



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Development Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Urban Regeneration and Community Development Policy Framework for Northern Ireland - Consultation
<b>Date:</b>	Tuesday, 21 August 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Catherine Taggart, Community Development Manager, 3525

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	The Department for Social Development (DSD) have launched a public consultation on the Government's proposals for an Urban Regeneration and Community Development policy framework for Northern Ireland. This paper outlines the arrangements for co-ordinating a response from Belfast City Council. The consultation runs until 25 October 2012.
1.2	The framework defines 'regeneration' as <i>'activities that reverse economic, social and physical decline in areas where market forces will not do this without the support of government.'</i> While 'community development activity' is defined as <i>'the main means by which we can be better engaged with local people and support their involvement in improving the neighbourhoods they live and work in.'</i>
1.3	DSD state that the new framework will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- shape the strategic direction of urban regeneration and community development policy over the coming years, and</li><li>- set out clear priorities for urban regeneration and community development programmes, both before and after the operational responsibility for these is transferred to councils under the reform of local government.</li></ul>
1.4	The framework's specific policy objectives are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- To tackle area-based deprivation;</li><li>- To strengthen the competitiveness of our towns and cities;</li><li>- To improve linkages between areas of need and areas of opportunity;</li><li>- To develop more cohesive and engaged communities.</li></ul>
1.5	Its 'enabling' objectives are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- To maximise the potential of urban regeneration and community development by establishing an evidence-based policy environment.</li><li>- To maximise the resources available for urban regeneration and community development by supporting an innovative financial environment.</li><li>- To develop skilled and knowledgeable practitioners in urban</li></ul>

	<p>regeneration and community development: and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To promote an effective and efficient voluntary and community sector</li> </ul>
1.6	Following the public consultation DSD will assess all existing Government policies and programmes to ensure compliance with the new Framework while all new policies and programmes will be developed within this context.
1.7	Copies of the draft consultation are attached as Appendix 1.

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	Once adopted the framework is likely to have immediate implications for local councils and, following the implementation of the RPA, it will certainly shape the nature of councils' contributions to urban regeneration and community development.
2.2	<p>The following list gives an example of existing Belfast City Council work on which the framework may have an impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support for the social economy</li> <li>- The development of financial instruments to stimulate investment</li> <li>- Delivery of the poverty framework</li> <li>- Urban masterplanning</li> <li>- City centre development</li> <li>- BIDS</li> <li>- City marketing</li> <li>- Physical regeneration of interface areas</li> <li>- Brownfield redevelopment</li> <li>- Preservation of built heritage</li> <li>- Development of community gardens, allotments and green spaces</li> <li>- Community development activity including developing volunteering and active citizenship</li> <li>- Developing networks, partnerships and participation within and between communities</li> <li>- Strengthening networks and cross-interface schemes</li> <li>- Supporting local asset ownership and management by communities</li> <li>- Collation of data, research and intelligence on urban regeneration and community development</li> </ul>
2.3	<p><b>Co-ordinating a council response:</b> The Development Department has been asked to lead on the council response to the consultation. Given its cross-cutting nature and its potential impact on both our work and our existing policy positions, the council response will require input at both a political and senior officer level. Working with the Chief Executive's Strategic Planning &amp; Policy team, we are proposing the following approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A special meeting of Development Committee in September, to which all Members of the Council would be invited, to consider the draft framework.</li> <li>- A facilitated workshop for relevant officers from across council</li> <li>- A facilitated workshop for senior officers (ie, directors and heads of service)</li> <li>- A draft consultation response presented to the first October Development Committee</li> <li>- Submission of the draft response to DSD following Committee approval and pending September Council ratification.</li> </ul>

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	None.

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</b>
4.1	None.

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	<p>The Members are asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Note the contents of the DSD consultation document attached in Appendix One.</li> <li>2. Agree to the recommended arrangements for co-ordinating a council response, including a special meeting of Development committee in September to which all Members of the Council would be invited.</li> </ol>

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
Further to Committees consideration of the report:	
Time line: September 2012                      Reporting Officer: Catherine Taggart	

<b>7</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
DSD – Department for Social Development	

<b>8</b>	<b>Documents attached</b>
Appendix 1: Draft Urban Regeneration and Community Development Policy Framework for Northern Ireland	