



Belfast City Council

Report to: Development Committee

Subject: DSD Advice Funding

Date: 9th December 2009

Reporting Officer: Tim Husbands, Interim Director of Development ext. 3470

Contact Officer: Catherine Taggart, Community Development Manager, ext 3525

Relevant Background Information

The current ongoing economic downturn and resultant uncertainty facing many households has resulted in an increase in the numbers of people accessing the services of advice agencies particularly, but not exclusively, in relation to debt and money advice services. The advice sector is experiencing difficulties in responding to this increased demand.

Following considerable lobbying from both the advice providers and Local Government the Department for Social Development has just announced an additional £500,000 for local advice services across Northern Ireland, of which £167,096.00 is offered to Belfast City Council. The Council has not been asked to provide any match funding support. If the Council accepts the offer of additional resources, this will bring the total financial support for Advice Services in Belfast to £992,727.00.

	<u>DSD Advice Grant</u>	<u>Council Contribution</u>	<u>Combined Total</u>
<u>Original Advice Grant/Contributions</u>	<u>£469,902</u>	<u>£355,729</u>	<u>£825,631</u>
<u>Additional Advice Grant November 2009*</u>	<u>£167,096</u>	<u>£0</u>	<u>£167,096</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>£636,998</u>	<u>£355,729</u>	<u>£992,727</u>

The additional funding may be spent to enhance the existing voluntary advice provision

in Belfast in order to meet the increased demand on the service at this time of recession.

The additional DSD grant is conditional on the utilisation of the full funds by recipient organisations within the current financial year, ending 31 March 2010.

Key Issues

Given the limited time-frame in which the additional available funds can be expended (approx 3 months), systems will need to be developed to ensure any funds available are distributed and made available to service providers as soon as possible.

In order to work within the dictated timeframe, while also maintaining adherence to the current BCC model for Advice & Information Services Support, officers would suggest that any agreed take up of DSD funds is administered via the consortia model.

1. Allocation of available additional funds.

The time-frame will not permit any competition for resources outside the model or indeed any significant reallocation of funding ratios between consortia or within the consortium partners. It is therefore proposed to allocate the additional resources to the 5 advice consortia on a pro rata basis against the agreed deprivation-weighted population formulae.

This will ensure consistency with the 2009/10 BCC standard Advice grant and the BCC/DSD Advice supplementary grant.

Consortium	% of total	£
North	27.33	45,667.33
South	13.51	22,574.67
East	16.82	28,105.55
West	32.34	54,038.84
City Centre	10.00	16,709.61
Total	100%	£167,096.00

2. Application Process

Officers will invite Advice Consortia to submit proposals on how they will utilise the potential available additional funding allocation to enhance their current advice services provision. A generic application pro-forma will be developed requesting information on detailed budget; additional provision, performance indicators, targeted additional outcomes, etc. Applicants will be asked to note specific activity to address the increase in demand due to the current economic downturn and increased outreach provision.

Officers will work with Legal Services to design and issue funding contracts within current corporate procedure.

3. Monitoring

As per current arrangements, all successful consortia will submit monitoring returns to report progress against stipulated targets.

Resource Implications

Other than human resources, there are no additional financial implications for BCC.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the extra DSD funding for advice services is accepted and distributed to the Advice consortiums/groups in the same way as the existing Advice funding.

Decision Tracking

Following approval by Committee the Community Development Manager will implement to ensure uptake and expenditure of additional funds by 31st March 2010.

Timeframe: April 2010

Reporting Officer: Catherine Taggart

Key Abbreviations

DSD – Department of Social Development

BCC - Belfast City Council

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