



Development Department

Your reference: Guidance on the Provision of Local Generalist Voluntary Sector Advice

Our reference: 115663

Being dealt with by: Brenda Kelly

Date: 10 March 2011

Tel: 02890 320202 ext 3770

Una Gilmore
DSD
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Dear Una

RE: Consultation: Guidance on the Provision of Local Generalist Voluntary Sector Advice

Please find attached our provisional response to this consultation document. Please note that this is still subject to full consideration by committee and final ratification by full council. We note with regret that the deadline of 7th March could not be extended further to allow for Council ratification to be confirmed.

Provisional Response

1.1. Overall comments

- 1.1.1. The Council is broadly supportive of the draft guidance. The proposals are in line with our existing practice as recently verified by independent review (Deloitte 2008)
- 1.1.2. The draft guidance document proposes that advice provision is "provided through a network of Area Advice Centres" – this is the structure which is currently in place in Belfast City Council.
- 1.1.3. The document recommends that funded advice groups should work to quality advice standards. The advice hubs currently funded by the Council are members of CAB or Advice NI and work to these organisation's quality standards. This is in line with the draft guidance recommendations.
- 1.1.4. We would recommend that funding for provision of local generalist voluntary advice move from yearly allocation of funding to 3 yearly allocation to align with the Community Support Planning cycle.
- 1.1.5. There are potential hidden IT costs for advice providers to ensure appropriate mechanisms for case recording. BCC does not have additional funding available to support the sector with these potential costs.

1.2. Responses to the specific questions

- 1.2.1. We have used the template you provided for specific responses. Please see the following pages.

Thank you for asking us to respond to the proposals.

Yours sincerely

Brenda Kelly
Development Dept.
Belfast City Council
The Cecil Ward Building
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Belfast BT2 8BP



Guidance on the Provision of Local Generalist Voluntary Sector Advice

Introduction

This survey forms part of the Department for Social Development's (DSD's) stakeholder consultation process on the Guidance on the Provision of Local Generalist Voluntary Sector Advice.

DSD have identified a number of key questions in relation to this draft Guidance Document and would be keen to hear your views.

The period for the submission of comments on this consultation document will extend from 5 January 2011 until 7 March 2011.

DSD have commissioned NISRA's Analytical Services Unit to collate the consultation responses. Under the Freedom of Information Act all information contained in your response may be subject to disclosure.

Following analysis of the responses received to this stakeholder consultation, it is anticipated that a guidance document to support local Councils in the resourcing of local voluntary advice services will be finalised by Spring 2011.

If you have any queries on this survey (or require it in an alternative format) please do not hesitate to contact:

Una Gilmore on 028 9082 9430 or by email at:

Una.Gilmore@dndi.gov.uk

About You?

Q1 Are You Responding...?

As an individual

On behalf of an organisation
(please state name of organisation below)

.....Belfast City Council
.....
.....

Q2 Please enter your details below

Name : _____ Brenda Kelly _____

E- mail Address : _____ Kellybrenda@belfastcity.gov.uk _____

Your thoughts on the Guidance Document

Please answer these questions in conjunction with the guidance document - this document is available at:

<http://www.dndi.gov.uk/consultation-provision-of-local-generalist-voluntary-sector-advice.htm>

Q3	How useful if this draft guidance for supporting discussions between local councils and local advice providers about the quality of advice services?
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	Not at all useful	
	Not very useful	
	A little useful	
	Quite useful	
	Very Useful	X
	Don't know	
	Any additional comments :	
	<p>Belfast City Council has an established and successful generalist advice provision structure and works through a consortium approach. The guidelines are in line with Belfast City Council's current practice</p> <hr/> <hr/>	

Q4	Would you use this draft guidance?	
	Yes	X
	No	
	Don't know	
	Any additional comments :	
	<p>The draft guidance are in line with current Belfast City Council Practice. Point 2.6 of the guidelines proposes that advice "is provided through a network of Area Advice Centres". This is in line with BCC 's current consortium approach. Section 3 and 4 of the consultation document refer to the underpinning principles of local advice agencies and the quality of advice. Groups currently funded via Belfast City Council's consortium approach are members of CAB or Advice NI and adhere to their quality standards in advice provision.</p>	

Q5	Would implementation of any of this draft guidance result in new costs being incurred?	
	Yes	
	No – not for BCC but potentially for advice providers	X
	Don't know	
	If yes, please specify what those additional costs would be :	
	<p>There are potential hidden IT costs for advice providers to ensure appropriate mechanisms for case recording. BCC does not have additional funding available to support the sector with these potential costs.</p>	



Q6		Is there anything that should be added to this draft guidance?
	Yes	X
	No	
	Don't know	
If yes, please specify should be added :		
<p>We would recommend that funding for provision of local generalist voluntary advice move from yearly allocation of funding to 3 yearly allocation to align with the Community Support Plan.</p> <hr/>		

Q7		Is there anything that should be removed from this draft guidance?
	Yes	
	No	X
	Don't know	
If yes, please specify should be added :		
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Q8		Do you think implementation of this guidance would be beneficial?
	Yes	X
	No	
	Don't know	
If yes, please specify what the benefits would be:		
<p>_The guidance are in line with current BCC practice. The guidelines would help to ensure that there is standard, consistent advice provision across Northern Ireland.</p> <hr/>		

Q9		Do you have any concerns about the implementation of this guidance?
	Yes	
	No	X
	Don't know	
If yes, please specify what these concerns are:		



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Q10	If you have anything else to add to this response please do so in the space below:	
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Thank you for completing this survey.