



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	European Structural Funds Post 2013
Date:	10 November 2010
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Relevant Background Information

European Structural Funds Post 2013

Members should be aware that European funding known as structural funds run in six year cycles. Northern Ireland has benefited to date from 800 million Euros in structural funds and is currently benefiting from the following funds in the 2007-2013 programming round;

- ERDF (Distributed via DETI) - 300 million Euros
- ESF (Distributed via DEL) - 300 million Euros
- Interreg IVA (Distributed via SEUPB) - 256 million Euros
- Rural Development Programme (Distributed via DARD) – 600million euros
- Peace III (Distributed via SEUPB) -333 million euros

In addition to the mainstream NI funds highlighted above, NI stakeholders can also avail of a wide range of European funding programmes by applying directly to Europe or through nationally appointed contact points. Members will be aware of many of these and also of the fact that BCC through the European Unit has secured a significant amount of funding in recent years both for Council and also city stakeholders. A brief overview of this is given as appendix 1 of this report.

Members should be aware that there remains a highly significant level of European funding available to NI and Europe as a whole to the end of the current funding period December 2013. An outline scan of remaining funds in those pots most relevant to BCC has been undertaken by and is held within the European Unit.

It is the intention that the European Unit will work closely with the Chief Officers once the new corporate plan is produced, to agree a way forward to prioritise and maximise European funding for BCC. This will begin with a maximising resources workshop for Chief Officers in January 2011.

Post 2013

Already stakeholders across Europe including city governments are looking to influence the shape of funding in the next programming round 2014-2020. As Members will be aware, member states across Europe are currently in the grips of economic recession and have competing priorities with much less funding.

There are a number of developments underway presently at the European Union level that will impact on the decisions regarding future Structural Funds programme post 2013:

- EU 2020
- EU Budget Reform
- Future Cohesion Policy

Already quite a number of European cities and regions have written formally to their National governments, the European Commission and European Parliament to begin to set out their position and priorities to try and influence the thinking and planning that is already underway.

BCC has been advised by the lead government department here for EU structural funds, the Department of Finance and Personnel, that the time for consultation with stakeholders such as BCC on the likely funding opportunities and priority areas will be mid to late 2011. However, having spoken to the EU cities and also having tracked the ongoing Eurocities lobby it is important that Belfast begins to formulate its position now, based on existing and emerging information.

The paper attached as appendix 2 of this report sets an early position paper and outlines the strategic context for forming a BCC view and trying to establish a position in terms of what the Council would like to see in a new EU programming round for NI 2014-2020.

Members are asked to consider and approve the attached position paper and approve the submission of the paper to DFP, DETI, DEL, DSD and the European Commission and Parliament and to engage in emerging consultations with respect to the development of the Future Cohesion Policy and Structural funds programme 2014-2020.

Key Issues

None

Resource Implications

Staff resources to develop and communicate BCC's preliminary position with respect to future EU cohesion policy and structural funds.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to approve the submission of an early position paper with respect to Belfast City Council views on EU structural funding post 2013 to NI Government departments, the EU Commission and the EU Parliament.

Key Abbreviations

BCC – Belfast City Council

AGM – Annual General Meeting

NI – Northern Ireland

DFP – Department of Finance and Personnel

DETI – Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment

DEL – Department of Employment and Learning

DSD – Department of Social Development

SEUPB – Special EU Programmes Body

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – EU Funding secured to date

Appendix 2 – Post 2013 preliminary BCC position paper

Appendix 3 – EU 2020 - Belfast Targets