

## Citywide Employers' Forum – Proposed Work Programme, November 2012 – 2015

Objective	Outputs	Outcomes and timeframe
<p><b>1. To extend the West Belfast and Greater Shankill Employers' Forum to establish a city wide presence that will channel employer skills, resources and expertise to ensure a greater alignment between employability, skills development and employer needs across Greater Belfast for the duration of the partnership.</b></p> <p><i>Rationale</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>achieve a modern competitive economy across Belfast by increasing economic activity rates;</i></li> <li>• <i>up-skill hardest to reach unemployed, to sustain employment</i></li> <li>• <i>impact most deprived communities where dependence on benefits or low skilled employment is disproportionate</i></li> </ul>	<p>1.1 Extend membership of the Employers' Forum to have representation from the sectors key to future jobs growth;</p> <p>1.2 Provide advice and strategic direction on the types of intervention required to enable employers to assist the unemployed and economically inactive into employment as raised by partners at 3 Board meetings per year;</p> <p>1.3 Build on 'what works' by continuing and extending programmes and interventions already championed by the West Belfast and Greater Shankill Employers' Forum. This would include Henderson's 'Roots and Wings' retail training programme, etc., as agreed with employers;</p> <p>1.4 Develop and support one innovative sector-based intervention that will encourage young people about to enter the job market and the long term unemployed and economically inactive to develop skills that match the needs of sectors key to future jobs growth in Greater Belfast;</p> <p>1.5 Maintain strong links with the community by involving DEL Employment Programme Providers to respond to the needs of stakeholders across Greater Belfast, with a focus on deprived communities;</p> <p>1.6 Ensure the Forum engages in strategic and operational exchanges between central and local government, on matters relating to employment and skills issues. This will ensure a flow of relevant information from those who recruit, train and manage staff and those organisations tasked with the provision of education and training. To this end, DEL/Belfast Council can opt to table one agenda item at each Board meeting, related to skills and employability;</p> <p>1.7 Monitor progress of employability interventions, against agreed outcomes. Forum directorate will have review meetings with Belfast Council and DEL officials on a quarterly basis.</p>	<p><b>Forum governance</b> 3 meetings of Forum Board annually 4 meetings of partnership directorate annually</p> <p><b>Sectoral representation</b> <u>Year 1</u> – Creative industries/digital media; and Business Services; <u>Year 2</u> – Financial and Business Services; <u>Year 3</u> – Advanced Manufacturing and/or Advanced Engineering;</p> <p><b>Build on Existing programmes and interventions</b></p> <p><b>Sector based intervention</b> <u>Year 1</u> – agree sectoral focus, appoint lead, establish sub-forum to include delivery partners and produce initial proposal and targets; <u>Year 2</u> - develop 'joined up' programme; <u>Year 3</u> – deliver programme against agreed targets</p>

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<p><b>2. To assist unemployed and economically inactive individuals to move into sustained employment by building on ‘what works’</b></p>	<p><i>2.1 Delivery of short, sharp, highly focused interventions, aligned with priority sectors as agreed by partnership directorate and CEF. These will focus on industries identified by the CEF and will draw from deprived areas as agreed by CEF.</i></p>	<p>An annual action plan, based on industry needs and focussing on areas in greatest need, will be developed and delivered to include the following interventions –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ business talks/career information sessions;</li> <li>▶ interview skills sessions; and motivational talks;</li> <li>▶ company site visits;</li> <li>▶ work experience/sampling.</li> </ul> <p>Business talks will focus on identified sectors, may involve one or more companies and will align with job vacancies, whilst developing the social skills of participants.</p> <p>Interview skills, facilitated by employers, will combine master-classes and 1-to-1 mock interviews and 30% will fall within the month preceding actual interview.</p> <p>Motivational talks will be delivered by leading business people and will targeted at the long term unemployed in the most socially deprived areas.</p> <p>Work experience will vary between 3 days – 2 weeks, and will enable the workless to experience the realities of working life and to engage with colleagues and customers.</p>

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	<p><i>2.2 Skills development and/or re-training will be delivered to address need and facilitated by members and supporters of the Employers Forum.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <u>mentoring by employers</u>:- on a one-on-one basis, or in small group format. There will be a particular focus on intergenerational mentoring, as older workers typically have huge emotional intelligence and networks, which would particularly benefit young unemployed persons who require extra support.</li> <li>▶ <u>access to company in-house training programmes</u>:- companies to open up selected places within an in-house training programme, to long term unemployed and economically inactive (a combination of accredited &amp; non-accredited programmes). Eg: company could provide customer care/World Host training, or open up places within specialized training courses (asbestos training, etc.).</li> <li>▶ <u>bespoke training programmes</u>:- accredited and non-accredited courses recognizing the 'skills creep' (the increase in jobs forecast in the future to require qualifications) and delivered by employers.</li> </ul>	<p>10 persons x 3 years (30 in total). Focus on matching those from disadvantaged areas to particular job sectors, as agreed by partnership directorate and CEF.</p> <p>Build skills for 51 people (17 x 3 years) that will encourage movement in to sectors that are key to future jobs growth .</p> <p>Increase skills for 90 people (30 per year) as prioritised by DEL and Belfast Council to support sectors key to future jobs growth eg</p> <p>→ <i>Supervisory Development Programme</i>: targeted at individuals who wish to become a supervisor, or to build upon previous experience gained;</p> <p>→ <i>Strive 2 Work</i>: based on the principles of self-help, this programme equips those wanting to re-enter the job market after a period of unemployment, with the confidence and practical skills to do so. It comprises a 3 week training programme to ensure participants are work ready followed by an interview.</p> <p>30% of participants will move into employment (as a stretch target, based on DEL overall target of 25%)</p>

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<p>3. Develop and support <b>one</b> sector-based intervention (based on the needs of sectors key to future jobs growth in Greater Belfast), that will -</p> <p>a) attract young people towards employment in sectors where there are currently skills gaps;</p> <p>b) address the identified skills gap through the development and delivery of a modular programme that will be open to young people and the long term unemployed and economically inactive.</p>	<p>3.1 Develop an innovative ‘pathway’ that will build upon existing interventions, and develop new ones that together, will positively impact a sector that is key to future jobs growth in Greater Belfast.</p> <p>3.2 Building on existing programmes and interventions, the pathway will bring together business and education (post primary and further) to create and deliver a pragmatic offering for young people and those who are long term unemployed or economically inactive.</p> <p>3.3 The Forum directorate, <b>led by BITC</b>, will facilitate discussion between providers, employers and education partners to address the skills/needs imbalance. This will explore:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ a joined up approach to developing and delivering a skills/employment pathway;</li> <li>▶ areas of responsibility and input to the pilot programme;</li> <li>▶ the programme structure, and marketing strategy.</li> </ul> <p>3.4 Pilot testing of the program strategy and materials will need to take place, with intended implementers (employers) and recipients (young people/the unemployed).</p> <p>3.5 The growth sector focussed on may be ICT, Business Services, Creative industries/digital media, Advanced Engineering/Manufacturing or possibly Retail and Hospitality.</p> <p>3.6 The pathway, created by a focus group of business people and education partners (post primary schools and Belfast Metropolitan College), may include:-</p> <p>→ Charter/Work inspiration<sup>1</sup> experiences for a cluster of schools (typically 15-17 year olds);</p> <p>→ Development of bespoke programmes delivered by business people and education partners focussing on the sectoral skills identified to involve young people and long term unemployed (involving Business Class<sup>2</sup> intervention, catering for 11-18 year olds).</p> <p>Inclusion in short interventions as included in Objective 2 to build on the skills base developed, programmed over one year.</p>	<p><b>Sector based intervention</b></p> <p><u>Year 1</u> – agree sectoral focus, appoint lead, establish sub-forum to include delivery partners and produce initial proposal and targets;</p> <p><u>Year 2</u> - develop ‘joined up’ programme;</p> <p><u>Year 3</u> – deliver programme against agreed targets.</p> <p>The pathway intervention created will represent a best practice model that can be applied to any cluster group of business, delivery and education partners - focussing on any sector.</p>

## 1 Charter Work Inspiration

Established in 1999 and funded by the Department of Education NI, the Charter Work Inspiration programme reduces the administrative burden of work experience for employers and encourages them to offer meaningful placements and career inspirations. Working with the schools, Charter ensures fairness, equality of access and work experience opportunities for all, particularly trying to improve access for those children from less privileged backgrounds. Charter works with employers, to ensure that students' vocational interests and career choices are matched to their work placement or inspiration. In addition to helping employers plan and manage their work experience provision, Charter also offers advice on insurance, indemnity and health and safety issues.

## 2 Business Class (son of BITC earlier intervention 'Adopt a School')

Business Class enables businesses to make a more meaningful, sustainable and long-lasting difference to schools. Inspired by the successful development of Business Class partnerships in schools in England, BITC NI introduced the project to NI, creating a cluster of five schools in Belfast, each of which have been partnered with a local business for support over a three year period. One year on and these partnerships are growing and deepening, each in its own unique way. Head Teachers drive the agenda, determining, through a detailed needs-assessment process, their priorities for their business partner across four areas: *Leadership and Governance, The Curriculum, Enterprise and Employability and Wider Issues*.

Business Class aims to overcome short-term and piecemeal business and school engagement by developing a strategic action plan of activity by which both schools and businesses can measure engagement and impact. With its strategic cluster approach, the project is bringing about a sea change in the way businesses work with post-primary schools. Each school and business partnership forms part of a localised cluster involving a diverse range of businesses. The cluster meets each term to share ideas and best practice, identify common challenges and develop effective interventions. Building on the success of our Belfast Business Class cluster, our vision is that schools in disadvantaged areas across NI will have access to long-term, strategic and sustainable support from BITC's member firms.