



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	European Social Fund – match funding requests
Date:	7 February 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development ext 3470
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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The European Social Fund (ESF) Priority One provides financial support to promote training and other activities to assist long term unemployed people obtain sustainable employment.
1.2	Funding is awarded through an open call for projects. Successful applicants are allocated funding on condition that they can provide 35% match funding from another public sector source.
1.3	At the July 2011 meeting of the Development Committee, Members agreed to provide match funding for five European Social Fund (ESF) Priority One projects. Four of these projects were being delivered by community-based organisations – namely Stepping Stones; Upper Springfield Development Trust (USDT); Time Associates and Greater Village Regeneration Trust (GVRT). The fifth was being developed and managed by Belfast City Council, with Lisburn City Council as a project partner.
1.4	The ESF projects are funded through Department of Employment and Learning (DEL) and are of a three years' duration. Match funding must be secured on an annual basis.
1.5	Three of the community based projects have approached Belfast City Council for match funding for the year 2012-2013 (East Belfast Mission, Upper Springfield Development Trust and Time Associates). To continue the HARTE programme (managed by Belfast City Council) a commitment for match funding for 2012-2013 is also required.

1.6	<p>Although the Development Committee approved a commitment of £20,000 towards a project being managed by Greater Village Regeneration Trust, they had already been successful in securing match funding from another source (Belfast Regeneration Office - BRO). The Belfast City Council funding therefore was not required as it would have meant that BRO would have reduced their commitment to GVRT and the net effect would have been no greater for the project. BRO have once again committed the full amount of match funding required for the programme in the 2012-2013 period and therefore GVRT have confirmed that they are not seeking Belfast City Council match-funding for this project.</p>
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2	Key Issues
2.1	<p>Appendix 1 (attached) provides a summary of performance to date and forecasts for year end from the four applicant projects, including financial amounts requested relating to the period 2012-2013.</p>
2.2	<p>The performance data for the three community based projects relates to April-December as the projects were able to commence at the start of the financial year as they already had some match funding in place from other sources.</p>
2.3	<p>The HARTE programme 2008-2011 has been nominated as finalist in the best European Funded Project category by the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA). The contract for the current HARTE programme was awarded late September 2011, following a public procurement process, and the first training programmes began in mid-November 2011.</p>
2.4	<p><u>HARTE</u> To date, 41 participants have completed the programme gaining a total of 221 Level 2 qualifications in industry recognised fields such as customer care, health and safety, food hygiene and team leadership. Five participants have obtained employment and eighteen are awaiting further interviews or are going through the selection process being conducted by Titanic Belfast and Fitzer's (the catering contractor for Titanic Belfast). Arrangements have also been made for HARTE participants to have a guaranteed interview for employment opportunities at the MAC, due to open in April 2012. A new programme commenced on 30 January 2012 involving 20 participants and an additional programme will take place before the end of the financial year. In addition, the first ever HARTE programme will take place in the Lisburn City Council area in January 2012, to coincide with the extension of the Premier Inn in the city.</p>
2.5	<p>It is planned that there will be 7 HARTE programmes in 2012-2013, involving 84 long term unemployed people. Participants will be provided with accredited training and will be given dedicated pre-employment support and mentoring to help them find a job within the relevant field. The project has a target of 34 people into employment in the 2012-2013 financial year.</p>
2.6	<p>In the application made to DEL the estimated total project expenditure for the coming year will be £186,416. European Social Fund (ESF) and the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) will provide £122,656 of the costs and Lisburn City Council will contribute £9,000. To continue the HARTE programme it is therefore anticipated that a match funding contribution of £54,760 will be</p>

	<p>required from Belfast City Council. The reason for the significant uplift in funding is the 40% increase in participant numbers for this financial year and represents full 12 month costs as opposed to anticipated 9 month costs requested for 2011-2012. It was always intended that the 2012-2013 year would be the most significant for this project, given its linkages to the tourism opportunities in this year.</p>
2.7	<p><u>Upper Springfield Development Trust (USDT) – Jobs on the Move</u> The progress report received from USDT indicates that the project is achieving results above target in terms of engaging with individuals and placing them into employment. 406 individuals engaged with the project to date this year with 40 obtaining employment against targets of 300 individuals engaged with the project and 30 to gain employment.</p>
2.8	<p>In 2011-2012, Belfast City Council committed £25,000 of match funding to an overall budget of £257,853. For the forthcoming year, 2012-2013 USDT are seeking match funding of £30,000 towards a total expenditure of £245,151. The DEL/ESF contribution will be £159,348 and USDT will provide £55,803 in match funding.</p>
2.9	<p>In 2011-2012, USDT received a one off grant of £5,000 from the Ireland Fund to provide extra support within the programme to engage with and find employment for political ex- prisoners from republican and loyalist communities. Currently 15% of the USDT caseload falls into this category.</p>
2.10	<p>USDT are requesting that the Council increases its match funding contribution by £5,000 from last year to replace this reduction in funding. The match funding from the council is currently used to contribute to the salary costs of employment advisers, working directly with clients. If further funding is approved it will also be used for this purpose. The project aims to engage with 300 clients and help 30 people find employment this year.</p>
2.11	<p><u>East Belfast Mission (EBM) - Jobs4U Project</u> The progress report received from EBM shows that the project is engaging with more people than originally forecast (168 against 150). 48 individuals have progressed to employment against a target of 37.</p>
2.12	<p>In 2011-2012, Belfast City Council committed £7,636 match funding as a contribution of 15% towards of the costs of an Employment Mentor. EBM are requesting support of £9,988 this year – a contribution of 20% towards the cost of an Employment Mentor. The overall project costs are £142,692. ESF will provide £92,750, EBM £27,705 and DEL £12,250. The project aims to engage with 175 clients and enable 44 people gain employment.</p>
2.13	<p><u>Time Associates/Belfast Metropolitan College – Learn to Earn</u> The target for the year 2011-2012 was to recruit 30 people onto the programme. By December, 24 people had been engaged. 10 of the participants have obtained employment or started the process of becoming self-employed.</p>
2.14	<p>Belfast City Council provided £5,000 of match funding towards overall project costs of £69,766 in the financial year 2011-2012. Time Associates are requesting a further contribution of £5,000 for the period 2012-2013 towards overall project costs of £71,324. ESF will contribute £46,360, BMC £9,000 and Time Associates £10,063. The project aims to engage with 24 clients and enable 8 gain employment or become self employed.</p>

3	Resource Implications
3.1	The total match funding requests for the four projects in the coming financial year are £99,748.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	All applications will be equality impact assessed by the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) as part of their decision-making process.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note the match funding requests received by ESF project applicants - Approve the match funding requests for the coming financial year, subject to targets being met.

6	Decision Tracking
Subject to approval a report will be brought to Committee in February 2013 with an update on progress against targets.	
Timeframe:	February 2013
Reporting Officer:	Shirley McCay

7	Key to Abbreviations
DEL – Department for Employment and Learning EBM – East Belfast Mission ESF – European Social Fund GVRT – Greater Village Regeneration Trust HARTE – Hospitality and Retail Training for Employment LCC- Lisburn City Council NILGA –Northern Ireland Local Government Association USDT – Upper Springfield Development Trust	

8	Documents Attached
Appendix 1 – Overview of match funding requests received	