



Belfast City Council

Report to: Special Development Committee

Subject: Strategic Regeneration Frameworks (SRFs)

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Relevant Background Information

Under the Renewing Communities Programme each Area Partnership Board (APB) has been resourced to, and tasked with, producing a Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) for their area by the Department for Social Development (DSD). Each APB has engaged a consultancy team to support them in this work which is due for completion in June – September 2008. Whilst each APB is at a different stage in development, efforts are being made to co-ordinate activity across the frameworks.

Engagement with councillors in each partnership board area has been pursued directly by the APBs. Some councillors are participating on the steering groups of the SRFs whilst others input through the APB meetings and consultation processes. Minister and MLAs have been engaged to a varying level dependent on the approach taken by the APB and the stage of development of their SRF.

Members will be aware that at the Development Committee meeting of 14 May, the Committee agreed to receive presentations from BRO and the Area Partnership Boards on the subject of Strategic Regeneration Frameworks.

Key Issues

The SRFs are due for completion during summer 2008, after which time they will be submitted to the Minister for Social Development. It is important to note that there are no specific resources committed for implementation of actions arising out of SRFs beyond those monies committed by DSD/BRO for the preparation of the SRFs.

Substantial staff support has been committed to working with the APBs, their consultancy teams and DSD/BRO in the SRF preparation process.

Each APB will submit their final SRFs to Council for consideration and endorsement which is likely to take place post summer. However, in advance, each APB along with BRO are seeking an opportunity to appraise Committee of key issues arising in each area before the finalisation process.

In its civic leadership role, Belfast City Council undertakes tasks relating to coordination, exerting influence and acting as an advocate. Using Council's convening authority, Belfast City Council frequently brings organisations together to agree an overall vision and accompanying strategy or plan. With the advent of community planning coming to Councils as a result of the recent RPA announcement, Belfast City Council will have a statutory duty to prepare an agreed strategy for its area. In advance of this, Belfast City Council is currently engaged in the preparation of a new corporate plan which will consider how Council can best fulfil a strategic leadership role in city-wide planning. In this regard, Council will be considering how the SRFs should be linked or encompassed as part of city-wide planning processes.

Presently under the SRF process it is apparent that APBs are highly supportive of Council taking a lead role in city-wide planning. The APBs are eager that the SRFs are utilised and incorporated into any emergent city-wide plans. BRO are currently reflecting on their view of joining up the SRFs and city-wide planning processes.

In order to initiate discussions on how all 3 organizations can work positively together on integrated city planning, a workshop was held at officer level on 3 March. Options for strategy alignment between all bodies are being further examined through a sub-group and will be brought back to Members for further consideration in due course.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Committee receive presentations from BRO and the Area Partnership Boards on the Strategic Regeneration Frameworks.

Key to Abbreviations

SRFs – Strategic Regeneration Frameworks
APB – Area Partnership Board
DSD – Department for Social Development
BRO – Belfast Regeneration Office