



<b>Report to:</b>	Development Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Update on current INTERREG IVA Funding Call
<b>Date:</b>	21 February 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	John McGrillen Director of Development ext. 3470
<b>Contact Officers:</b>	Laura Leonard European Unit Manager ext 3577

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	Members will be aware that there is currently an open funding call with respect to the Cross border INTERREG IVA programme which is administered through the Special European Programmes Body (SEUPB).
1.2	This is the final call within the 256m Euro programme and is worth between 30-40 m euros with 100% funding available for projects. Details of the call are as follows; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Call opened 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2012</li> <li>- Call closed 17<sup>th</sup> February 2012</li> <li>- New 2 Stage Application process with a shorter form to be submitted on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2012. This will be followed by a robust and detailed business plan to be submitted by 11<sup>th</sup> May 2012, as Stage 2, if the project passes initial criteria.</li> </ul>
1.3	The following are key requirements for each project; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- promoting cross border-public sector collaboration</li> <li>- must lead to more efficient delivery of public services and lead to clear and measurable economic impact</li> <li>- cross border public sector collaboration can be around enterprise, tourism, ICT, transport, energy and health</li> <li>- needs to be strategic in nature rather than small with low impact</li> </ul>
1.4	Since the call opened, Belfast City Council's EU Unit has been working intensively to support the development of project ideas from within Belfast City Council and also with COMET stakeholders. Members are asked to note that the dedicated COMET INTERREG team based within the EU Unit has currently only a part time administration resource at the moment, as the INTERREG Manager has been off sick since early November 2011

1.5	<p>The EU Unit has provided the following support since the opening of the call;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encouragement of all European Unit database contacts to attend one of the three Special European Programmes Body (SEUPB) led information workshops held in January 2012.</li> <li>- hosting of a Belfast City Council (BCC) led information workshop held in City Hall on January 2012 supported by the Special European Programmes Body (SEUPB)</li> <li>- 1-2-1 meetings held with all interested parties.</li> <li>- Partner search carried out on request.</li> <li>- Assistance in writing applications.</li> </ul>
1.6	<p>Members are asked to note that projects going forward as COMET projects must be endorsed by the COMET INTERREG Board consisting of 12 elected members from the constituent councils.</p>
1.7	<p>Organisations based within the greater Belfast region e.g. Belfast Metropolitan College can submit their own independent applications. Any applications submitted under the COMET INTERREG banner will be supported and monitored by the COMET INTERREG staff located within Belfast City Council and Belfast City Council will put in place the necessary legal and financial agreements</p>
1.8	<p><u>Belfast City Council led Project Ideas</u>  The following project ideas for Cross Border collaboration have emerged within the COMET region and were submitted on 17<sup>th</sup> Feb 2012.</p>
1.9	<p>1. Belfast led, Tourism Marketing project driven by the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau through the Development Department, promoting Belfast as a Tourism Gateway to the North West (Derry/Donegal) i.e. building on the legacies of 2012 and 2013 and providing a strong tourism marketing campaign in Greater Belfast/Derry/Donegal to Great Britain and European markets. Aligns with the Economy theme of the new BCC Investment programme.</p>
1.10	<p>2. Belfast City Council led Employability Through Fitness, led by Parks and Leisure- working with urban sports users in Belfast and Donegal to seek vocational training and skills development to become employable. Aligns with economy theme (support employability and skills development), as well as People, Communities and Neighbourhoods (reduce inequalities and tackle disadvantage) but needs strengthened.</p>
1.11	<p>3. Belfast City Council led Electric Vehicles Project led by Health and Environmental Services which will seek to change behaviour around use of electric vehicles plugged in infrastructure and awareness campaign to reduce carbon emissions and contribute to creating a super cross border electric highway. Aligns to the physical investment programme of the overall Council Investment programme.</p>
1.12	<p>4. Belfast City Council led Giro D' Italia Cycling Event led by the Development Department and supported by the East Border Region, to attract the second largest European Cycling competition to Belfast and Dublin with key tourist related events along the Belfast/Dublin corridor particularly from North Dublin to the border and Belfast(eligible INTERREG area). Aligns to the tourism and events aspects of the Investment Programme Economy theme.</p>

1.13	<b>Other COMET Region Projects</b> The European Unit (EU) also supports the development and submission of other projects led by the stakeholders in the COMET region namely,
1.14	6. An droichead project focusing on cultural trails, developments and links around Ulster Scots and Irish Language with partners in Belfast, Donegal and Western Scotland.
1.15	7. Coast to coast sailing project led by Carrickfergus Borough Council creating sailing centres of excellence around the Irish sea.
1.16	8. Value Added Sourcing led by Lisburn City Council. This project was rejected under the Enterprise call and now with issues being addressed it will be re submitted and will link with Cavan and Meath County Enterprise Boards to bring companies into export markets.
1.17	9. Compatible Curricula-led by Belfast Metropolitan College- this product will be submitted independently and will seek to encourage students to study 3 <sup>rd</sup> level on the island of Ireland and seek to make IT systems in college's compatible on a cross border basis.

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	Members are asked to note the above project ideas submitted under the Interreg IVA call on the 17 February 2012. A report will be brought to council in all due course to advise which projects have successfully passed stage 1 of the appraisal process.

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	Any successful INTERREG IVA applications will receive 100% funding. Resource implications will be staff time within the named BCC Departments who are leading bids as well as European Unit staff at the development and implementation stages.
3.2	Project bids will have built in delivery resources.
3.3	Future monitoring of the successful projects will be done by the European Unit's INTERREG staff

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</b>
4.1	Any successful project application will be equality proofed.

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	Members are asked to note and endorse the submission of the above mentioned Belfast City Council led and COMET Interreg IVA submissions. A further report will be brought to Committee once the project appraisal process has been completed.

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
6.1	SEUPB project Approval expected June 2012

<b>7</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
SEUPB- Special European Programmes Body INTERREG- Interregional Development COMET- Councils of the Metropolitan Area	

