Belfast
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Outcomes Framework (DRAFT)

Department for
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BELFAST
CITY COUNCIL

This report was prepared by Community Places

**Belfast Community Investment Programme
Outcomes Framework (DRAFT)**

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1.   Introduction

The Belfast Community Investment Programme (BCIP) is a new joint strategic programme being established by Belfast City Council and the Department for Social Development (DSD). Formed by bringing together a number of existing funding streams currently managed by the council and DSD's Belfast Regeneration Office (BRO) and Voluntary and Community Unit (VCU), BCIP will support a resilient and effective community development infrastructure across Belfast. Consisting of community development (CD) services provided by local groups and organisations, this will become a major part of Belfast's CD commitment.

In order to achieve clarity of purpose and results for the new programme, DSD and the council are working with the community and voluntary sectors to agree on a new approach to designing a programme of support for community development. This approach focuses on how the programme can maximise its impacts (outcomes) for the benefit of local communities and how best to measure progress towards these outcomes.

This is in keeping with the 'Concordat' between Government and the Community and Voluntary sectors which expresses their shared commitment to working together as social partners and provides a framework which supports opportunities for greater co-operation and joined up activity. A key commitment of the Concordat is for Government and the sector "to work together to implement an outcome-focused approach to funding".

The previous programmes from which the BCIP is formed are:

- BRO's funding for community development work in Belfast under the Neighbourhood Renewal programme (ie the CD part of NR, not the main NR programme itself);

- VCU's Community Investment Fund to groups in the city;

- Belfast City Council's and VCU's funding through the council's Community Support Plan, which includes its Capacity Support Grant programme; revenue funding for community facilities; funding for the city's advice and information consortia; and its Small Grants programme.

BCIP will only exist within Belfast and will operate in place of a number of programmes which will continue to be delivered across the rest of the region. These include VCU's Community Investment Fund and support for Advice Services and the Neighbourhood Renewal programme's support for community renewal. However, the new BCIP's framework is designed to support similar community development outcomes to those of these regional programmes.

The new programme is expected to be delivered through three main strands, subject to further consultation. Each strand should produce particular outcomes, but the strands are also interactive and should combine to produce the full set of outcomes.

(i)   '**Core Community Development**': Supporting local consortia/organisations to develop an active, influential, informed, sustainable and organised community; working in partnership to identify and address local issues; informing local service provision; promoting participation and active citizenship; and building neighbourhood relationships.

(ii)   '**Community Buildings**': Supporting local consortia/organisations to provide venues for people to gather, meet, participate, share information and celebrate, in recognition that community centres promote social inclusion, participation and engagement (in addition and complementary to the 22 directly managed council community centres).

(iii)   **Advice and Information**: To support advice consortia in N, S, E, W and Central Belfast to provide generalist advice enabling ease of access, especially for those who are most disadvantaged, to information, advice and advocacy services which ensures that local people are aware of their rights and entitlements and are able to maximise their opportunities and quality of life.

This paper outlines the wider policy context for community development and how the new programme links with these policies. It describes the work undertaken in identifying programme outcomes and how these were informed by engagement with community and voluntary groups in the city. The Outcomes Framework is also presented with proposed next steps.

2.   Policy Context for BCIP

The Belfast Community Investment Programme is designed to support the implementation of high level policies in an integrated way. Amongst the sources for the new programme, the following policies have particular importance.

The Programme for Government includes commitments for the introduction of Community Planning as part of the Local Government Reform agenda. This will include the development of an overarching **Community Plan for Belfast**. The council has developed a model for this new responsibility which promotes an outcomes approach that includes the strengthening of synergies with community development, consultation and engagement. The **Concordat** between all Government departments and the community and voluntary sector includes a commitment to supporting community development as an important way of enabling people to contribute to the issues affecting their communities. The Concordat also commits Government to working in partnership with and recognising the independence of the sector.

The Department for Social Development's draft **Urban Regeneration and Community Development Framework 2012** sets out a number of strategic and operational objectives. One of four strategic objectives is to develop more cohesive and engaged communities. The draft Framework highlights the importance of community development in the pursuit of policy aims and recognises the importance of strong community infrastructure to enable social and economic objectives to be achieved in more sustainable and efficient ways. It also places an emphasis on outcomes and measuring change as a consequence of investment and presents a logic model approach in which a suite of indicators including community development data will be used to guide, monitor and evaluate delivery. The Department's **Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (People and Place)** incorporates four strategic objectives. The community renewal objective is designed to develop communities which are better able to improve the quality of life in their areas and work in partnership to contribute to the social, economic and physical renewal of the most disadvantaged areas.

Belfast City Council's Draft Corporate Plan 2012-2013 sets out five priority themes including the need to strengthen people, communities and neighbourhoods. The priorities under this theme are: investing in local neighbourhoods; reducing inequalities and tackling disadvantage; promoting positive relations and shared space; helping people feel safer; and promoting and supporting engaged and active communities. The Plan also acknowledges the link between community development and the achievement of the other themes with an emphasis on how a vibrant community sector can help to strengthen work in key areas including community arts, culture and local tourism and how community development helps deliver the achievement of good relations, the development of shared space and addressing the effects of interfaces. The Plan proposes significant investments in creating a greener and cleaner environment through: improving community facilities (£18m); park improvements (£4m); and playgrounds (£2m) - all of which are based on strong local links and a capacity to work in partnership with community groups.

Similarly, the Council's **Investment Programme** identifies significant investments to support 'engaged and active communities'. These include working with local communities on the development and implementation of local investment schemes.

Clearly there is a strong relationship between BCIP and the **Council's Community Development Strategy 2012-2015**, which aims to support four community development strands: core support; more effective forms of engagement; partnership working; and shared service design and delivery. The first strand is to strengthen core community development and the social capital that enables local people to have greater influence on the development of their neighbourhoods. Engagement highlights the need for community development to involve people, user groups, centres and staff in local planning and development. Third, is effective partnership working and the creation of networks within and between the community sector and council, government agencies and politicians to create more integrated approaches to complex problems. Finally, shared design highlights the importance of community management, the development of assets and creation of social enterprises in strengthening community ownership of service delivery.

The strategy makes it clear that all four strands, working together, make for more resilient and successful communities, better able to cope and to exercise some control over their economies, services, facilities and needs.

The **Opening Doors Advice Strategy** was launched by DSD in 2007 and aims to put in place an integrated, quality advice service across the region and to ensure that services are planned and delivered in a way which matches resources to need, with a particular focus on meeting the needs of the most disadvantaged. The development and maintenance of infrastructure to enable disadvantaged people to access services and to allow service providers to more effectively reach their users, is an essential component in social inclusion strategies across the city.

The Policy Challenges for Community Development

This wider policy environment presents some key challenges for stakeholders from all sectors who are involved in supporting the development of local communities. These challenges include:

- building communities which are resilient and better able to adapt and respond to wider processes of change;

- enabling all communities to be supportive and welcoming places for all;

- strengthening the capacity of all groups within communities to engage constructively with Government and the council in the identification and prioritisation of needs;

- enhancing the processes for and quality of community engagement and co-design and partnership working;

- developing and drawing on the assets within communities so that they are better able to support the delivery of services and priorities in partnership with the council and wider public sector; and

- attracting investments which will address the multiple issues associated with disadvantage and create new and accessible development opportunities for those most affected.

The Belfast Community Investment Programme (BCIP) will play a central role in enabling communities to make their contribution to these challenges by promoting and investing in a resilient and effective independent community development sector across the city.
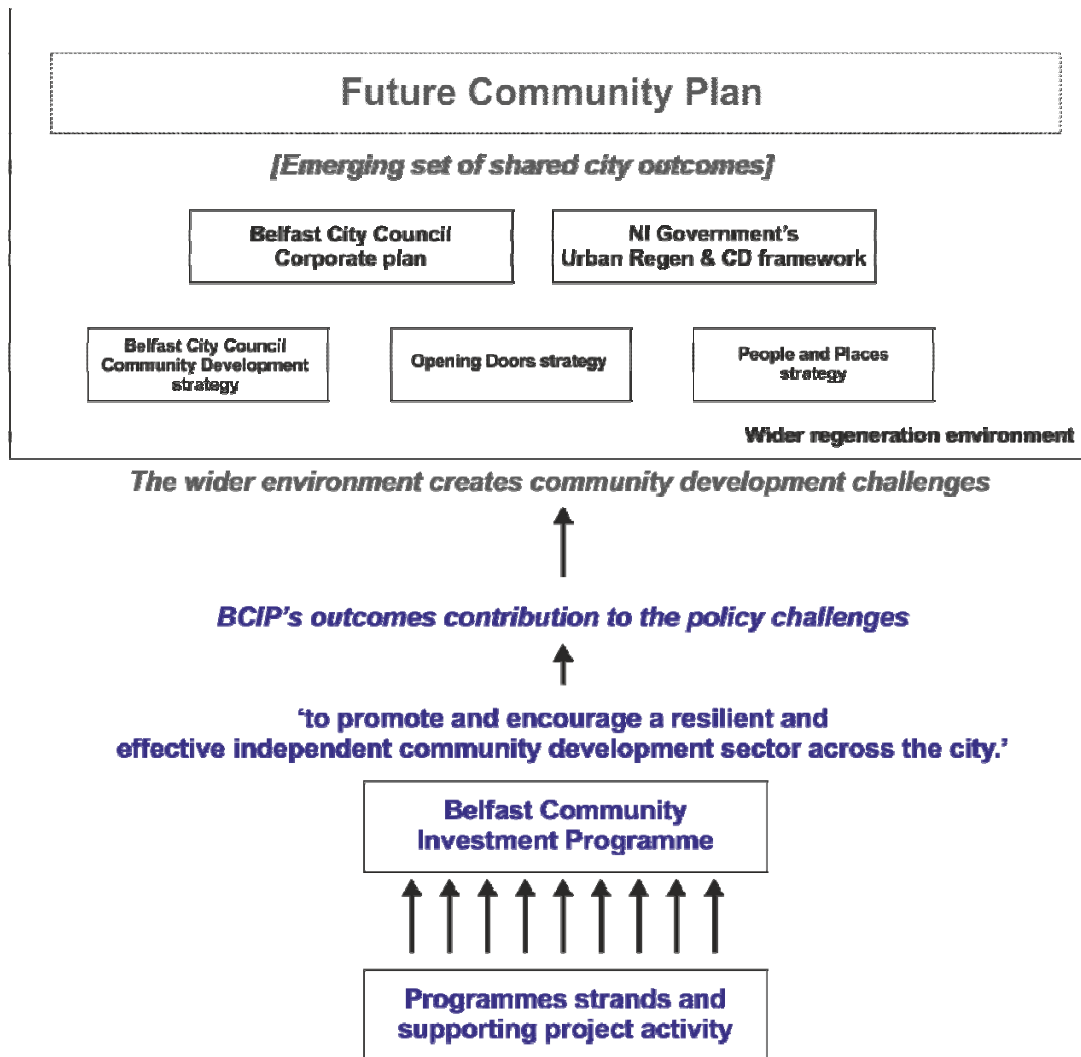
BCIP's Outcomes Contribution to the Policy Challenges

In the past community development has been expected (somewhat unrealistically) to comprehensively regenerate disadvantaged areas and overcome complex problems of poverty and social exclusion. It is important that the BCIP outcomes properly reflect community development in the context of the council's emerging city outcomes and wider regeneration policies and programmes. It is also important to have a clearer understanding of the way in which community development creates more resilient and adaptive communities and how they can respond to economic, social and environmental change. Community development can help support communities to address and respond to the worst effects of these changes and to develop new initiatives and opportunities by:

- ensuring that residents have access to strong relationships, groups and activities for mutual aid, to improve their conditions and sustain their quality of life;

- building the capacity of community groups and organisations to strengthen the community to support itself by volunteering, group activities, and developing partnerships and local networks;

- providing the facilities for group activities/events and residents' meetings;

- developing the capacity of the independent community development sector to represent local people, advocate with them and work in partnership with policy makers and politicians;

- strengthening the access that disadvantaged people have to resources such as housing, better social care or support services, welfare benefits;

- developing the infrastructure to provide direct services to meet local needs, especially where traditional public services or the private sector cannot or do not reach;

- developing the ability of community organisations to become more sustainable and diversify their income streams.

The BCIP outcomes have been developed to support independent community development activity which seeks to contribute to the challenges of the wider policy environment by developing these characteristics of resilience and adaptability within communities across the city.

The connections between the policy environment and the BCIP Programme strands, supported projects and outcomes are illustrated below:

Future Community Plan

[Emerging set of shared city outcomes]

| Belfast City Council Corporate plan | NI Government's Urban Regen & CD framework |

| Belfast City Council Community Development strategy | Opening Doors strategy | People and Places strategy |

Wider regeneration environment

The wider environment creates community development challenges

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BCIP's outcomes contribution to the policy challenges

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'to promote and encourage a resilient and effective independent community development sector across the city.'

Belfast Community Investment Programme

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Programmes strands and supporting project activity

3.   Development of the BCIP Outcomes and Indicators

The outcomes were developed through a series of interlinked activities and tasks:

(a)   a scoping of good practice in community development outcomes;

(b)   an analysis of the aims, objectives and outcomes of the programmes from which BCIP is being formed;

(c)   engagement workshops with community and voluntary groups in Belfast and an online survey of groups;

(d)   discussions with councillors, council and DSD staff involved in community development programmes and in developing BCIP.

The following BCIP supporting papers and reports are available at www.belfastcity.gov.uk/bcip/engagewithbcip.asp

* Executive Summary of the Community Development Strategy
* Towards an Outcomes Framework
* Current Community Development Programmes – Outcomes and Indicators
* Community Outcomes Workshop Report
* On-line Survey Report

The main findings and lessons learned from these reports, activities and tasks are summarised below and have been drawn on in the design of the Outcomes Framework.

(a)   **Good Practice**

The scoping of practice on community development outcomes found that to people working in or close to a project on the ground, the intentions often seem clear and obvious. They are tackling poverty, building people's confidence, delivering childcare or addressing some other need or issue. But their intentions can be far from clear to people more distant from the action, whose support and understanding they need – funders, public authorities, or community members who are not part of the inner circle. A clear statement of outcomes establishes good communication with stakeholders and enables supporters and co-operators to understand what the project is aiming to do.

Similarly, clear outcomes guide what evidence to collect. Collecting evidence of achievement and of how things happen is often neglected in the thick of the action. Again, to the people taking the action it often seems obvious at the time what is happening and why, and diverting effort into collecting evidence can seem like a waste of time when there are pressing social needs to be met. But the result is that at the end of the project it is often difficult to reconstruct what happened or even to show that things have improved as a result of the actions taken.

Demonstrating the impact of programmes which have supported a range of projects but do not have a clear set of measurable outcomes can pose an even greater challenge for both programme and project managers.

This is not just a matter of satisfying external audiences. Expending effort can easily be mistaken for achieving progress. To check whether progress is really happening we need to periodically stand back from the process and ask whether the conditions or problems which we were addressing in the first place are really changing. For that we need evidence beyond our own perceptions (though including them).

A way of visualising the benefit of clear outcomes is shown in **Figure 1**.

(b) **Analysis of Programmes**

The community development programmes from which BCIP is being formed have different ways of expressing the types of impacts to be achieved and how progress should be measured. Overall these legacy programmes share common features which suggest common outcome statements:

- developing more inclusive and engaged communities;

- increasing the capacity, impacts and influence of community groups through learning and training;

- encouraging active citizenship and stronger communities;

- supporting communities so that they can play a greater part in community, social and economic renewal;

- ensuring people have access to advice which enables them to avail of services and support;

- provision of community facilities and activities which enable people to organise, participate and celebrate.

The programmes individually gather monitoring information on projects they support. The types of information include data which can be used as indicators of progress towards desired outcomes. This includes:

- volunteer and participation levels in centres, projects, activities, training etc;

- profile of users of community facilities and catchment areas;

- levels of grant aid and other income and numbers employed;

- number and range of advice clients;

- networking and partnership activities;

- percentage of residents who agree there is a strong sense of community;

- number of volunteers on management committees;

- groups receiving capacity building support and/or training.

(c)   **Community Groups Engagement**

The community group workshops and responses to the online survey were broadly similar to the types of outcomes and indicators identified from the analysis of the legacy programmes (above). However they also identified other types of community development outcomes including:

- wider impact on policy and decision making by Government, council etc;

- influence on how services are planned and delivered;

- direct and indirect beneficiaries of advice and information;

- empowerment of people to influence;

- more participation by disengaged people;

- provision of inclusive facilities, events, activities which welcome all;

- diversity of programme activities and of involvement of volunteers and committee members.

Ways of measuring progress towards community development outcomes (in addition to those listed above) suggested by groups were:

- responsiveness of statutory services;

- levels of awareness of centres/advice services/community groups;

- non-grant aid sources of income;

- number of jobs supported and social enterprise projects;

- range and breadth of groups' and/or centres' activities;

- wider family beneficiaries of advice;

- improved skills and knowledge of groups;

- increased investment/leverage in communities;

- number of collaborative projects.

(d)   **Discussions with Councillors and Staff**

In many ways similar types of outcomes and indicators (measurements of progress) as those listed above were suggested by these discussions. Participants stressed the need to be able to measure the direct impacts of the new Programme on residents in disadvantaged communities. This could range from levels of involvement and volunteering to awareness and usage of centres, advice and facilities and include levels of satisfaction with the work of groups and facilities. Councillors placed a particular emphasis on the need to capture the wider impacts of advice services (including enabling people to access other forms of support) and to find ways of measuring the level of demands on advice services. The positive impacts people and community groups have on the delivery of services and development of new initiatives should also be important for BCIP. Like some of the findings from community group engagement the staff discussions also raised issues such as sustainability, inclusiveness and diversity and community capacity to engage in the delivery of wider policy aims. The need to ensure that levels of monitoring are proportionate to funding was also referred to as was the importance of BCIP being open to groups who have not been funded under previous programmes.

All of these findings and the learning from good practice and current community development programmes have informed the content and shape of the Outcomes Framework for BCIP (see pages 15-22). The outcomes presented below seek to encapsulate challenging but achievable ambitions for community development while recognising that community development activity (and BCIP in particular) is only one of a range of measures and investments needed in disadvantaged communities.

The outcome indicators presented in the Framework also draw on these findings and learning. Where possible, valuable and supported by the engagement process they have been transferred from one or more of the existing programmes (thus utilising existing data collection). In other cases the indicators are modifications and distillations of suggestions made and some are developed from good practice. In some cases proposed indicators have not been utilised either because of the administrative burden or cost involved or because it is not possible to collect the data required. Finally some suggestions for indicators referred to the wider issues of regeneration, health improvement, economic development etc which require investments from a much wider set of strategies and programmes.

4.   The Outcomes Framework

The partners to the BCIP programme are committed to building it on a clear set of outcomes. The logic of using outcomes as a main focus in developing a funding programme is set out in a number of sources (for example in DSD's Urban Regeneration and Community Development Policy Framework[1] and BCIP Towards an Outcomes Framework Paper[2]) and it is a key commitment of the Concordat between Government and the Community and Voluntary Sector. The key point of this approach is that the planning of the programme proceeds by envisioning a clear picture of the intended outcomes. It then works backwards to establish what practice would deliver those results, and what inputs would be required to put that practice in place.

Outcomes should therefore be accompanied by indicators – practical measures to describe both the current situation and stages of change. Experience shows that indicators work best if they are single, unambiguous and measurable. An indicator is a pared down practical test of one of the factors by which it can be judged whether an outcome is being reached. This ideal is not always achievable. Some indicators can take the form of single questions in a survey, yielding quantitative answers. Others are inevitably more complex and require assessments made by key contributors.

A programme outcomes framework approach needs to have the following characteristics:

- The outcome indicators should show how the desired change will be measured and thus whether investment (grants, people and facilities) are delivering the impacts sought.

- Statistical indicators and factual information alone cannot capture process as well as measure change. In addition to quantitative and qualitative measures, some information needs to be in the form of assessment and interpretation of processes. This should be done by those who are in a position to see what changes are happening and how the programme is or is not achieving the desired outcomes.

- By measuring the impact of the investments in projects/activities across all the indicators, the framework can help to identify good practice and contribute to learning and sharing better knowledge on community development.

- The information should also be used to direct strategic management and planning. If an outcome is not being achieved then the framework needs to help identify where the shortfalls may be and the type of actions required. It should thus be a live planning tool to assist managers to get the best value from the investment as well as draw on and share best practice.

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[1] http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/urcd-policy-framework-consultation-document.pdf
[2] www.belfastcity.gov.uk/bcip/engagewithbcip.asp

The outcomes for BCIP were informed by: the policy context; a study of the programmes being replaced by BCIP; and engagement with community and voluntary groups across the city through community outcomes workshops, an online survey and the provision of information on a dedicated website.

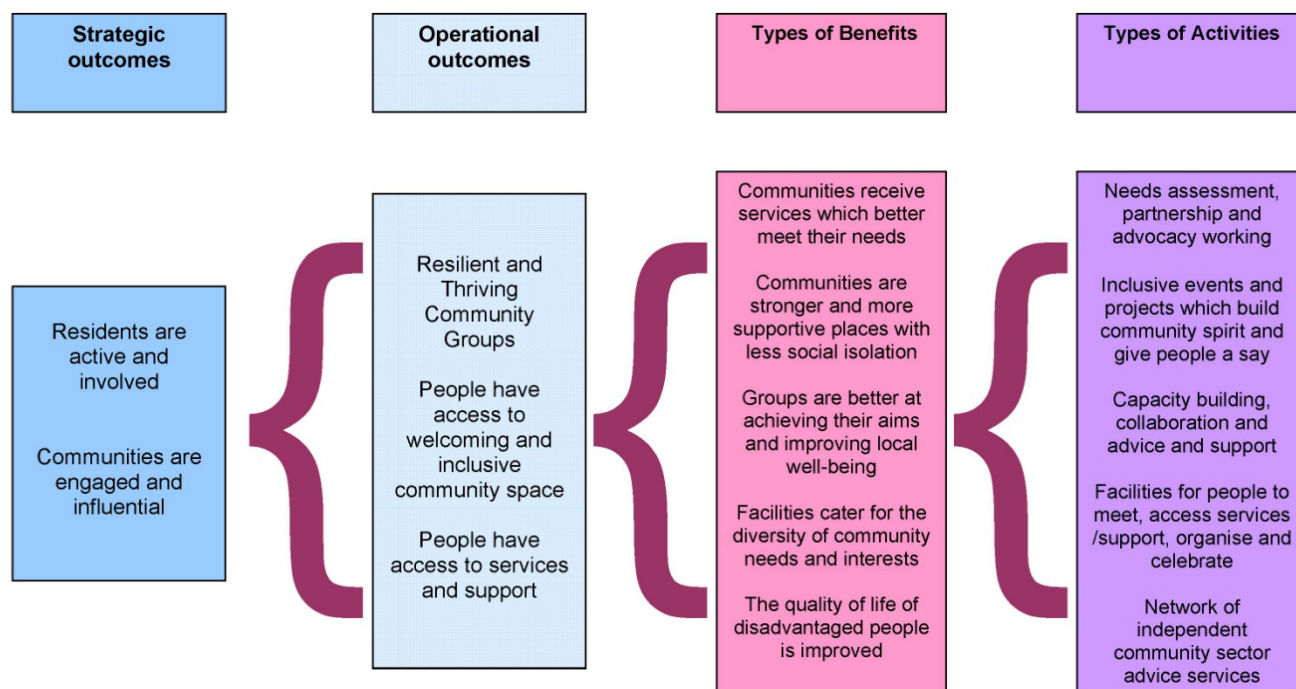The following important parameters were also taken into account:

- the fact that this is an investment programme, managed through grants to groups embedded within the community, by whom the outcomes must be seen as realistic, desirable and achievable;

- the fact that this programme is only one part, albeit a major one, of the council's community development service, so should have a distinct role, complementary to other parts of the service;

- the need to ensure that the programme has beneficial wider effects for other council departments and for other public services, so that it is valued by them; and

- above all the need for simplicity and transparency to ensure that purpose and progress are visible to all stakeholders affected by the programme.

Outcomes, Typical Benefits and Activities

The diagram below presents the Programme Outcomes together with an indication of the types of benefits which would flow from these outcomes and the range of activities which the Programme might support. The outcomes are presented as **strategic** and **operational**. The strategic outcomes are those longer term impacts which the Programme will have on people and on the delivery of services in communities. The operational outcomes capture the more short-term impacts which the Programme will have.

BCIP Programme Aim

To promote and invest in a resilient and effective independent community development sector across the city

Strategic outcomes	Operational outcomes	Types of Benefits	Types of Activities

| Residents are active and involved

Communities are engaged and influential | Resilient and Thriving Community Groups

People have access to welcoming and inclusive community space

People have access to services and support | Communities receive services which better meet their needs

Communities are stronger and more supportive places with less social isolation

Groups are better at achieving their aims and improving local well-being

Facilities cater for the diversity of community needs and interests

The quality of life of disadvantaged people is improved | Needs assessment, partnership and advocacy working

Inclusive events and projects which build community spirit and give people a say

Capacity building, collaboration and advice and support

Facilities for people to meet, access services /support, organise and celebrate

Network of independent community sector advice services |

Assessing and Measuring Progress

As explained above an outcomes framework includes the indicators of progress (what will be measured) and the ways in which evidence will be gathered. The engagement process and scoping of good practice all confirm the need to combine quantitative and qualitative indicators. The following table thus includes both types of indicators (many of which were suggested through the engagement process). The inclusion of qualitative and quantitative indicators leads in turn to the need for the use of different methods for gathering data and evidence of progress. The table thus includes four methods:

- Survey of residents (which would be undertaken as part of the council's existing household survey);

- Project monitoring;

- Practice Impact Analysis by projects (to capture indirect effects and good practice); and

- Programme Evaluation (focused on the benefits of the programme to service delivery organisations and the community sector across the city.

Baseline information is needed in order to measure and describe progress over time. The first year of the new programme will thus be used as the baseline year during which data will be collated across the outcomes and indicators presented in the table below. This will also provide an opportunity to test the suitability of the outcome indicators.

Strategic Outcome	Indicator	Method
A. Residents: **Active and Involved** More residents are active and involved in their community in positive ways, building relationships, groups and activities from which they and others benefit.	1. Percentage of residents who say they are aware of community groups/projects in their area.	Residents Impact Survey
	2. Percentage of residents who say they volunteered to help a community group/project/activity in the past year and percentage who volunteered for the first time.	
	3. Percentage of residents who say they received a service or support from a community group, project or centre in the past year.	
	4. Percentage of residents who agree there is a strong sense of community in their local area.	
	5. Percentage of residents who agree their community is a welcoming place for others.	
	6. Percentage of residents who have helped someone individually, outside their own household, in the past year.	
	7. Percentage of residents who say that being active in the community helped them make new friends, contacts or become less isolated in the past year.	
	8. Percentage of residents who say that being active in the community helped them become healthier or feel better in the past year.	
	9. The community is more inclusive and strengthened by project activities which have engaged people at the margins.	Practice Impact Analysis

Strategic Outcome	Indicator	Method
B. Communities: **Influential and Engaged** Residents, communities and the delivery of services benefit from community influence, engagement and collaboration	1. Percentage of residents who agree that they can influence decisions affecting their area by working together with others.	Residents Impact Survey
	2. Number of groups who agree that they can influence decisions affecting their area.	Programme Evaluation
	3. Extent to which agencies agree that the effectiveness of their service delivery has improved in response to community engagement.	
	4. Extent to which agencies agree that decisions on programmes, strategies or investments have been influenced by community engagement.	
	5. Extent to which agencies agree that the BCIP supported community development infrastructure is inclusive and reflects the diversity of the city's communities.	
	6. Number and type of advocacy contacts with statutory sector officials and politicians.	Project monitoring reports
	7. Number and type of collaborations/partnerships with other CVS organisations to increase influence and engagement.	
	8. Extent to which statutory programmes/initiatives/services have improved or changed as a result of work by the project itself and/or in partnership with other projects.	Practice Impact Analysis

Operational Outcome	Indicator	*Method*
C. Community Groups: **Resilient and Thriving** Community groups achieve more of their objectives and make a greater contribution to local wellbeing.	1. Number of BCIP funded groups and projects.	Project monitoring reports
	2. Number of people employed by BCIP and total employed.	
	3. Total number of volunteers involved in helping with group activities in the past year and percentage of new volunteers recruited in the past year.	
	4. Number and sections of population (by age, gender, sexual orientation and ethnicity) involved as committee members and number of these who are new in the past year.	
	5. Number and sections of population (by age, gender, sexual orientation and ethnicity) served by group within its catchment community.	
	6. Diversity of income sources (by BCIP; other council programmes; other bodies; income generation/trading; membership and donations).	
	7. Number (where applicable) of groups provided with community development capacity building advice, support, training.	
	8. Number of funded programmes and projects (by type, source and value).	
	9. Number and details of collaborative/partnership applications for funding.	
	10. Good practice in supporting community groups and strengthening the capacity and collaboration of community groups.	Practice Impact Analysis
	11. User group satisfaction.	

Operational Outcome	Indicator	Method
D. Community Buildings: **Welcoming and Inclusive** Community buildings host a diverse range of activities and groups, are used by residents from all sections of the community and are managed effectively as assets.	1. Number of community buildings grant aided.	Project monitoring reports
	2. Hours opened by day and time (morning; afternoon; evening).	
	3. Annual income/expenditure (and % from non-BCIP sources and from income generation/trading).	
	4. Programme of activities reflects the diversity of the catchment area.	
	5. Number of individual users (by age, gender, community background, ethnic group and disability).	
	6. Number of group users by type of group and activities.	
	7. User group satisfaction with facility.	
	8. Number and sections of population (by age, gender, sexual orientation and ethnicity) involved as committee members and volunteers. Number of these who are new volunteers in the past year.	
	9. Percentage of residents who know of their local community building and know what it does.	Residents Impact Survey
	10. The building's user and volunteer profile has developed to reflect the diversity of the catchment area as a result of project practices/activities to develop inclusivity.	Practice Impact Analysis
	11. Extent to which the community building meets council good practice standards and extent to which the building and its activities are welcome and inclusive of all sections of the community.	Programme Evaluation

Operational Outcome	Indicator	Method
E. People: **Access Services and Support** More people obtain access to services, benefits and support to which they are entitled, and gain from information, advice and advocacy	1. Number of enquiries and clients by category.	Project monitoring reports
	2. Total number of beneficiaries (including family members).	
	3. Waiting list times and numbers.	
	4. Number of appeals and success rate.	
	5. Number of direct referrals to other support services.	
	6. Value of benefits claimed as a result of advice given.	
	7. Number of volunteers and volunteer hours.	
	8. Percentage of residents who can name their local advice service and say they would use it if in need.	Residents Impact Survey
	9. Extent to which local community development processes, service delivery or policy developments have been informed and influenced by the experience and knowledge of the advice service.	Practice Impact Analysis

5.   Next Steps

Much more needs to be done in developing the new Programme and in preparing staff and the community sector for its introduction.

Some of the key tasks are:

• Developing an overall Performance Management system which supports the programme implementation and links with the council's Corporate System.

• Further development of the council's grant aid system to ensure capture and management of key data to inform decision making and reporting.

• Identification of programme eligibility and assessment criteria.

• Further engagement and communications with the community sector and discussions with other funders of the sector on opportunities for synergy.

• Training of staff who will be involved in delivering BCIP.

• Capacity building for the community sector on BCIP with an emphasis on the outcomes approach utilised.

Appendix 1 - Methods for Collecting Evidence of Outcomes

Complementary and cumulative methods:

Project Monitoring Reports

Information is required from organisations in receipt of grants. This monitoring data on their own performance will inform their own planning and practice and the assessment of the overall city-wide impacts of the programme. The information to be collected includes impact on the users and beneficiaries of services and activities.

Practice Impact Analysis

The organisations receiving significant funding (eg for capacity building, networking, community buildings, advice services) would provide short descriptions of examples of good practice. These would capture the qualitative impacts of projects on outcomes and enrich the overall evaluation of both the projects and the whole programme. They would also inform community development practitioners' learning and support the development of good practice across the city.

Residents Impact Survey

This independent survey of residents would seek to capture the benefits residents derive from community development supported projects and activities within their communities and help provide a statistical basis for evaluating the overall impact of the BCIP programme. The survey could be undertaken at local spatial levels or could form part of the council's regular household survey – though if this approach is taken the household sample size should be significantly increased and stratified for areas of disadvantage.

Programme Evaluation

An overall evaluation of BCIP would draw on all information from the other evidence gathering methods. Crucially, it would also gather the experiences and views of council departments, statutory agencies and community groups which interact with the community development sector projects supported by BCIP. They will be in a position to provide valuable evidence on the extent to which the programme and projects have been influential on their work and decision making and the ways in which communities themselves have become more skilled and effective in engaging in positive ways with policy and making and service/programme delivery. The evaluation should include a community survey of all community groups in the city and seek to ascertain their community development support needs and the impacts of the Programme on their work.

Drawing on Complementary Research

The methods presented in this Framework will provide evidence of the impacts of the overall programme and the projects supported by it. The evaluation of the programme would also benefit from information about the needs and experiences of groups outside its sphere of influence.

This type of information would also be useful for ongoing programme management and help inform activity planning by those larger organisations receiving grants to provide capacity building support to smaller groups. Some of the additional ways in which information on the issues and experiences of the whole community sector in the city might be identified are described below.

The council itself could undertake a survey of the whole community sector on a regular basis (perhaps every three years). The council could also consider how the NICVA annual State of the Sector survey and the Northern Ireland Life and Times (NILT) Survey could be refined and developed to provide information on the needs and experiences of the city's community groups and residents respectively. Similarly the council could give consideration to how its knowledge of volunteering levels in the city might be enhanced through the work of Volunteer Now (see Mapping Volunteering Involving Organisations, June 2011). The Consumer Council undertakes research on consumers' awareness of their rights. This includes questions on sources of advice and information (see Canny Consumers? 2012). Further development of this type of research by the Consumer Council would provide data on awareness of BCIP supported advice services. Finally the household survey on health and wellbeing by the Belfast Strategic Partnership will provide a wider contextual picture. Should this survey be repeated the council should seek to include questions which would inform the overall assessment of the Belfast Community Investment Programme.

Appendix 2 - Technical Details on Methods

The table below provides technical detail on each method and how they work together to create an integrated approach to the design, evaluation and management of the BCIP.

Outline of Module Methods

Method	Focus	Technical
Method 1 Project monitoring reports [PMR]	Standard systematic monitoring reports linked to the release of grant aid and evaluation. This would be a broadly standardised system concerning: funded community groups; community centres; and advice organisations.	These reports will form part of the standard monitoring processes but data collected will focus on agreed outcome indicators.
Method 2 Practice Impact Analysis [PIA]	PIAs would be up to 1,000 words in length and provide an opportunity for grant recipients to explain their wider impacts in a more holistic way.	The number of PIAs submitted should vary by scale of grant. The council should provide a set of core questions to be addressed by each PIA.
Method 3 Residents Impact Survey [RIS]	This would involve a survey of households, disproportionally stratified by areas of disadvantage.	The sample should be large enough to provide statistical confidence in reporting and inform the management and review of the programme.
Method 4 Programme Evaluation [PE]	This focused evaluation would examine the performance of the grant programme from the perspective of the statutory agencies and programme managers. It would also survey community groups to asses their support needs and the contribution of BCIP.	The approach is based on defining designated organisations and conducting a standardised assessment on their view of the performance of the programme on developing more effective and engaged organisations, sectors and communities.