



<b>Report to:</b>	Development Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	European Social Fund (ESF) match funding requests
<b>Date:</b>	19 March 2013
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<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	Members may be aware that European Social Fund (ESF) Priority One provides financial support to promote training and other activities to assist long term unemployed people obtain sustainable employment. Funding is awarded through an open call for projects. Successful applicants are allocated funding on condition that they can provide 35% match funding from another public sector source.
1.2	At the February 2012 meeting of the Development Committee, Members agreed to provide match funding for four European Social Fund projects. Three projects were managed by community-based training providers, namely Stepping Stones; Upper Springfield Development Trust (USDT) and Time Associates while the fourth project was led by Belfast City Council, with Lisburn City Council as a project partner.
1.3	The ESF projects are funded through Department of Employment and Learning (DEL). Match funding must be secured on an annual basis. Requests for match funding for these projects in the financial year 2013-2014 have now been received by Belfast City Council.
1.4	Although the original letters of offer from DEL were issued on the basis of a three year programme, DEL have now written to all project promoters to confirm that they can offer funding to the approved projects for an additional year (2014-2015) should the project promoters wish to take this offer up. Equally, they have confirmed that they are in a position to offer an uplift of 25% in the funding available to interested projects. In both instances, these offers are based on the project being able to draw in the appropriate levels of match funding.

2	Key Issues
2.1	Appendix 1 (attached) provides a summary of performance to date on each of the projects (based on a 10 month performance: April 2012-Jan 2013); forecasts for year end from the four projects and funding requests and targets for the coming year, for which match funding is being sought. Additional details on each project are provided below.
2.2	<p><u>HARTE</u> To date, 88 participants have completed the programme gaining a total of 625 Level 2 qualifications in industry recognised fields such as customer care, health and safety, food hygiene, World Host and team leadership. This equates to more than 7 vocational qualifications per participant. In addition, some participants have gone on to “next steps” training on topics such as “service of food at a table” and “preparing and serving wines”. These participants have gained a total of 273 additional qualifications in these areas.</p>
2.3	34 participants have obtained employment and 12 are awaiting further interviews or are going through selection process.
2.4	In the coming year, it is planned that there will be 4 HARTE programmes, involving 60 long term unemployed people. Participants will be provided with accredited training and will be given dedicated pre-employment support and mentoring to help them find a job within the relevant field. The project has a target of 24 people into employment in the 2013-2014 financial year.
2.5	In the application made to DEL the estimated total project expenditure for the coming year will be £142,000. European Social Fund (ESF) and the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) will provide £92,000 of the costs and Lisburn City Council will contribute £15,000. To continue the HARTE programme it is therefore anticipated that a match funding contribution of £25,000 will be required from Belfast City Council. This represents a cost per job to Council of around £1000 per person. In addition, 90% of participants in the programme will acquire a range of transferable skills as a result of their engagement. Given the target group (long-term unemployed, voluntary referrals) this achievement cannot be under-estimated, given that over 60% of participants on current programmes have low or no skills.
2.6	<p><u>Upper Springfield Development Trust (USDT) – Jobs on the Move</u> The progress report received from USDT indicates that the project is on course to achieve its targets in terms of engaging with individuals and placing them into employment. 245 individuals engaged with the project to date this year with 23 obtaining employment against targets of 300 individuals engaged with the project and 30 to gain employment.</p>
2.7	In the coming year, it is planned that the project will work with 300 participants, helping 10% of those find employment. Upper Springfield Development Trust (USDT) also manages the LEMIS contract for west Belfast and an additional 34 clients will be helped into employment through that programme. USDT are also coordinating the work on behalf of the LEMIS providers across the city to place long-term unemployed in vacancies created by Belfast City Council. At present, a number of participants are undertaking work placement and training with the Council as part of a pre-employment programme and five posts have been ring-fenced for individuals from that group (to be recruited following a competitive interview process).

2.8	Other training being undertaken by USDT clients includes SIA training (for security/door staff) as well as tour guiding and forklift licence.
2.9	In addition to provision on-site, USDT also engage in a wide range of outreach activities with hard-to-reach groups. This coming year, they plan to operate outreach clinics in locations such as Upper Andersonstown Community Forum; Glen Community Centre; Conway Education Centre; Suffolk Library and Cloverhill Hostel.
2.10	The total project costs for the USDT programme are £264,170 for the coming year. The organisation is requesting match-funding support of £30,000 from Belfast City Council. The other funding sources are DEL/ESF (£171,704); other DEL match (£17,000) and Job Assist Centre (£45,456).
2.11	<p><u>East Belfast Mission (EBM) - Jobs4u Project</u></p> <p>The progress report received from EBM shows that the project engaged with 152 out of an annual target of 170 (to end January 2013) and the Mission has confirmed that they are likely to reach their target within the current year. The employment outcomes for the year were very positive – 78 full and part-time jobs were supported against a target of 40. Some of this can be attributed to East Belfast Mission’s targeted programmes around the opening of the Skainos Centre and a number of programme participants were able to find employment opportunities within the new development. 25 of the participants gained a total of 62 qualifications from the programme.</p>
2.12	In the coming year, the Jobs4u project will increase its activity levels, with a target of 212 participants registering for support and at least 53 finding employment.
2.13	The total project costs for the Jobs4u programme are £190,253 for the coming year. The organisation is requesting match-funding support of £12,485 from Belfast City Council. The other funding sources are DEL/ESF (£123,665); other DEL match (£15,312) and East Belfast Mission (£38,791).
2.14	<p><u>Time Associates/Belfast Metropolitan College – Learn to Earn</u></p> <p>The progress report received from the Learn to Earn project shows that the project engaged with 26 participants (annual target 24). Of these, 8 found employment or went into self-employment and the participants amassed a total of 96 qualifications as part of their engagement in the programme. These include exploring enterprise; ILM management and food hygiene certification.</p>
2.15	In the coming year, the project has a target of recruiting 32 participants, 14 of whom will progress into employment or self employment. It is also anticipated that participants will gain a total of 150 additional qualifications as part of the programme.
2.16	The total project costs for the Learn to Earn programme are £85,518 for the coming year. The organisation is requesting match-funding support of £6,000 from Belfast City Council. The other funding sources are DEL/ESF (£55,587); Time Associates (£11,966) and Belfast Metropolitan College (11,966).
2.17	Members will recall that, at the 29 January meeting of Development Committee, the need for strategic-level engagement of statutory partners to gain consensus on the key employability challenges for the city was recognised in order to

	prioritise and develop activity which will support the city's economic growth and target those furthest from the labour market. They also acknowledged that one of the most significant challenges was the range of employability-related activity that was under way in the city but that was not necessarily aligned to the key challenges of the current labour market.
2.18	It is anticipated that, as a result of the city-wide engagement, we will work to encourage DEL to take a more targeted approach to the new ESF programmes (from 2014). However, in the interim, it is not possible to move away from their letters of offer with existing projects and therefore the challenge is to avoid duplication where possible and to encourage projects to align to agreed targets.
2.19	For each of the ESF projects listed above, we are working with partners to ensure that delivery is focusing on the areas of need as identified in our research and to encourage collaboration where possible in order to maximise the impact of the intervention.
2.20	Although DEL has encouraged the projects to seek funding for a further year's extension (i.e. 2014-2015), we have advised projects that we would not be able to make any commitments for that timeframe, given our annual budgeting cycle. Therefore the existing requests are for financial year 2013/14 only.

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	The total match funding requirements for the four projects in the coming financial year are £73,485.

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</b>
4.1	No specific equality and good relations implications. These will be tested by DEL as part of the funding application process.

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	Members are asked to consider the match-funding requests for the four ESF projects as identified above in order to meet the targets as set out in the report and appendix:  HARTE: £25,000 Jobs on the move: £30,000 Jobs4u: £12,485 Learn2earn: £6,000.

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
	Update reports will be presented to committee on an annual basis.

<b>7</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
	EBM – East Belfast Mission HARTE – Hospitality and Retail Training for Employment USDT – Upper Springfield Development Trust

<b>8</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	Appendix 1 - ESF match funding requests – overview of performance and match funding requested