



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	European Social Fund – match funding requests
Date:	21 February 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext 3459

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	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.
1.3	At the 7 February Development Committee, Members requested that further information be provided with regard to the match funding required to enable the continuance of the Belfast City Council managed Hospitality and Retail Training for Employment (HARTE) programme and the Learn to Earn programme delivered by Time Associates and Belfast Metropolitan College (BMC).

2	Key Issues
2.1	<u>HARTE</u> The HARTE project 2008-2011 is a city-wide, industry-focused skills development and employability initiative for long-term unemployed people.
2.2	<u>Progress Since November 2011</u> The HARTE project consists of 16 bespoke training programmes that will be delivered over the three years of the project to groups of 12-18 participants. The 4 programmes that have been initiated since the project became operational in

	<p>November have been devised to coincide with planned recruitment in the Titanic Quarter and the expansion of the Premier Inn in Lisburn. Recruitment for a 5th programme is currently in progress and participants will be guaranteed interviews for positions in the Metropolitan Arts Centre (MAC).</p>
2.3	<p>The programmes since November have been delivered in the Grosvenor Hall, Belfast Migrant Centre, Lisburn Civic Centre and the forthcoming programme will be held in the Mount Conference Centre. Belfast Metropolitan College (BMC) provides training at its TQ campus. Future programmes will take place at a range of venues across the city.</p>
2.4	<p>The HARTE programmes consist of 2 weeks employability skills training (delivered by Gems NI), 2-3 weeks of industry recognised training that leads to Level 2 qualifications (delivered by BMC) and 8 hours individual mentoring support that is provided by a wide range of partner organisations throughout the city.</p>
2.5	<p>The participants are recruited through open advertising, job centres, mail shots to community groups and referrals from established organisations such as Upper Springfield Development Trust, East Belfast Mission, Shankill Job Assist Centre, North Belfast City Training, Ashton Centre. These organisations can cite referral to HARTE as a positive outcome for their clients when reporting to claim funds from Department of Employment and Learning (DEL) and provide mentoring support to participants. (Appendix 1)</p>
2.6	<p>Since November, 42 participants (91%) have completed their training programmes although most still have 4 hours one-one mentoring support available to them. 30 of the 42 participants have been unemployed for 12 months or more including 23 who have been unemployed for over 2 years. 16 (38%) of the participants had no formal qualifications of any description. The participants are from across the city (Appendix 2 Ward data)</p>
2.7	<p>In total these participants have undertaken 293 Level 2 qualifications. 227 have been achieved and 22 results are pending (on average each participant achieves 7 qualifications). Appendix 3 outlines the Qualifications achieved.</p>
2.8	<p>Of the 42 completers, 14 have obtained employment (33%) and 8 are awaiting outcome of interviews with Titanic Belfast. For those who have not obtained employment or engaged in further education or training, the mentoring support and the continuous work with potential employers will be used to assist them reach a positive destination.</p>
2.9	<p>The Lisburn programme with 18 participants will not be completed until 24 February, with all completers being interviewed by Premier Inn. The programme being run in conjunction with JRS Catering (MAC) will start on February 20 and complete 23 March.</p>
2.10	<p>The 12 month target for the project was 60 participants, with 24 obtaining employment and 270 qualifications being achieved. The project is on course to have engaged with 76 participants, reach employment targets and overachieve on the qualifications target despite only being operational for 5 months by March 2012.</p>
2.11	<p><u>Plans for 2012-2013</u> It is planned that there will be 7 HARTE programmes in 2012-2013, involving 84-</p>

	<p>100 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 works to a target of approximately 40% of participants gaining employment and a target of at least 5 level 2 qualifications per person. The minimum target for 2012-2013 will be 34 into employment and 420 qualifications.</p>
2.12	<p>Using the minimum anticipated targets the cost to Council of obtaining employment is £1,610 per person and £130 per level 2 qualification, the cost of providing each participant with 8 hours individual mentoring is £81 per person.</p>
2.13	<p>Members are asked to note that the HARTE project provides an added value service to unemployed individuals in the city and other organisations that are working on a full time basis with unemployed people either as a statutory body or part of the community and voluntary sector. These organisations use HARTE to provide training and support that they cannot provide. Participants engage on a totally voluntary basis and are provided with high quality, intensive support which does not end when they finish a programme. For instance for participants that obtain employment a HARTE adviser is available to assist in the transformation period between long term unemployment and the challenges of adapting to work.</p>
2.14	<p>The HARTE project has built an excellent relationship with employers and will tailor programmes to meet the requirements and demands of employers. For instance the programmes with JRS (catering contractors for the MAC) and Premier Inn (Lisburn) have been altered to accommodate the different demands of the employers.</p>
2.15	<p>Given the requirement to have a match funding element in place, the DEL letter of offer for this project will have to be withdrawn if Council support is not approved.</p>
2.16	<p><u>Time Associates/Belfast Metropolitan College – Learn to Earn</u> The Learn to Earn programme is another ESF project involving 24-30 people per year that aims to provide intensive advice, training and support to those who are long term unemployed and very disengaged from all other forms of assistance available to enable people overcome barriers to work. The programme is delivered by Time Associates and BMC. The target for the year 2011-2012 was to recruit 30 people onto the programme. By December, 24 people had been engaged over 2 programmes.</p>
2.17	<p>The first programme was run in conjunction with Malone Lodge with a view to participants obtaining housekeeping jobs. 8 participants (33%) have obtained employment; 4 have enrolled on other training employment related training programmes and the remainder are still engaged with the delivery agents in job seeking activities.</p>
2.18	<p>Between them the participants have obtained 106 Level 2 Qualifications or 4.4. per participant.</p>
2.19	<p>Belfast City Council provided £5,000 of match funding towards overall project costs of £69,766 in the financial year 2011-2012 with Time Associates and BMC contributing £19,418 and a DEL/ESF contribution of £45,348.</p>
2.20	<p><u>2012-2013</u> Time Associates are requesting a further contribution of £5,000 for the period</p>

	2012-2013 towards overall project costs of £71,324. DEL/ESF will contribute £46,360, BMC £9,000 and Time Associates £10,063.
2.21	The project aims to engage with 24 clients and enable 8 to gain employment or become self employed. The participants are expected to obtain 125 level 2 qualifications.
2.22	In the request for support in 2011-2012 members were advised that this programme would encourage/enable participants to consider self –employment as a viable option.
2.23	In the period 2012-2013 to encourage participants to pursue the self-employment route out of unemployment the project will: target recruitment towards people who have expressed an interest in self – employment, have the personal circumstances and experience to realistically consider this option. The project promoters will also run a level 2 Enterprise Programme with the aim of increasing the number of participants who become self-employed.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	The total match funding requests for the 2 projects in the coming financial year are £59,760.

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
6.1	There is no decision tracking attached to this report.

7	Key to Abbreviations
DEL – Department for Employment and Learning ESF – European Social Fund HARTE – Hospitality and Retail Training for Employment LCC- Lisburn City Council NILGA –Northern Ireland Local Government Association	

8	Documents Attached
Appendix 1 – Comments from other training organisations	
Appendix 2 – HARTE participant ward Data	
Appendix 3 – HARTE Participant Qualification Information	