

# **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](http://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](mailto:martin.drumm@dsdni.gov.uk)**

**Website: [www.dsdni.gov.uk](http://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@dndni.gov.uk](mailto:martin.drumm@dndni.gov.uk)**

## **YOUR DETAILS**

**NAME:**

**John Nelson**

**ADDRESS:**

**Belfast City Council  
Cecil Ward Building  
4-10 Linnenhall Street  
Belfast BT2 8BP**

**TEL:**

**9027 0357**

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**nelsonj@belfastcity.gov.uk**

**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**    **Support**    **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.

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

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
- 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/>).