



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Young Enterprise – Future Funding Options
Date:	10 August 2011
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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Young Enterprise Northern Ireland (YENI) is a not-for-profit organisation which delivers enterprise education to schools across Northern Ireland. Since 2003, Belfast City Council has supported YENI's Primary Programme which provides economic literacy support to over 5000 primary school students on an annual basis.
1.2	Since 2003, funding of £25,000 per annum has been provided to Young Enterprise Northern Ireland to deliver the programme in the Belfast City Council area. This funding has been used to supplement core funding from the Department for Education (DE) which is responsible for the mainstream support to the organisation.
1.3	The organisation also delivers additional programmes which are supported by the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) as well as two other district councils.

2	Key Issues
2.1	Belfast City Council has been asked to provide £25,000 support for the delivery of the primary programme to schools located within the council boundary in the 11/12 academic year. This would allow the support programme to be delivered to 5000 primary school pupils across the city. The focus for coverage is on schools located within TSN (targeting social need) areas. There are 20,000 primary school pupils in attendance at schools within the council boundary.

2.2	This activity is not suitable for match funding from DETI EU Programmes or Invest NI. This means that the Council is liable for the full amount of funding allocated to the initiative. Conversely, it means that the resources allocated to this programme are not available for match funding additional eligible activity, with the effect that our ability to draw in grant funding is reduced.
2.3	The Primary Programme is also supported by Department for Education. The funding available from the Department allows YENI to provide support to 2500 pupils within the Belfast City Council area. Traditionally, the council funding has been used to “top up” the numbers in the council area. In this instance, the council funding would allow an additional 1800 pupils to take part in the programme.
2.4	The programme is delivered by a number of 80 volunteers, many of who are employed by Belfast City Council and who undertake this work for one hour a week over a period of six weeks.
2.5	In addition to the Primary Programme, Young Enterprise delivers a range of post-primary programmes as well as one-off events, masterclasses and workshops for primary and secondary level students.
2.6	Successive economic strategies have pointed to the need to promote a more entrepreneurial culture in the city as a way of enhancing its longer-term competitiveness. Equally, it is recognised that it is important to instil that culture from an early age. In this regard, initiatives such as Young Enterprise can make a useful contribution to that objective.
2.7	At recent meetings of the Development Committee, Members have reiterated the need to focus resources on those activities which can deliver the greatest economic return for council. In this regard, while the support for Young Enterprise is positive, it is considered that there are other areas which can create a greater return for the council’s investment in the field of enterprise support. These have been identified and agreed within the Council’s plan for economic and business growth which was endorsed in June 2011.
2.8	<p>It is proposed that Belfast City Council should continue to encourage its staff to volunteer to deliver the primary programme. However it is recommended that, instead of the direct financial assistance for the primary programme, resources for “pre-start” activities are focused on the enterprise support programmes identified and agreed within the enterprise plan agreed in June 2011. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Enterprise outreach in targeted areas, in conjunction with Local Enterprise Agencies, helping those interested in starting a business to realise their ambitions – Belfast Enterprise Academy for college and university students – helping final year students understand the logistics in starting a business and providing them with mentor support in doing so – Student enterprise competitions – providing students with real-life opportunities to explore the issues involved in setting up a business, by testing this out in teams – High-growth pre-enterprise support – focusing on those made redundant, helping them work through the mechanics of delivering on their business idea.

2.9	These
2.10	<p>programmes will be used to enhance the volume and value of business starts, thereby addressing the reduction in the number of new businesses that has been seen over the last two years.</p> <p>The investment in the primary programme in recent years means that Young Enterprise is almost at saturation point in terms of coverage of all local schools. It may therefore be more appropriate to encourage Young Enterprise to focus their Primary Programme (funded by DE) support on key target areas. Belfast City Council could also consider the merits of working with Young Enterprise on one-off events and workshops, aligned to the Primary Programme and other programmes managed by the organisation.</p> <p>It may also be appropriate to encourage those start-up businesses and other companies with whom we are working through our business programmes and events to provide in-kind support to Young Enterprise.</p>

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<p>Financial</p> <p>A request for financial support to the value of £25,000 has been made to Belfast City Council to deliver the Primary Programme in 2011-2012. Instead of</p>

	agreeing this support for the programme, it is proposed that the council continues to encourage volunteers to engage in programme delivery. Consideration may also be given to engagement with Young Enterprise in one-off events, aligned to our wider strategy.
3.2	<u>Human Resources</u> Council staff to be encouraged to volunteer within their own time or in conjunction with their line management approval.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no Equality and Good Relations considerations attached to this report

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note the request for support received from Young Enterprise to support the expansion of the Primary Programme in the academic year 2011-2012 - Agree the recommendation to continue to encourage volunteering by Council staff in YENI programmes and to encourage new start companies participating in Council programmes to engage in the YENI activities - Agree to work with Young Enterprise to explore the relative merits of engagement with them to promote entrepreneurship among young people through specific events and initiatives.

6	Decision Tracking
	No specific decision tracking required if recommendation is accepted.

7	Key to Abbreviations
	DE – Department for Education DETI – Department for Enterprise, Trade and Investment YENI – Young Enterprise Northern Ireland