivalent staff working at capacity to deliver their core programme of activity. The request from Wheelworks to Belfast City Council is for £12,000 to support the cost of a project manager to oversee all aspects of the design and build, as well as deliver business and communications plans. This funding, which equates to less than 5 per cent of the total project cost, would enable Wheelworks to buy the time and expertise to successfully deliver the capital project. Once operational, the new cart can be utilised effectively to ensure further engagement by marginalised communities in cultural and arts-based activities.
2.4	Details on the current programme of activity are provided in Appendix 1. Essentially, the organisation had three main strand of work, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The ArtCart outreach and festivals programme – Multiple realities – a development programme using digital and traditional arts to address issues facing marginalised and at-risk young people – A wider community engagement and training programme – training and engagement activity with young people, providing an introduction to digital arts techniques to support their personal development.
2.5	Last year, the art cart visited 27 events and venues across Belfast – full details are provided in Appendix 2. With the refurbishment of the new cart, there will be additional capacity to develop new contacts as well as generating additional programmes of activity as a follow-up to the taster sessions offered.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<u>Financial</u> This can be funded out of the Tourism, Culture, Heritage and Arts (TCH&A) Unit's 2014/15 budget.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no equality and good relations implications attached to this report.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to note the contents of this report and agree to fund £12,000 towards the cost of Wheelworks' new ArtCart, as part of a £212,000 funding package, with the remaining resources agreed by ACNI.

6	Decision Tracking
There is no Decision Tracking attached to this report.	

7	Key to Abbreviations
TCH&A – Tourism, Culture, Heritage and Arts ACNI – Arts Council of Northern Ireland	

8	Documents Attached
Appendix 1 - Additional information on Wheelworks Appendix 2 - Locations visited by ArtCart in 2014 Appendix 3 - Cultural Framework case study	

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Appendix 1: Additional information on Wheelworks

Current funding received by Wheelworks from Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit

Wheelworks currently receives £10,000 of core funding towards an overall annual budget of £175,000. Over 65% of work takes place in Belfast and in 2013-14 this funding helped to support activities that reached 2911 participants and 9006 audiences members as well as creating 153 artist contracts.

Their multi-strand programme engages with marginalised young people from communities across Belfast in arts activity. This includes the ArtCart, a purpose-built mobile arts hub, the award-winning issue-based Multiple Realities programme and training for arts and youth workers.

Wheelworks' programme of activities

WheelWorks works with 2,000 – 3,000 young people aged 4 – 25 every year, on a range of taster/ short term and sustained artistic activity. All activity is delivered directly in young people's communities and is designed to appeal particularly to participants who may otherwise feel disaffected or excluded from mainstream youth/ arts activity, such as young men, disabled young people and/ or communities with limited access to service provision.

Programme strands:

- ArtCart Outreach Programme
- ArtCart Festivals Programme
- Multiple Realities
- Community/Training Programme

This year, Wheelworks is on track to exceed their targets including:

- 82 employment opportunities for artists
- 2.5 full-time equivalent staff employed
- 2,075 participants engaged
- 4,200 audience members

Successes this year to date include:

- *Being yourself*, a film created by young people from the Frank Gillen Centre, picked up a MAC MADE Festival award and was Highly Commended in the Under 15 category at Cinemagic Festival.

- The Multiple Realities programme was featured in BBC Children in Need programme.
- Wheelworks continues to attract funding from a wide range of funders including the Youth Council for Northern Ireland, BBC Children in Need and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. They are the only arts organisation to have received capital funding under OFMDFM's Together: Building United Communities (TBUC) strategy, which is an offer of £200,000 via the Arts Council of Northern Ireland towards their new ArtCart.

ArtCart

ArtCart workshops allow WheelWorks to form new partnerships and develop community engagement, with taster sessions acting as a way of initiating working relationships with community groups and inspiring young people who may previously be unaware of the innovative art forms, fusions and approaches on offer. For example, many young people perceive themselves to have no talent in music or art following their experiences at school, and are then amazed at their achievements in digital music/ art, guided by professional artist using a creative approach: One young person said, 'I didn't know I had so much talent until I did that.' Youth Leader, Families Beyond Conflict Digital Music ArtCart Workshop.

Once a partnership has been established via ArtCart taster activity, community groups are then targeted to take part in longer term, issue based activity, including accredited projects. In this way, community partnerships are nurtured and developed over years, such as the Frank Gillen Centre in west Belfast which was targeted through ArtCart activity in 2012 and since then has seen 2 of its youth groups participate in 3 long term projects and 4 short term workshop series, resulting in accreditation for its 9 – 12 age group and an award-winning short film.

The broad approach to engaging with new community groups is:

- **Initial research, targeting and consultation** with community group, including barriers to participation experienced, access requirements and interests/ background of participants
- **Delivery of taster ArtCart workshop(s)** in art form of young people's choice – e.g.: animation/ digital music/ digital photography/ graphic design. The ArtCart delivers directly in young people's community (or sometimes in a neutral location nearby, as is the case in intervention and/ or interface work).

- **Collection of feedback and recommendations from young people**, youth leaders and artists from initial workshop and lead in work to design and support future sustained activity, if requested (approx. 95% of ArtCart groups request future activity)
- **Sourcing of project support and consultation with young people** and community leaders ahead of sustained (possibly accredited) project. Confirmation of young people's goals, fears, expectations and desired art forms and output.
- **Delivery of long term activity** under the Multiple Realities, ArtCart or Community programme strands.
- **Collection of feedback and recommendations from young people**, youth leaders and artists which are integrated into future activity.

Activity to be supported by additional funding

The funding from Together: Building United Communities has been awarded to support continuation of the ArtCart's unique portability and year round work in frontline communities, interface areas and with cross community groups. As such, the provision of a new ArtCart will not so much provide additional activity as ensure that existing participation and community engagement is not lost. Currently, approximately 2,075 participants engage with the ArtCart each year in a range of art forms and projects from graphic design to comic performance. Through the outreach taster programme, Wheelworks is starting to explore and build new relationships with a diverse range of community groups and we would see the launch of the new vehicle as an exciting opportunity to revisit previous partnerships and establish new ones targeting areas that have not previously accessed activities. We are open to engaging with all communities.

An ArtCart consultation project in early 2014 sought feedback and ideas from a range of young people, youth leaders, artists and funders, and so the new vehicle will incorporate some of these recommendations. The new vehicle will provide young people with:

- Improved access to new inspiration and programmes, through on board wifi
- A more exciting, appealing exterior to the vehicle, with designs created by young people (TBC – Crowdfunding campaign in progress to support this)
- Improved comfort in bad weather, thanks to new, weatherproof stage insulation
- More space for workshops and other, non-digital art forms (eg: drama, visual art) through use of foldaway furniture
- Built in surround sound system.

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Appendix 2: Locations visit by ArtCart in 2014

During the period January – December 2014, the WheelWorks ArtCart has worked in the following areas of Belfast, reaching approximately **3,245** young people in total:

North Belfast:

The MAC (BT1 2NJ): Age range: 11+ years

The Spectrum Centre (BT13 3AA): Age range: 8+ years

HERe NI: (BT1 2DX): Age range: 4+ years

Upper Ardoyne Community Partnership (BT14 7JE): Age range: 10 – 14 years

The FabLab, Ashton Centre (BT15 2BP): Age range: 18+ years

Mencap/ Lough Shore Education Centre (BT36 7DH): Age range: 7 – 14 years

Culture Night Belfast, Donegall Street (BT1 2FH): Age range: 7 + years

MAC MADE Festival (BT1 2NJ): Age range: 12 – 15 years

Total: 1,563 participants

South Belfast:

Cedar Foundation (BT10 0GW): Age range: 10 – 17 years

Out & About (BT1 6AS): Age range: 16+ years

Olympia Community Centre (BT12 6NA): Age range: 7 – 14 years

Pobal (BT2 7FF): Age range: 7+ years

Belfast Day (BT1 5GS): Age range: 7+ years

Mencap Fun in the Park (BT7 1LP): Age range: 7+ years

Disability Pride, Belfast City Hall (BT1 5GS): Age range: 7 + years

Total: 886 participants

East Belfast:

Wandsworth Community Centre (BT4 3FF): Age range: 13+ years

European Heritage Open Day, Stormont (BT4 3XX): Age range: 7+ years

Knocknagoney Community Centre, (BT4 2QF), Age range: 9 – 14 years

Total: 103 participants

West Belfast:

Kilmakee Activity Centre (BT17 9QA): Age range: 7 – 14 years

Frank Gillen Centre (BT12 4JU): Age range: 9 – 12 years

Hope Nursery (BT13 1DN): Age range: 4 – 5 years

Poleglass Community Association (BT17 0PB): Age range: 8 – 12 years

Families Beyond Conflict (BT13 3BH): Age range: 8 – 12 years

Belfast Children's Festival (BT1 1DD): Age range: 5+ years

Blackie River Community Group (BT12 7NW): Age range: 4 – 8 years

West Belfast Family Fun Day (BT11 8BW): Age range: 8 – 13 years

Frank Gillen Centre (BT12 4JU): Age range: 8 – 13 years

Total: 713 participants



CASE STUDY WHEELWORKS MULTIPLE REALITIES



With 40 per cent of Belfast City Council's arts funding targeted at projects for children and young people, it's clear how much importance is placed on facilitating creative expression in the upcoming generation.

This is a vital investment, not just in future individual lives, but for a healthier, more inclusive and engaged society overall.

Wheelworks' projects are always driven by young people, many of whom are approaching art for the very first time. Their Multiple Realities programme encourages young people to explore issues of identity – including sexuality, disability and ethnicity – using new digital technologies alongside more traditional art forms.

What's the Difference? was the theme adopted by the participants in Wheelworks' recent Multiple Realities collaboration with WAVE Trauma. The ten 11 to 16 year olds had experienced severe personal trauma, and the programme allowed them to devise and implement their own digital art project, taking them on a voyage of self-discovery on the way.

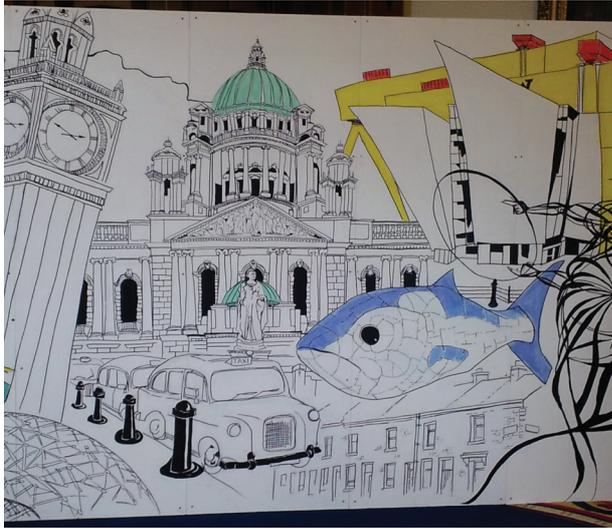
Wheelworks' Karen McIlvenny, the Multiple Realities programme coordinator, explains how careful planning and collaboration helped to create a hugely successful project.

"We always work through youth and community groups and generate projects for kids who wouldn't always have access to arts. But in this case it wasn't just about accessibility to arts – there were, of course, serious issues around it.

"These are young people who've experienced terrible things, some as recently as a couple of months ago. Suicide, sectarianism, alcoholism and even having parents murdered were all issues. These were often fresh in the young person's minds, so it's essential not just to have youth leaders there, but also counsellors on hand."

The project began with a confidence-building session to put the young people at ease with each other:

"Many of these kids are what might be called 'problematic' or 'lively' at school. An introductory session is so important to give them that initial belief in themselves."



“

One of the girls took her image back to where her father had been shot dead. It was just at the time of the elections too, and she had herself photographed there on the spot, among the election posters, holding up her own work.”

The session also put the participants at ease with using new technology, though, Karen laughs, “The technology bit always comes easy for that generation.”

Wheelworks then got a visual artist and digital artist to sit with the young people as they worked out their own vision for the project. The idea for the theme and the medium – macro-photography, extremely close-up photography – came from an unexpected talking point.

“There was a discussion about burkhas, and that all you could see was a person’s eyes if they were wearing one. This then led on to the idea of filming up-close and the eyes being the windows of the soul.”

Once the young people had created a series of macro-photographic images, the artwork was printed on Corex – the same material used for election posters. They then took their work back into their communities and the spaces and places that were important to them.

Karen has seen firsthand how from reticent, even hostile beginnings, such a project can radically alter the relationship young people have with themselves, with each other and their communities. This is backed up by the testimonies of the participants.

“I believe in myself now and I can do good work,” one young person remarked. Another spoke about enjoying getting to know about “other people’s community and culture”. “I learned that I can do class things when I put my head to it,” enthused a third.

Does Karen think that this kind of work has a significant, long-term impact?

“Definitely. When we started, they claimed they haven’t an idea between them, and they initially clammed up. By the end, the artists could hardly keep up with all the suggestions coming! Many young people found their voice here, and many others will have a lifelong engagement with arts ahead of them. And that’s the real mark of success.”



For more information, visit www.wheelworks.org.uk

Tourism Culture and Arts Unit

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Requests for support for BIDs
Date:	20 January 2015
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Lisa Toland, ext 3427

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware that, at the December 2014 meeting of the Development Committee, a request for support from those working on the Business Improvement District (BID) applications for the Cathedral Quarter and Lisburn Road areas was presented to the committee for consideration.
1.2	Members will also recall that the committee previously agreed to provide £45,000 to Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM) to support the recruitment of a member of staff to carry out preparatory work on a Business Improvement District (BID) for a defined area within the city core. The council's funding was matched with a similar amount from Department for Social Development (DSD), with the funding to be allocated over an 18 month period.
1.3	BCCM, Cathedral Quarter Trust and Lisburn Road Business Association (LRBA) were the three Belfast-based organisations selected to become pilots as part of a "BIDs Academy". This was an initiative by DSD to identify areas that had the potential and interest in becoming a BID area and to provide them with support to strengthen their initiative and make them better prepared once the BIDs legislation was in place and organisations were formally invited to apply to become a BID.
1.4	After discussion at the December 2014 meeting, Members asked that engagement take place between council officers and representatives from BCCM to see whether they had any capacity or resources available to provide support to CQT and LRBA to help them undertake the necessary preparatory work on their BID submissions. They also asked that maps of the BID areas in the city centre and Cathedral Quarter be provided for their information.

2	Key Issues
2.1	Cathedral Quarter Trust requested a contribution from the council of up to £37,000 towards a resource to carry out the BIDs preparatory work. They have already carried out a significant volume of work in analysing the database provided by Land and Property Services (LPS) and now need to spend time on additional promotion of the BID and securing support for the submission from local businesses. This work is currently being done within their own resources (both staff and financial resources) but they consider that it will require a full-time staff resource along with some administrative support and some overhead costs associated with promotional activities. They expect the overall costs to be in the region of £70-£80,000 and are seeking match funding from NITB and DSD.
2.2	Lisburn Road Business Association (LRBA) have carried out some preliminary work on the BID to date including defining the area, getting the database from LPS and undertaking some planning and preparatory works to set out the programme of activity for the coming year. The next stages for the group are to create a BIDs website and develop a regular newsletter, undertake a survey of the 300+ businesses in the BID area and carry out a review of services/agreements currently in place within the BID area to clarify the baseline. Following that, they will develop a communications plan, develop the business plan and implement the campaign in the run up to the decision date in late Autumn 2015. LRBA currently has £12,000 that it has secured from Area Working Group monies and is using this to undertake the preliminary work. It estimates that it will need one full-time resource (costing around £35,000 p.a.) plus some overhead costs (indicative costs around £15,000) to carry out the required development activity.
2.3	The Development Committee was previously advised that there was no budget available with the Development Department to finance either of these requests in the draft budgets for 2015/16 or in the current financial year.
2.4	Officers from the Development Department also engaged with BCCM to identify whether they had any resources or capacity that they could allocate to support the development of the BIDs in Cathedral Quarter and Lisburn Road areas. At this point, BCCM have advised that their BIDs Manager has a full programme of work to meet the requirements set out in the BCCM BIDs submission. As such, she would not be able to provide any substantial support to either Cathedral Quarter Trust or Lisburn Road Business Association (LRBA).

3	Resource Implications
3.1	CQT have requested funding of £37,000 towards the cost of a BIDs Manager as well as some overheads. LRBA have requested funding in the region of £50,000 to support this activity. This represents a combined financial request of around £87,000. As highlighted above there are no resources currently available to meet these costs.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no specific equality and good relations implications.

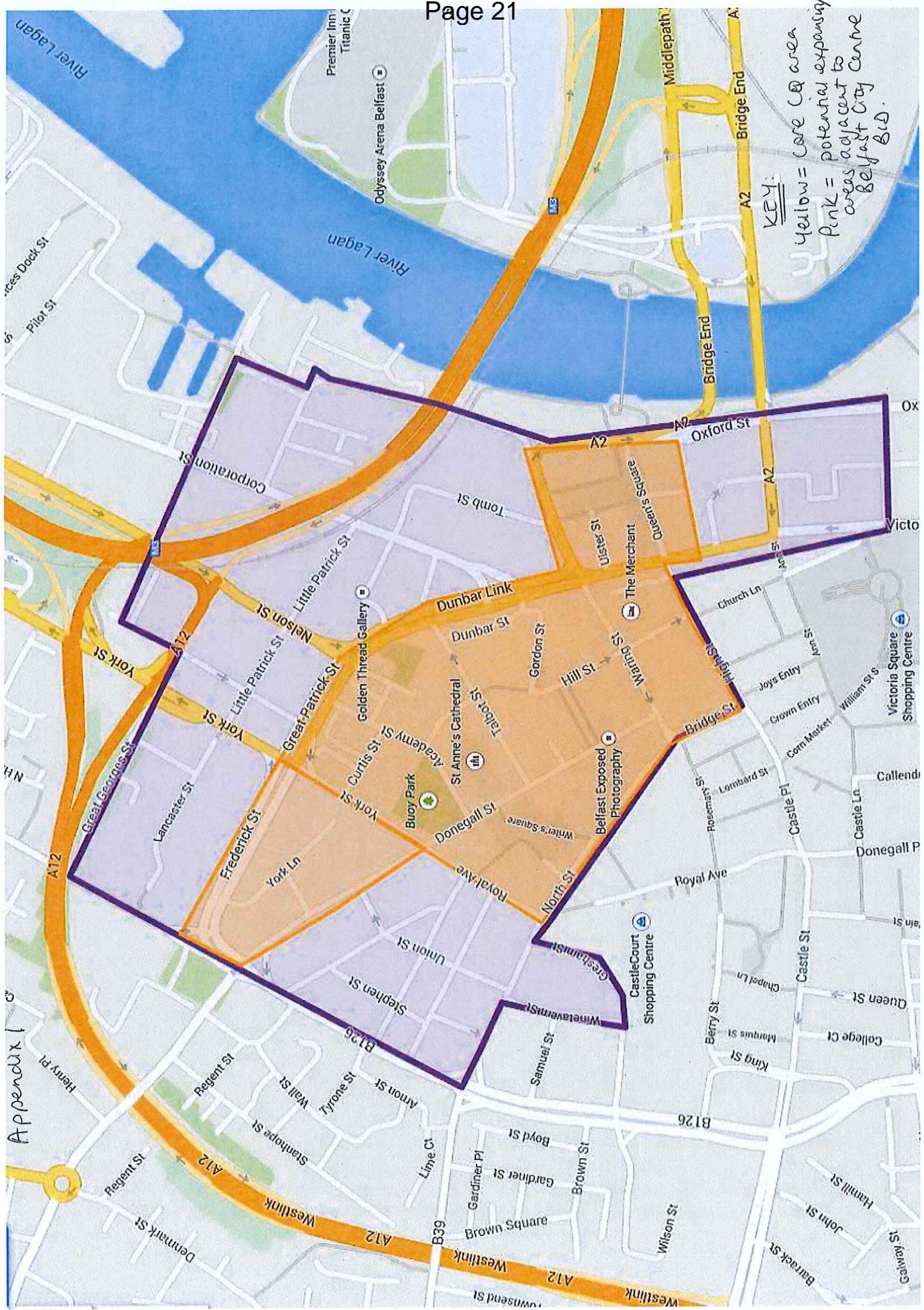
5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note the requests for financial support towards the BID development process from CQT and LRBA - Note the advice from BCCM that they are not in a position to provide any substantial support to either Cathedral Quarter Trust or Lisburn Road Business Association

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Advise on how the requests for support from Cathedral Quarter Trust and Lisburn Road Business Association should be considered in the absence of any financial resources at this point in time.
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6	Key to Abbreviations
BCCM – Belfast City Centre Management BID – Business Improvement District CQT – Cathedral Quarter Trust LPS – Land and Property Services LRBA – Lisburn Road Business Association DSD - Department for Social Development	

7	Appendices
Appendix 1 – map of Cathedral Quarter area BID Appendix 2 – map of Belfast City Centre area BID	

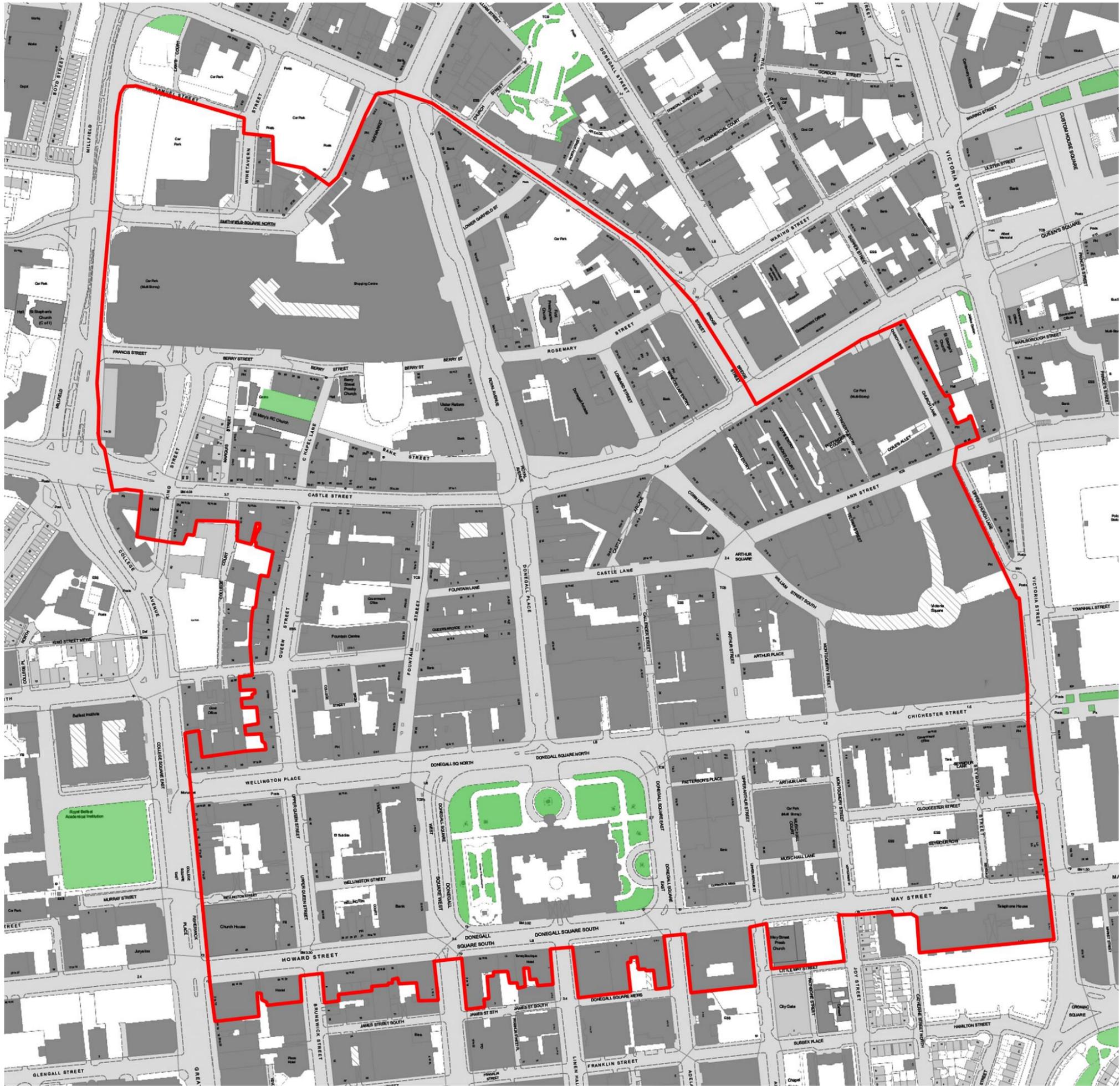
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KEY:
 yellow = core CA area
 pink = potential expanding areas adjacent to Belfast City Centre B.I.D.

Appendix 1

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Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Markets rights policy – clarification on fee rates
Date:	20 January 2015
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Clodagh Cassin, Markets Development Manager, ext 5455

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware that, in June 2012, the Development Committee approved a new Markets Rights policy for the Council. This policy set in place a framework which allowed the Council to utilise its historic rights to hold markets and to extend these rights to third party organisations to allow them to operate independent markets.
1.2	The main driver of this policy was the growing number of requests for Council from private operators to establish their own markets. A public consultation on the policy was carried out in the Summer of 2011 and the policy was endorsed by the Development Committee at its June 2012 meeting.
1.3	The policy sets out the various types of markets, the relevant conditions and the fees applicable to each. Currently, there are two elements to the market licence fee, namely a one-off licence fee and a fee per stall for each market day. The policy states that both the licence fees and the fees per stall will be waived for any market which is organised “for solely charitable purposes”. It also notes that discounted licence fees will be payable for events run by charities or non-commercial operators.

2	Key Issues
2.1	At the time of drafting the markets rights policy, the reference to markets held for “solely charitable purposes” was intended to cover one-off fund-raising events for a specific purpose, for example a car boot sale in aid of a child’s medical treatment. However, with the policy now in operation for over two years, it has become apparent that there is some ambiguity around what types of activities this might incorporate.
2.2	Officers have therefore engaged with colleagues from the Legal Services section to consider how the policy could be amended to clarify this point. Given that

	<p>there are a number of applications pending, a proposed clarification has been provided within the report. This simply seeks to provide additional clarity around the terminology used in the existing policy with regard to fees payable. It is proposed that a full review of the policy will be carried out in the coming months, with the revised policy to be brought back to the relevant Council committee for endorsement.</p>
2.3	<p>At present, fees (both licence fees and stallage fees) are waived in the case of car boot sales/speciality markets “operated for solely charitable purposes”. Discounted licence fees and full stallage fees are payable in the case of car boot sales/speciality markets operated by a non-commercial organisers/operators or by a registered charity.</p>
2.4	<p>The current fee levels are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – £50 for a one-off licence – £100 for a licence to cover multiple markets – £6 per stall at markets/£3 per stall at car boot sales.
2.5	<p>While the policy refers to a “discounted licence fee” in certain instances, no discounted fees have been applied to date. In all instances, markets have been either considered as “solely for charitable purposes” with no fees payable, or operated on a commercial basis, with full fees payable.</p>
2.6	<p>There are a number of different business entities working for charitable, non-commercial and commercial purposes. The Charity Commission estimates that there are between 7,000 and 12,000 charities currently operating in Northern Ireland.</p>
2.7	<p>Community Interest Companies (CICs) were created by the Companies (Audit, Investigations and Community Enterprise) Act 2004 and are a special type of limited company which is intended to benefit the community rather than private shareholders. A CIC is a social enterprise and a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community. According to the Community Interest Company Association there are nearly 10,000 CICs across the UK (no figures are currently available for Northern Ireland).</p>
2.8	<p>The benefit of establishing a CIC as opposed to a charity is, in part, due to the restrictions which are imposed on the trading abilities of charities. No such restrictions apply to a CIC. In addition, the founder of a CIC can be paid for their work.</p>
2.9	<p>Advice from our Legal Services team suggests that it is unlikely that a CIC will meet the criteria set out in the policy in respect of events for “solely charitable purposes” as there is no requirement for them to comply with this objective. While a CIC has a community focus as opposed to pursuing solely commercial interests, it does not have to exist for “solely charitable purposes”. In this regard, it is suggested that it does not meet the current stipulations of the policy in terms of organisations exempt from fee payments but that it benefits from the discounted licence fee that is applied to non-commercial organisers/operators or by registered charities.</p>
2.10	<p>If stall fees were waived for both charities and CICs, this could represent a significant loss of potential income to the Council. Given the management</p>

	<p>associated with processing these markets applications, there is a need to allocate officer time to this activity and this is likely to increase as interest as markets grow. By way of example, based on a 30 stall weekly market at £6 per stall, a full fee waiver would mean an annual loss of income of £9,000 to the Council for that market alone.</p>												
2.11	<p>In order to address the confusion with the existing policy, the following clarification is proposed:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Description of organiser</th> <th>Licence fee payable?</th> <th>Stallage fees payable?</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Organisation operating for "solely charitable purposes", namely a charity, sporting group, social group, church or one-off fundraising market where the event is staffed by volunteers and the groups receives full proceeds of the sale</td> <td>No</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Registered charity, non-commercial organisation including CICs, social enterprises and organisations where the primary purpose is not for commercial return</td> <td>Discounted licence fee payable</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All other markets</td> <td>Yes</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Description of organiser	Licence fee payable?	Stallage fees payable?	Organisation operating for "solely charitable purposes", namely a charity, sporting group, social group, church or one-off fundraising market where the event is staffed by volunteers and the groups receives full proceeds of the sale	No	No	Registered charity, non-commercial organisation including CICs, social enterprises and organisations where the primary purpose is not for commercial return	Discounted licence fee payable	Yes	All other markets	Yes	Yes
Description of organiser	Licence fee payable?	Stallage fees payable?											
Organisation operating for "solely charitable purposes", namely a charity, sporting group, social group, church or one-off fundraising market where the event is staffed by volunteers and the groups receives full proceeds of the sale	No	No											
Registered charity, non-commercial organisation including CICs, social enterprises and organisations where the primary purpose is not for commercial return	Discounted licence fee payable	Yes											
All other markets	Yes	Yes											
2.12	<p>It is also proposed that the discounted licence fee rate is set at 50% of the full licence fee, i.e. £25 licence fee payable for a one-off market and £50 licence fee for a recurring market. The full stallage fees would be payable.</p>												
2.13	<p>Should Members agree this clarification on the fees, a full review of the policy will be undertaken by the Markets Unit and Legal Services in the coming months and the revised policy will be brought back to the relevant Council committee for endorsement.</p>												

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<p>No specific resource requirements, apart from officer time to process and manage market applications. The policy is currently generating small levels of income the Council each year but the management costs are currently in excess of the licence fees generated.</p>
4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	<p>Equality and good relations considerations were taken account of in developing the original policy.</p>

5	Recommendations
5.1	<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Note the current markets rights policy and references to fee waiver/discounted fee rates – Agree the clarification provided at 2.10 regarding licence fees and stallage fees payable by market operators – Note the proposal to review the markets licence policy and to bring the revised policy back to the relevant Council committee for endorsement.

6	Decision Tracking
Timeline: June 2015	Reporting Officer: John McGrillen



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Consultation: A strategy for the delivery of generalist advice services in Northern Ireland 2015-2020
Date:	20 January 2015
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Catherine Taggart, Community Services Manager, ext 3525

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The Council has been asked to respond to DSD's arrangements for a proposed new strategy for the delivery of generalist advice services for the period 2015-2020. This new strategy is intended to follow on from the current strategy, "Opening Doors", which was the first ever strategy on the delivery of voluntary advice services in Northern Ireland. Opening doors was launched in 2007 and was charged with changing the approach to the delivery of voluntary advice services across the region. The strategy was geared to put in place an integrated, quality advice service across Northern Ireland.
1.2	A formal evaluation of Opening doors has been completed by the Department for Social Development (DSD). The evaluation report recognises that, whilst progress towards all five strategic objectives in Opening Doors has been made, there has not yet been wide spread and significant change in the delivery of advice services across the region. The evaluation report points to a growing recognition of the need for better collaboration across the Advice Sector, with some examples of successful integration and collaboration emerging. It recognises that the strategy's overarching aim of putting in place integrated quality advice services across NI and its five strategic outcomes remain valid and appropriate. Going forward, work already done to implement the Opening Doors Strategy has provided a good starting point to build upon.
1.3	The 2015-2020 document sets out, for consultation, arrangements for a proposed new strategy for the delivery of generalist advice services. The public consultation aims to facilitate a wide ranging discussion on the main challenges facing advice services in Northern Ireland, The consultation document sets out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A proposed new vision for the strategy, together with underpinning values - A series of high level strategic objectives - Key priorities and proposals geared to support delivery of the strategic

	objectives
1.4	Development of the new strategy, will guide the delivery of generalist advice services, strengthening and supporting service delivery in a changing environment, over the period 2015-2020.
1.5	Generalist advice includes advice on issues like welfare benefits, housing, finance, consumer issues and employment issues. It involves the provision of initial broadly based advice services with the option for referral to organisations which can provide more in-depth support. Generalist advice services are currently provided throughout Northern Ireland by Citizens Advice Bureau and Advice NI.
1.6	The emerging strategy recognises the key challenges arising from key policy drivers such as the Reform of Local Government, the planned Welfare Reforms and the Financial Capability Strategy. The strategy also recognises the need to maximise the impact of scarce resources by securing services which represent value for money and which make a real difference to people's lives. The proposals contained in this emerging strategy are geared to address these challenges whilst building on the recognised strengths of the Advice Sector.
1.7	This consultation does not address specialist advice services which are typically linked to a specific issue such as disability or debt or to those Advice providers that deal with specific target groups rather than the population as a whole.
1.8	It is planned that the new strategy will be structured around a vision statement underpinned by a number of values. The strategy will also set out a series of key high level strategic objectives which will be supported by key priorities and proposals which are, collectively, geared to guide and strengthen the provision of generalist advice services over the next five years.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The consultation seeks views on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the suggested vision and underpinning values; - the proposed strategic objectives and the identified priorities and proposals.
2.2	<u>The Vision and Values for a new strategy</u> It is proposed that the vision for the provision of generalist advice services is "to have in place accessible, quality generalist advice services for the people of Northern Ireland"
2.3	It is proposed that the vision is underpinned by the following values: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impartiality - provide an impartial service to everyone regardless of race, religious belief, political opinion, age, sex, sexual orientation or disability. - Accessibility - provide an accessible service to everyone. - Confidentiality - provide a confidential service to clients and meet all data protection legislative requirements - Independence - Be independent of political parties, statutory organizations and government. Be free from political interference

	<p>and any conflicts of interest.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effectiveness – provide an effective service to all clients and the community and show effectiveness through demonstratable and measurable outcomes. - Accountability – provide a service which is accountable to users and others who work with advice providers. - Free to the user – all generalist advice should be provided at no cost to the user.
2.4	<p>The vision with underpinning values are set alongside seven strategic objectives outlined as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To empower and enable people to help themselves - To have an aligned and complementary approach to the delivery of advice services - To have a sustainable Advice Sector which maximises the impact of resource - To maximise accessibility to quality generalist advice services - To encourage the role of the Advice Sector in contributing to the policy development cycle - To support the delivery of the strategy - To deliver the strategy
2.5	<p>Within the consultation, each of these strategic objectives has a number of priorities and proposals for consideration and response by stakeholders.</p>
2.6	<p>In order to have a robust and considered response to the strategy Community Services also sought and collated the view of other relevant internal departments. Their responses have been included in the provisional draft response.</p>
2.7	<p>The draft council response to the strategy is attached at Appendix 1 using the Advice Strategy Consultation questionnaire provided as the preferred method for responses to be submitted. It responds to questions set out in the consultation document. The key elements of the response include:</p>
2.8	<p><u>Vision and Values for a new Strategy</u> Perhaps the vision statement should state that advice is to be free, i.e. 'To have in place free, accessible, quality generalist advice services for the people of Northern Ireland.'</p> <p>When it comes to independence, there must also be the perception of independence, especially when political parties are involved in advice provision. This seems to be more of an issue for smaller councils in rural areas rather than Belfast.</p>
2.9	<p><u>Objective 1: to empower and enable people to help themselves</u> There is broad agreement with the priorities outlined. The move towards an online service is in keeping with modern society. Online services is a useful tool in helping to empower individuals to help themselves rather than being totally dependent on an advisor.</p> <p>Importantly, it also helps to free up appointments for those who might benefit more from one to one assistance.</p>

2.10	<p>Whilst self service provision is to be encouraged, we should be mindful of individuals who are not computer literate and those who do not have access to computers or internet access. We also need to ensure facilities are in place for individuals who cannot speak English.</p> <p><u>Objective 2: To have an aligned and complementary approach to the delivery of advice services</u></p> <p>We strongly agree that service delivery should be organised to take account of changes from the Reform of Local Government. The responsibility for delivery of the strategy should not rest entirely with DSD. There is a case for joined up working between regional and local government as well as NI Advice Service Consortium and representatives from frontline advice providers. The regional bodies need to work closely with member groups to support them in delivering the various aspects of this strategy.</p> <p>CAB is a well recognised brand name but brand recognition is lacking when it comes to independent Advice providers. Promotion and branding of the independent advice sector is something which Advice NI could do in conjunction with their member groups.</p> <p>Joint training between CAB and Independents is an action which should be encouraged and facilitated between advice providers.</p>
2.11	<p><u>Objective 3: To have a sustainable Advice Sector which maximises the impact of resources</u></p> <p>We strongly agree there is a need to find new and innovative ways to provide better value for money and enhance the sustainability of the Advice sector. There is agreement of the need to review organisational structures and create a more efficient delivery model through the adoption of common systems and pooling of resources. In terms of maximising the impact of resources, Belfast has led the way. We have worked with delivery organisations to develop area based advice consortia and we have funded a citywide tribunal service which is the first of its kind in NI.</p> <p>There is the need for the advice sector to become more business like to ensure best use of resources. It has been the case that many providers have provided a type of handholding service to clients but the environment is changing and given the ever increasing demand on the sector, clients now need to be encouraged and supported to help themselves. Advisors need to free up their time to deal with individuals with more complex cases and those to require more in-depth support</p>
2.12	<p><u>Objective 4: To maximise accessibility to quality generalist advice services</u></p> <p>We strongly agree that good quality advice services are available to those who need them, that services are readily available and easily accessed and there is a need to increase the provision and use of telephony and digital services.</p> <p>The introduction of a single IT recording system to be used by advice sector groups has been encouraged and financially supported by the Voluntary and Community Unit within DSD. Not all groups are using this system and this is something which should be reviewed with the aim of getting all groups on to the one IT system.</p> <p>In order to maximise accessibility, advice providers should promote web-based resources such as 'how to' guides, FAQ pages, pdf information leaflets, etc.</p>

	<p>CAB is moving towards Information Kiosks in public places (shopping centres, libraries, etc). This is to be encouraged and supported as it is complementary to face-to-face advice provision and encourages more self empowerment on the part of individuals. It is also an excellent way of providing accessible information outside of normal office hours (weekends, evenings, etc).</p> <p>A move towards a telephony service as the main method of accessing information is being promoted by some providers (eg. CAB). This makes good business sense in an environment of limited resources and increasing demands. It also enables face-to-face appointments to be available for those who need them most. A triage system for people contacting advice providers is to be encouraged as it promotes better business efficiency.</p> <p>There is agreement with having consistent Quality Standards in place: perhaps this should be linked to the principles for achieving vision.</p> <p><u>Objective 5: To encourage the role of the Advice Sector in contributing to the policy development cycle</u></p> <p>2.13 The Advice Sector should have a role in contributing to policy development as they are the people who see firsthand how governmental policies are working. There is a need for evidence based policy contribution as opposed to anecdotal input. Their input will be invaluable in assisting policymakers to develop policies and procedures which are in keeping with day to day experiences of individuals. The advice sector should be involved at a consultative level in every stage of policy development.</p> <p><u>Objective 6: To support the delivery of the strategy</u></p> <p>2.14 We strongly agree with the priorities of having consistent training, quality standards and IT systems across the advice network. There is a need to enhance communications structures locally and regionally amongst the advice sector. The local consortia model developed in Belfast could be used as an example in other council areas where there are a number of advice providers in operation.</p> <p>We recognise volunteers are one of the biggest resources within the generalist advice sector. There is agreement that experienced volunteers should be recognised for their contribution and the on-going contributions they make to a sector which is heavily reliant on voluntary workers. There is also the need to develop new volunteering opportunities. It is acknowledged that without volunteers the sector would falter. All volunteers should be adequately trained and supported. An audit of volunteer needs would help identify the various needs and measures to be put in place to help support and encourage volunteering in the advice sector.</p> <p>The regional bodies need to work closely with member groups to support them in delivering the various aspects of the strategy. In addition, an action plan to accompany the strategy should be developed with key milestones and robust review mechanisms to ensure effective delivery of the strategy.</p> <p><u>Objective 7: To deliver the strategy</u></p> <p>2.15 The responsibility of delivering the strategy should not rest entirely with DSD. There is a case for joined up working between regional and local government as well as NI Advice Service Consortium and reps from frontline advice providers.</p>
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2.16	Finally, the strategy and its implementation should be reviewed on a regular basis, by all stakeholders and, where necessary, steps taken to ameliorate difficulties at an early stage.
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3	Resource Implications
3.1	There are no resource implications attached to submitting the consultation report.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no Equality and Good Relations implications attached to this report.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to approve the draft Belfast City Council (BCC) response to the consultation and raise any additional issues, relating to the consultation document, that they would like to be included.

6	Decision Tracking
John McGrillen – Director for Development Catherine Taggart – Community Development Manager	

7	Key to Abbreviations
DSD – Department for Social Development CAB – Citizens Advice Bureau	

8	Documents Attached
Appendix 1: Consultation questionnaire: Draft Response to DSD strategy for the delivery of generalist advice services in Northern Ireland 2015-2020	

**Advising, Supporting, Empowering.
A strategy for the delivery of generalist advice services in Northern Ireland 2015-2020**

Advice Strategy Consultation questionnaire.

Introduction and background

The Department for Social Development is consulting on a new strategy for the provision of generalist advice services in Northern Ireland. This includes advice on issues like welfare benefits, housing, finance and consumer issues and employment issues.

This survey forms part of the public consultation process on the draft proposals for the new strategy. The survey should be completed in conjunction with the consultation document which sets out the background and detail of the proposals. The consultation document is called '**Advising, Supporting, Empowering' a Strategy for the Delivery of Generalist Advice Services in Northern Ireland 2015-2020**'. It is available in the Consultation Zone on Department for Social Development (DSD) website <http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/consultations.htm>

This consultation will run from 22 September 2014 until 14 December 2014.

DSD have commissioned the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency's Analytical Services Unit to collate the consultation responses. All responses will be treated as confidential and no individual or organisation will be identifiable from the responses given.

If you have any queries on this survey please do not hesitate to contact the Analytical Services Unit:

asu@dsdni.gov.uk

About you

Your details

No individual will be identified in the analysis of responses, however under the Freedom of Information Act anonymised individual responses may be disclosed.

1. Please provide your details below (* denotes required text):

Name: *	Belfast City Council
Address:	City Hall
City/Town: *	Belfast
Post Code:	BT2 8BP
Email Address:	Taggartc@belfastcity.gov.uk ; mullenc@belfastcity.gov.uk
Phone Number:	02890320202

2. Please tick the box below if you wish your response to be held confidential

[] I wish my response to be confidential

Are you responding as an individual or as a representative on behalf of another group or organisation?

As an individual.

As a representative on behalf of another group or organisation (including charities, advocacy groups, representative bodies and other organisations).

What is the name of the organisation?

Belfast City Council

The Vision and Values for a new strategy

The background and details behind the priorities and proposals are in section of the consultation document titled “*The Vision and Values for a new strategy*”.

Question: To what extent do you agree with the following priorities and proposals?

Priorities	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That a new Vision for the new strategy be agreed. That underpinning values be agreed. 						
Proposal 1	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
Vision statement – “To have in place accessible, quality generalist advice services for the people of Northern Ireland”.						
Proposal 2	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
The underpinning values of the Vision are - Impartiality, Accessibility, Confidentiality, Independence, Effectiveness, Accountability, Free to the user.						

For consideration: Please provide details of any other components that you feel should be included, in the Vision or underpinning values?

- Some of the values could be made clearer, for example detail what is DSD’s understanding of ‘Effectiveness’.
- Accountability and Independence could be made clearer by emphasising the service is open and transparent.
- In terms of vision and principles, it would be good to see a direct link between accessible, effective advice provision and building emotional resilience and mental health and wellbeing in local communities.
- Perhaps the vision statement should state that advice is to be free, i.e. *‘To have in place free, accessible, quality generalist advice services for the people of Northern Ireland.’*
- When it comes to independence, there must be the perception of independence, especially when political parties are involved in advice provision. This seems to be more of an issue for smaller councils in rural areas rather than Belfast.

Objective 1: To empower and enable people to help themselves

The background and details behind the priorities and proposals are in the section of the consultation document titled “**Strategic Objective 1: To empower and enable people to help themselves**”.

Question: To what extent do you agree with the following priorities and proposals?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide services in a way that empowers and enables people to better manage their own affairs. Increase self service provision and its use. 					
Proposal 3	Generalist advice providers should work to provide people with the skills and confidence to manage their affairs effectively.					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
Proposal 4	Generalist advice providers should increase self service provision and actively promote its use.					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure

For consideration: Do these priorities and proposals address the main issues? Responses are especially welcome that offer suggestions about how the proposals might be implemented or that raise issues that have not been covered.

- Self service is probably the preferred method of initial access for the majority of users as information can quickly be accessed any time it is needed, however lack of access, or capacity to access digital self service provision would be a concern for those who do not have internet access, those who are not IT competent, and people who do not speak English.
- The move towards an online service is in keeping with modern society. Online services is a useful tool in helping to empower individuals to help themselves rather than being totally dependent on an advisor.
- Importantly, it also helps to free up appointments for those who really need one to one assistance.
- Whilst self service provision is to be encouraged, we should be mindful of individuals who are not computer literate and those who do not have access to computers or internet access. We also need to ensure facilities are in place for individuals who cannot speak English.
- Consideration could be given to linking advice services to primary care or family support hubs.

Objective 2: To have an aligned and complementary approach to the delivery of advice services

The background and details behind the priorities and proposals are in the section of the consultation document titled “*Strategic Objective 2: To have an aligned and complementary approach to the delivery of advice services*”.

Question: To what extent do you agree with the following priorities and proposals?

Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service delivery should be organised to take account of changes arising from the Reform of Local Government. Deliver efficient services, which are aligned, minimising duplication and overlap. 					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
Proposal 5	Funders and advice providers should align, simplify and streamline the present mechanisms to work closer, more collaboratively and minimise duplication.					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
Proposal 6	Promote the use of signposting and referrals to maximise service delivery.					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure

For consideration: Do these priorities and proposals address the main issues? Responses are especially welcome that offer suggestions about how the proposals might be implemented or that raise issues that have not been covered.

- CAB is a well recognised brand name but brand recognition is lacking when it comes to the independents. Promotion and branding of the independent advice sector is something which Advice NI could do in conjunction with their member groups.
- Joint training between CAB and Independents is an action which should be encouraged and facilitated between advice providers.
- Locally advice providers should consider running “one stop” shop type events. This would ensure alignment, encourage collaborative working on the ground and enhance the opportunity for signposting and referrals to maximise service delivery.

Objective 3 To have a sustainable Advice Sector which maximises the impact of resources

The background and details behind the priorities and proposals are in the section of the consultation document titled “**Strategic Objective 3: To have a sustainable Advice Sector which maximises the impact of resources**”.

Question: To what extent do you agree with the following priorities and proposals?

Priorities	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find new and innovative ways to provide better value for money. Enhance the sustainability of the Advice Sector. 						
Proposal 7	Review organisational structures and create a more efficient delivery model through the sharing or pooling of resources and adoption of common systems.					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
Proposal 8	Develop new and innovative ways to deliver current services more effectively.					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
Proposal 9	Explore alternative funding sources and models.					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
Proposal 10	Consider a new model for delivery of representation services.					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
Proposal 11	Develop opportunities for diversification and income generation.					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
Proposal 12	Develop services to meet well evidenced need.					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure

For consideration: Do these priorities and proposals address the main issues? Responses are especially welcome that offer suggestions about how the proposals might be implemented or that raise issues that have not been covered.

- The strategy needs to identify ways of linking advice services to outcomes and outcome indicators for new council community plans to ensure collaboration and a more strategic and joined up approach to the provision of advice services.
- The strategy does not reflect this and refers to a principle of working more collaboratively to ensure efficiency and reduce duplication of services.

Objective 4: To maximise accessibility to quality generalist advice services

The background and details behind the priorities and proposals are in the section of the consultation document titled “*Strategic Objective 4: To maximise accessibility to quality generalist advice services*”.

Question: To what extent do you agree with the following priorities and proposals?

Priorities	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good quality advice services are available to those who need them. Services are readily available and easily accessed. Increase the provision and use of telephony and digital services. 						
Proposal 13	Introduce an agreed advice quality standard across the Advice Sector					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
Proposal 14	Extend and promote the use of high quality digital and telephone services.					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
Proposal 15	Provide a full range of services using multiple channels and include face to face services for those who need them most.					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
Proposal 16	Generalist advice providers should have appropriate mechanisms in place to provide advice to people with specific accessibility needs.					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
Proposal 17	Funders of generalist advice services should seek assurance that services meet an agreed quality standard.					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure

For consideration: Do these priorities and proposals address the main issues? Responses are especially welcome that offer suggestions about how the proposals might be implemented or that raise issues that have not been covered.

- In order to maximise accessibility, advice providers should promote web-based resources such as ‘how to’ guides, FAQ pages, pdf information leaflets, etc. There is the need for the advice sector to become more business like to ensure best use of resources. It has been the case that many providers have provided a type of handholding service to clients but the environment is changing and clients now need to be encouraged and supported to help themselves where possible and advisors need to free up their time to deal with individuals with more complex cases and those to require more in-depth support.
- CAB is moving towards Information kiosks in public places (shopping centres, libraries, etc). This is to be encouraged and supported as it is complementary to face-to-face advice provision and encourages more self empowerment on the part of individuals. It is also an excellent way of providing accessible information outside of normal office

hours (weekends, evenings, etc).

- Agree with having Quality Standards in place. Perhaps this should be linked to principles for achieving vision
- The move towards an online service is in keeping with modern society. Online services are a useful tool in helping to empower individuals to help themselves rather than being totally dependent on an advisor.
- Importantly, it also helps to free up appointments for those who really need one to one assistance.
- Whilst self service provision is to be encouraged, we should be mindful of individuals who are not computer literate and those who do not have access to computers or internet access. We also need to ensure facilities are in place for individuals who cannot speak English.
- A move towards a telephony service as the main method of accessing information is being promoted by some providers (eg. CAB). This makes good business sense in an environment of limited resources and increasing demands. It also enables face-to-face appointments to be available for those who need them most. A triage system for people contacting advice providers is to be encouraged as it promotes better business efficiency.

Objective 5: To encourage the role of the Advice Sector in contributing to the policy development cycle

The background and details behind the priorities and proposals are in the section of the consultation document titled **“Strategic Objective 5: To encourage the role of the Advice Sector in contributing to the policy development cycle”**.

Question: To what extent do you agree with the following priorities and proposals?

Priorities	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Advice Sector contributes to the policy development cycle, particularly in terms of independent evidence based input. 						
Proposal 18	Policy makers should seek the contribution of the Advice Sector when developing, reviewing or evaluating policies.					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
Proposal 19	The Advice Sector should contribute to the formulation, development, review and evaluation of policies and to the evidence base that supports these.					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure

For consideration: Do these priorities and proposals address the main issues? Responses are especially welcome that offer suggestions about how the proposals might be implemented or that raise issues that have not been covered.

- The Advice Sector should have a role in contributing to policy development as they are the people who see firsthand how governmental policies are working. There is a need for evidence based policy contribution as opposed to anecdotal input. Their input will be invaluable in assisting policymakers to develop policies and procedures which are in keeping with day to day experiences of individuals. The advice sector should be involved at a consultative level in every stage of policy development.

Objective 6: To support the delivery of the strategy

The background and details behind the priorities and proposals are in the section of the consultation document titled “**Strategic Objective 6: To support the delivery of the strategy**”.

Question: To what extent do you agree with the following priorities and proposals?

Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That consistent training, quality standards and IT systems are in place across the advice network. Develop communications structures to support the changing advice environment. Develop volunteering within the Advice Sector. 	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
Proposal 20	Training should be consistent, to a standard that is set out in an advice quality standard and providers should not duplicate or overlap training services.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
Proposal 21	A single IT system (that includes Management Information Statistics) should be encouraged across the advice network to improve consistency, reduce costs and improve support for frontline staff and volunteers.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
Proposal 22	Develop an integrated communications strategy.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
Proposal 23	Retain experienced volunteers, recognise their contribution and develop new volunteering opportunities to help ensure the ongoing involvement of volunteers in advice provision.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure

For consideration: Do these priorities and proposals address the main issues? Responses are especially welcome that offer suggestions about how the proposals might be implemented or that raise issues that have not been covered.

- The responsibility of delivery the strategy should not rest entirely with DSD. There is a case for joined up working between regional and local government as well as NI Advice Service Consortium and reps from frontline advice providers.
- The regional bodies need to work closely with member groups to support them in delivering the various aspects of this strategy. In addition, an Action Plan to accompany the strategy should be developed with key milestones and a realistic timeframe otherwise the strategic objectives could easily ‘slide’. It is also important to acknowledge the different issues of urban and rural areas and, for this reason, the strategy should be able to accommodate both and not be a one size fits all paper.
- The strategy and its implementation should be reviewed on a regular basis, by all stakeholders and, where necessary, steps taken to ameliorate difficulties at an early stage.

- Agree with the need to develop the use of volunteers. Volunteers are one of the biggest resources within the generalist advice sector. It is acknowledged that without volunteers the sector would falter. All volunteers should be adequately trained and supported.
- An audit of volunteer needs would help identify the various needs and measures to be put in place to help support and encourage volunteering in the advice sector.
- Agree that it is in the interests of the Advice Sector to have a single IT and management information system to be able to provide and record robust, evidence based services. This will be particularly important going forward as government and funders will have to give assurance that value for money services are in place. Anecdotal evidence will not be attractive to funders who will want to see evidenced outcomes and impact for any investment. The strategy needs to identify who pays for the implementation of this system. This was also identified as a priority in the last strategy but was not implemented.

Objective 7: To deliver the strategy

The background and details behind the priorities and proposals are in the section of the consultation document titled “**Strategic Objective 7: To deliver the strategy**”.

Question: To what extent do you agree with the following priorities and proposals?

Priorities	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No view /not sure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure the strategy and its associated Action Plan are implemented, monitored and evaluated. To ensure strong, effective engagement structures are in place to support delivery. 						
Proposal 24						
The strategy will have an Action Plan setting out how the strategy will be implemented and which can be adapted to reflect future needs and priorities.						
Proposal 25						
DSD will establish a Steering Group to oversee the implementation of the Action Plan and monitor the strategy’s delivery and evaluation.						
Proposal 26						
The cross cutting nature and the need to provide aligned and complementary advice services should also be reflected in the makeup and work of the Steering Group.						
Proposal 27						
The implementation of the strategy will be monitored and reported on throughout its lifetime and there will be interim and final evaluation reports with recommendations.						
Proposal 28						
Have in place supporting structures to ensure that the cross cutting nature of advice provision is reflected.						

For consideration: Do these priorities and proposals address the main issues? Responses are especially welcome that offer suggestions about how the proposals might be implemented or that raise issues that have not been covered.

There is agreement that the priorities and proposals presented are required to ensure the strategy is implemented effectively during the period. It is important that the responsibility of delivering the strategy does not rest entirely with DSD. There is a case for joined up working between regional and local government as well as NI Advice Services Consortium and reps from frontline advice providers. The regional bodies need to work closely with member groups to support them in delivering the various aspects of the strategy. In addition, an action plan to accompany the strategy should be developed with key milestones and a realistic timeframe.

It is also important to acknowledge the different issues of urban and rural areas and, for this reason, the strategy should be able to accommodate both and not be a one size fits all papers.

The strategy and its implementation should be reviewed on a regular basis, by all stakeholders and where necessary, steps taken to ameliorate difficulties in delivery at an early stage.

