



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Special Development Committee
Subject:	Consultation on the DSD Urban Regeneration and Community Development Policy Framework for Northern Ireland
Date:	11 September 2012
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Catherine Taggart, Community Services, ext 3525

1	Relevant Background Information
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.
1.2	At the August Development Committee meeting Members agreed to hold a Special Meeting to consider the content and implications of the proposed framework. Officers from across council would then draw on the results of this meeting to prepare a draft corporate response which would be presented to Development Committee in October. The consultation runs until 25 October 2012.
1.3	DSD state that the new framework will: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- shape the strategic direction of urban regeneration and community development policy over the coming years, and- 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.
1.4	The framework's specific policy objectives are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- To tackle area-based deprivation;- To strengthen the competitiveness of our towns and cities;- To improve linkages between areas of need and areas of opportunity;- To develop more cohesive and engaged communities.
1.5	Following the public consultation DSD say they 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. Copies of the draft consultation and the DSD questionnaire are attached

	as Appendix 2 .
--	------------------------

2	Key Issues
2.1	In the introduction to its draft framework DSD note that it will shape the strategic direction of urban regeneration and community development policy over the coming years: <i>'It will set out for DSD and its partners, 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.'</i> As such, when adopted, the framework may have immediate policy implications for the role of Belfast City Council in urban regeneration and community development work in the city.
2.2	The consultation is structured around a number of questions (Appendix One) that focus mainly on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Their stated objectives and enabling objectives - The use of an outcomes model - Their definitions of 'urban', 'regeneration' and 'community development'
2.3	The Special Meeting will be facilitated by CLES (Centre for Local Economic Strategies) – a Manchester based charity and consultancy with a strong background in urban regeneration and community development. CLES have been asked to collate the responses from Members and officers and, incorporating good examples of practice and policy elsewhere, assist in preparing a draft council response.
2.4	At the Special Meeting CLES will present a paper to Members that provides an overview of the broad context for urban regeneration and community development. They will then facilitate a discussion on the DSD consultation document structured around the consultation questions.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	None.

4	Equality and Good Relations Implications
4.1	None.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider the content of the DSD consultation document and the consultation questions. 2. As part of the facilitated meeting, identify any key issues which should inform the corporate response. 3. Agree to officers preparing a draft corporate response to DSD which will be presented to Development Committee for approval in October.

6	Decision Tracking
-	Officer responsible: John McGrillen

- Catherine Taggart to implement actions in line with the BCIP project plan

7	Key to Abbreviations
----------	-----------------------------

- DSD - Department for Social Development

8	Documents Attached
----------	---------------------------

Appendix One: Framework questions

Appendix Two: Draft Urban Regeneration and Community Development Policy Framework for Northern Ireland

Appendix One: DSD's Framework Questions

1. Do you agree that the four policy objectives in the Framework for urban regeneration and community development are the right ones?
2. Are there any additional policy objectives which should be included in the Framework?
3. Do you agree that the enabling objectives in the Framework are the right ones?
4. Are there any additional enabling objectives which should be included in the Framework?
5. Do you feel that the emphasis on an outcomes-focused approach, as exemplified by the use of the Logic Model, is appropriate?
6. Do you agree with the Department's definition of "urban" or should a more flexible approach be taken in future?
7. Do you agree with the Department's definition of "regeneration"?
8. Do you agree with the Department's definition of "community development"?
9. Are you content with the conclusion reached in the DSD Equality Screening document?
10. Are there any issues that have not been addressed?

Appendix Two: The consultation document