



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	B-Team - INTERREG IVC Brownfield Network
Date:	11 August 2010
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Relevant Background Information

As outlined in the report to Committee in January 2010 Belfast City Council was confirmed as the Lead Partner in the ERDF funded B -Team INTERREG IVC project.

This European Network project seeks to improve regional policies influencing the regeneration of Brownfield areas through transfer of best practice. The project will provide policy support to the partner cities to assist with the successful development Brownfield sites in order to contribute to the continued sustainable growth and address the issues of urban dereliction and under used land.

The B-Team will bring together experts in Brownfield regeneration from different countries to exchange knowledge and improve regional policies linked to practical work addressing current development issues. This work will provide dual benefits through the development of skill across the participating organisations as well as through the transfer techniques or alternative approaches to the common problems or challenges for the cities. The exchange of knowledge and cooperation will take place in "Brownfield Days" which are local engagement events in the partner cities focussed on addressing the local obstacles to successful regeneration. These experiences and lessons will form the basis for dissemination to a broader public in Seminar and Conference events.

The specific policy or development recommendations will be implemented through the planning or development processes in the partner cities through commitments to improve or introduce new approaches. The partners in the project will sign a "Brownfield Pledge" which commits them to improving their policies or addressing the obstacles to the continued redevelopment of the important city land assets.

Following on from the earlier Committee updates this report seeks to outline the detailed activity for the first partner meeting and approval for participation at the "Brownfield Days" in Oulu, Finland.

Key Issues

The exchange of knowledge and cooperation is focussed on the "Brownfield Days" local engagement events in the partner cities. These concentrated efforts will address the local obstacles to successful regeneration and development of Brownfield land. The first of the "Brownfield Days" will take place in the City of Oulu in Finland on the 13th to 16th September 2010 (See attached programme in Appendix 1).

The project is based on a minimum of two participants from each partner city attending the local engagement events to contribute their specific skills or experience to the understanding of the challenges and the development of potential solutions or alternative approaches.

The INTERREG funded B-Team project will be developed over the period to December 2012 and will include a similar local engagement event in Belfast. Through the participation as the Lead Partner of this project there will be a number of benefits for the Council including:

- Consultant support and advice from international experts and practitioners in Brownfield regeneration (regeneration experts from other countries will participate in local engagement events and support the Council in enhancing regeneration processes)
- Establishment of Belfast City Council as Lead partner in Brownfield regeneration and regional policy development in Europe
- Support in developing practical solutions for existing urban issues (special case studies in Belfast will be presented to the experts from abroad and generic approaches or solutions will be explored on a collaborative basis utilising academic support from a range of institutions)
- Exploration of the potential for the application of innovative methods or approaches (successful lessons from other countries can be assessed in relation to their potential to contribute to regeneration in Belfast)
- European wide engagement within a partnership, raising the Council profile and enhancing the potential to access further funding (as the Lead Partner the Council will demonstrate the ability to manage and deliver complex EU projects)
- Potential for more effective application of resources to existing challenges (through the improvement of the broader policies and approaches regarding Brownfield regeneration future development processes could become more effective and sustainable)
- Development of existing Brownfield sites through the support of international practitioners and a commitment to change policy at the local level (through improving regeneration approaches with the support of experienced international experts more complex sites could be addressed and the context for development changed)
- Local partnership development (through a local thematic stakeholder group different agencies will work together to explore issues in advance of the partnership with European experts in the Brownfield Days)

The Oulu event draft agenda has already been agreed with the hosting partner and features proposals for a high level of local political participation in the proposed workshops and events forming the three day programme as outlined in Appendix 1.

This presents the opportunity for the Council to contribute through both officer and

political participation at the proposed events. Oulu in seeking to progress the regeneration of their redundant waterfront site want to explore the type of regeneration issues frequently encountered by the Development Committee. It is therefore suggested that one of the participants is a member of the Development Committee.

~~The importance of understanding the nature and scale of decline is crucial in the designing and placement of regeneration initiatives that will achieve the optimal outcomes. However, given the finite amount of resources, there will always be a need for some form of prioritisation, which reflects both the need for regeneration and the opportunity to achieve this transformation. One of the main contributors to this research will be the SNAP (Strategic Neighbourhood Action Programme) Unit, whose knowledge in localised socio-economic data will assist in the analytical process~~Guiding principles

~~In determining which variables to adopt, the following guiding principles has been~~

- ~~data available in administrative geographies (e.g. electoral ward);~~
- ~~geography to be of appropriate size to allow for variation in areas (e.g. population less than 3,000);~~
- ~~variable measurable over time;~~
- ~~variable to be appropriate to the chosen theme.~~

Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM)

~~One of the main aims of RTR work has been to improve environs in deprived areas. In the case of RTR, this consideration is no exception. Therefore, the fundamental criterion should be the prevalence of deprivation. It is therefore intended to use the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM) as the most comprehensive measure of deprivation, covering a range of economic, social and physical indicators including income; employment; health deprivation & disability; education, skills and training; proximity to services; living environment; and crime and disorder~~

Resource Implications

There are no additional resource implications

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to approve the attendance of the Chair, or nominee, Project Manager and two Council officers at the Oulu B -Team local engagement event as an approved duty

Decision Tracking

There is no decision tracking attached to this report

Key to Abbreviations

ERDF – European Regional Development Fund

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – programme of Brownfield Days in Oulu / Finland
