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| Report to: | Development Committee |
| Subject: | Investors in People (IiP) programme |
| Date: | 18 September 2012 |
| Reporting Officer: | John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470 |
| Contact Officers: | Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext 3459 |

| 1 | Relevant Background Information |
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| 1.1 | The Investors in People (IiP) programme is a business improvement initiative designed to help employers improve performance by linking people development and skills development activities to overall company development activities. |
| 1.2 | Since 1994, over 1500 companies in Northern Ireland have taken part in the initiative, with an additional 300 currently going through the process. |
| 1.3 | Belfast City Council – as an organisation – has just achieved IiP status and this was recognised at an event in City Hall in early September 2012. |

| 2 | Key Issues |
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| 2.1 | The IiP framework has been tailored by the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) to support small businesses who are interested in improving their business performance by investing in their staff. |
| 2.2 | The department is offering to match-fund support from the Council to roll out the programme to small businesses located in the Belfast City Council area. The programme will consist of a series of workshops, supported by 1-2-1 mentoring to take the businesses through the steps required to help them achieve IiP accreditation. |
| 2.3 | Research undertaken by DEL shows that organisational changes made by IiP recognised employers are twice as profitable as changes made by other companies. Other benefits enjoyed by IiP organisations include improved efficiency; improved productivity; increased sales; motivated staff and lower staff |

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| | <p>absenteeism and turnover.</p> <p>In this pilot initiative, 10 local companies will take part in the programme, and each company is expected to complete the accreditation process. The total cost for the programme will be £11,200. DEL have committed to contributing 30% (£3,360) towards the overall costs, with the balance of £7,840 to come from the Council and the participating business.</p> <p>In order to encourage company engagement in this process, it is proposed that Belfast City Council contributes up to £4,840 towards the overall programme costs (around 40%), with the remaining £3,000 to be paid by the 10 participating businesses (£300 per business). The target of 10 has been set as this is the first time that this programme has been supported and therefore it may be useful to test the response and interest before making a greater commitment.</p> <p>The outcomes of this investment will be measured and targets established around efficiency improvements; sales growth; staff retention and satisfaction levels and productivity improvements.</p> |
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| 3 | Resource Implications |
| 3.1 | The total programme costs, based on 10 businesses, will be £11,200. Belfast City Council is asked to contribute £4,840 towards the overall project costs. |

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| 4 | Equality and Good Relations Considerations |
| 4.1 | There are no specific equality and good relations considerations attached to this report. |

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| 5 | Recommendations |
| 5.1 | Members are asked to approve the allocation of £4,840 towards the Belfast Investors in People programme for small businesses. |

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| 6 | Decision Tracking |
| If approved, a report on progress will be brought back to committee in April 2013. | |
| Timeframe: April 2013 | Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay |

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| 7 | Key to Abbreviations |
| DEL – Department for Employment and Learning | |
| IiP – Investors in People | |