# SHARED EDUCATION CAMPUSES PROGRAMME

## 1. INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

1.1. The First Minister and deputy First minister in their '**Together: Building a United Community**' statement to the Assembly on 9 May 2013 contained a range of proposals including details on **Shared Education Campuses**. Work on 10 shared education campuses will be commenced within the next 5 years, building on the project proposals for Lisanelly. These campuses will be the pathfinder projects leading to a wider programme of shared education capital projects. The campuses will also integrate community activities and resources and other services including statutory provision where appropriate.

1.2 The specific aim of the Executive's Together: Building a United Community strategy relating to education is *'To enhance the quality and extent of shared education provision, thus ensuring that sharing in education becomes a central part of every child's educational experience.*

1.3 Included in the strategy is a commitment 'to *create 10 Shared Educational Campuses based on the Lisanelly Shared Education Campus model'*. We believe that building good relations, tackling intolerance and challenging prejudice can be embedded through the ethos of schools and is already an integral part of the curriculum. In addition to current work in this area this Strategy proposes that the PfG commitment to ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015 seeks to reinforce opportunities to contribute to the shared vision of building a united community.

1.4 Creating more opportunities for socially-mixed, shared education, with a view to achieving a full shared education system in Northern Ireland, is a crucial part of breaking the cycle of inter-generational educational underachievement unemployment, and sectarianism; and improving good relations amongst and for our young people.

1.5     Lisanelly has been quoted as the template for these new 'Shared Educational Campuses'. This is a shared campus' in the truest sense of the term, bringing together six schools of different management types and phases, on a site in excess of 130 acres, with a forecast combined long term enrolment of c. 3,700 pupils.

1.6     While Lisanelly Shared Education Campus (LSEC) is an example or pathfinder for shared education facilities here, it must be recognised that it is also unique. The availability of an extremely large site close to the centre of Omagh will not be readily replicated in other towns across the north. Implementation of the FM/dFM announcement will require a flexible approach to the identification of potential 'shared campuses'.

1.7     In progressing shared education, delivery of educational benefits to children and young people must be the overarching priority. It is important that any proposal for a shared campus be consistent with the work on area planning currently being undertaken. Any models of sharing must fit within the relevant Area Plan, taking into account the full needs of an area, including the implications for other schools and recognising the importance of parental preference, which is protected in legislation.

1.8     Enhancing shared education provision provides a range of benefits including: raising educational standards, particularly for disadvantaged pupils; greater choice and greater opportunity; providing sustainable local provision; facilitating delivery of the Entitlement Framework; and providing wider choice for pupils in terms of leisure, cultural and sporting activities.

1.9     The purpose of this document is to set out the process and timetable to be used to identify and assess proposals submitted under this initiative.

## 2. DEFINITION and SCOPE

2.1 In July 2012, the Minister of Education announced the establishment of an independent Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) on Advancing Shared Education and the group published its findings on 22 April 2013. The issues arising from the findings on shared education cross many existing policy areas throughout education and the Department is already working on and will continue to develop shared education initiatives in schools.

2.2 It is important there is a clear definition of what is meant by schools 'sharing' and the Department of Education proposes to use the definition of sharing, provided to the Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education:

"*Shared education involves two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion*."

2.3 The "Shared Campuses" initiative under TBUC is seen as complimenting the work already underway and will be targeted towards infrastructure projects aimed at improving or facilitating sharing initiatives within local schools.

2.4 The Shared Educational Campuses Programme will have the potential to bring together a range of schools and aid sharing of classes, subjects and sports and extra-curricular activities.

2.5 The programme will target schools that can demonstrate the following types of sharing:
- Shared facilities – where new facilities are built to allow for shared use by all schools within the model.
- Enhanced facilities – where current facilities are improved to allow for shared use by all schools within the model.
- Shared Campus – where schools are co-located and share infrastructure i.e. the Lisanelly model.

2.6 The Shared Educational Campuses Programme will not give consideration to the concept of a 'virtual campus' or to those schools that do not actually share facilities.

2.7 Whist the sharing of teachers across schools or the sharing of training and development is undoubtedly a contributor; it is assumed that the focus will be on children and young people in the first instance.

2.8 The programme will consider project proposals that demonstrate that they meet the following essential criteria:

**Essential Criteria**

- **Number and Management Type of Schools** – must involve at least two schools from different sectors. As per the integrated test, 30% of the minority community should be represented within the combined total of population involved.
- **Educational Benefits** – must demonstrate how the proposals will benefit the education of all children involved.
- **Societal Benefits** – must demonstrate how the proposals will enhance/develop a shared future for the local community.
- **Endorsement from respective Managing Authorities** – all Managing Authority relating to the schools involved in the process must provide endorsement of their agreement to the proposal.
- **Evidence of Community Support** –community parent and pupil support is required to ensure the success of these types of proposals, evidence is therefore required to confirm support is in place.
- **Context of Area Planning** – any proposal should fit within the relevant Area Plan, taking into account the full needs of an area, including the implications for other schools within the area plans.

2.9    Priority will be given to project proposals that demonstrate that they meet the following desirable criteria:

**Desirable Criteria**

- **Location** – proposals should be for schools to be located within the same campus or in close proximity to each other. Any proposal that is for shared facilities rather than a shared campus should provide details on the distances between the schools involved.
- **Evidence of Existing Sharing** – schools should already be working in collaboration on curricular and non-curricular issues and/or be sharing facilities on a regular basis. The move to a Shared Campus will therefore build on the shared education that has already taken place. Evidence is required to be provided to confirm that any existing sharing exists.

2.10    Applications should demonstrate that all essential criteria are met and that any evidence requested is provided. Proposals considered as having met all the essential criteria will then be assessed with priority given to those proposals that best meet both the essential and desirable criteria. Those proposals which best meet the criteria will be submitted to the Minister for a final decision on which projects will be approved to proceed to full business case.

## 3.    PROCESS

### *Stage 1 – Call for Expressions of Interest*

3.1    The programme will be delivered by means of separate discrete calls for proposals.  In order to reduce the administrative and financial burden on individual schools and Managing Authorities a two staged approached will be operated with regard to the application process.

3.2    The first stage will take the form of an Expression of Interest which must be endorsed by the relevant school Managing Authorities i.e. the relevant Education and Library Board on behalf of controlled schools in its area, the Catholic Council for Maintained Schools on behalf of catholic schools or by an

individual Voluntary Grammar, Grant Maintained Integrated or Irish Medium School.

3.3     Expressions of Interest should be submitted through the relevant Education and Library Board who will be responsible for submitting the EOIs to the Department of Education.   You should ensure that proposals are submitted through the Board in time to meet the deadline for responses of 31March 2014.

3.4     The Expression of Interest should be supported by a Strategic Outline Case (SOC) setting out the case for the project.  A copy of the SOC Template is included at Annex 1 to this document.  This will introduce the basic project concept, backed up with information on the cost, benefit and timing of the project.

### Assessment of Project Proposals

3.5     Following the closing date for applications, all project applications will be assessed under the relevant essential criteria as set out at 2.8 above. Those applications deemed to have met the essential criteria will be further assessed along with any evidence provided in support of the desirable criteria as set out in 2.9 above.  Projects will be sifted and selected on the basis of the information provided in this application.

3.6     A group will be established within the Department to consider proposed projects against the set criteria.  This group will report to the Director of Area Planning and will make recommendations to the Minister based on which projects best meet the criteria, and within the funding available, should be progressed to a full business case.

3.7     Projects selected for further consideration will be required to work up a detailed business case for consideration and approval.  Only after approval of the detailed business case and subject to availability of funding at that time will projects be permitted to move to award of contract

3.6 The indicative timetable for the first call under the Shared Education Campuses Programme is as follows:

- May 2013 – OFMDFM Minister's Statement to Assembly – announcing work on 10 shared education campuses will be commenced within the next 5 years, building on the project proposals for Lisanelly;
- January 2014 - Call for Expressions of Interest – , the Department issues letter to school authorities setting out process, copying the approved protocol, programme application form and confirming the programme timetable;
- End of March 2014 – deadline for submission of proposals by School Planning Authorities;
- June 2014 – Announcement of programme; Selected proposals advised to proceed in planning, including securing professional team as required.

## 4. APPROVAL OF PROGRAMME

4.1 Planning Authorities will be informed of the projects to proceed in planning.

4.2 Selected projects will be invited to develop a full business case. The full business case, when submitted will be considered within the normal business approval processes and in line with NIGEA guidelines including value for money and affordability. Only after approval of the full business case and can a project proceed to tender and construction.

4.3 Projects not selected for advancement in the call will be returned to the Planning Authority. The project may be submitted to any subsequent call for proposals.

## 5. MONITORING

5.1 Programme governance and control structures will be established for the programme of shared education campuses emerging.

5.2    Project plans will be sought from the School Managing Authorities for all approved projects.

## 6.    ECONOMIC APPRAISALS

6.1    A full business case (Economic Appraisal) must be prepared for each selected proposal. Business cases must be completed in accordance with NIGEA guidelines. No project shall be permitted to proceed to tender/construction without an approved full business case and confirmation from the relevant managing authorities of affordability and available funding.

6.2    The Department will provide consultants to work with the managing authorities to help complete the business case.

## 7.    PROCUREMENT

7.1    All professional appointments arising on approved projects must be carried out in full compliance with procurement guidelines and regulations. Where a professional team has already been appointed, the relevant managing authorities must provide evidence that the team has been procured in compliance with procurement guidelines and regulations, otherwise the Department will not support the appointment.

**Shared Educational Campuses Programme – Application Form**

The Shared Educational Campuses Programme will be delivered through a distinct, single call to Planning Authorities.

All project proposals must be supported by a complete application form which will form the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) for the shared educational campus proposal.

The application form will help the Department to assess whether it is worth committing resources to take the project forward to develop a more detailed design and Economic Appraisal.

**The completed application form must be returned through your Education and Library Board to reach the Department by 31 March 2014**

This form is designed to help Planning Authorities make an application using appropriate and proportionate effort. There is flexibility over the amount of information to be included under each heading below, but note that the Application Form is intended to be a short document and should not exceed 10 pages.

**Project Title:**

**Planning Authority:**

**Managing Authorities Involved:**

**Senior Responsible Officer:**

**Signed:**                                            **Date:**

## Section 1: Project Overview

*Briefly describe the basic project concept.*
*Confirmation must be given that the application relates to schools which are viable and core to emerging area plans.*

## Section 2: Rational, Aims and Need

*State the rationale for shared education.*
*Identify the type of sharing being proposed (Shared facilities, enhanced facilities or shared campus).*
*Identify the relevant aims and objectives of the proposed project.*
*Outline how the project meets the following criteria:*
- *Number and Management Type of Schools;*
- *Demonstration of the Educational Benefits that will be created;*
- *Demonstration of the Societal Benefits that will be created;*
- *Evidence of parent and Pupil Support;*
- *Location;*
- *Evidence of Existing Sharing;*
- *Relevance within context of Area Plans.*

## Section 3: Constraints

*Identify likely constraints e.g. lands issues; legal constraints; planning approvals.*

## Section 4: Stakeholder Issues

*Identify the key stakeholders and confirm their agreement to the project proceeding.*

*Indicate their level of commitment to the project as specifically as possible.*
*Describe any consultations held or still required.*
*Are there any outstanding stakeholder issues?*
*Provide endorsement from respective Managing Authorities.*

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## Section 5: Management and Implementation

*Give a preliminary indication of the proposed project management arrangements.*
*Is any consultancy support likely to be required?*
*Describe any legal or contractual issues.*
*Are there any important outstanding management/implementation considerations?*

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## Section 6: Costs, Benefits & Risks

*Provide broad estimates of the capital and revenue costs of the project.*
*If savings are anticipated, for example of planned minor works or maintenance explain their nature and quantify them broadly.*
*Describe the non-monetary costs and benefits that are expected to arise.*
*Explain the key risks that the project is likely to face and any potential mitigation measures.*

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