



Report to: Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Subject: **Building Successful Communities**

Date: 24 January 2013

Reporting Officer: Peter McNaney, Chief Executive
John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	In October 2013, Minister for Social Development announced six 'Building Successful Communities' pilot areas to take forward a housing-led regeneration programme. Five of these six areas fall within Belfast, with the sixth area in Ballymena (covering the Doury Road area). The five areas in Belfast include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lower Oldpark/Hillview; - Divis/Albert Street; - Tiger's Bay/Mouncollyer; - Lower Shankill/Brown Square; and - Andersonstown
1.2	The 'Building Successful Communities' initiative is part of the 'Facing the Future - Housing Strategy for Northern Ireland 2012-2017'. The Housing Strategy sets out the criteria for the selection of these pilot areas which includes areas that are already designated areas of deprivation and which have good potential for recovery with available land or properties that can be refurbished. The aim of the programme is to use housing intervention as one of the main catalysts for local regeneration. It is intended to complement existing departmental programmes including the Social Housing Development Programme, Neighbourhood Renewal and other capital regeneration activities.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The programme will involve concerted social, economic and physical interventions by the DSD, the NI Housing Executive, Housing Associations, local communities and key statutory and voluntary agencies to develop solutions that will reverse decline and create more sustainable communities.
2.2	A 'Regeneration Forum' will be set up within each of the designated 'Building Successful Communities' areas to develop plans with economic, physical and social interventions and take work forward to meet community needs. Once the plans are in place, DSD will secure appropriate funding from DFP for delivery. Membership of Regeneration Forums will be sought from the Housing Executive, elected representatives, council officials, housing associations and representatives from

	education, health and the voluntary and community sectors.
2.3	A dedicated 'Regeneration Manager', will be recruited for each area to support the forums to identify the issues in their respective areas, design and deliver solutions relating to housing, regeneration, infrastructure, employment and social enterprise, together with other issues that the forum feels is important.
2.4	A Programme Board will be established to provide strategic direction, agree the action plans for each area and oversee the delivery of the Building Successful Communities pilot programme. The pilot programme is designed to build upon examples of best practice in Manchester and Liverpool and the intention is that it will be expanded to other areas if the pilots prove successful.
2.5	The formation of each of the forums is at an early stage. DSD have written to request Council participation on each of the five Regeneration Forums as well as senior officer involvement in the Building Successful Communities Programme Board to oversee the initiative. DSD are also approaching local councillors and MLAs within each of the target areas to confirm interest and participation in the forums. It is anticipated that the forums will be established within the next few months.
2.6	Members have previously agreed that the development of area plans will be considered within the context of the emerging community planning framework and, as demonstrated in other cities, there is likely to be a strong relationship between neighbourhood regeneration and community planning at a local level. It will therefore be important for the Council to ensure the programme ties in with existing programmes and targeted regeneration initiatives as well as the future plans for a transformed integrated regeneration and place-shaping agenda.
2.7	As this is likely to impact on the Council's delivery of regeneration post-2015 it is recommended that the Director of Development is nominated to the Programme Board and that a programmed and co-ordinated approach is adopted to manage council representation on each of the five Regeneration Forums. To support this co-ordinated approach, it is suggested that in the first instance, appropriate council officers from the Urban Development Unit be assigned to each of the five Regeneration Forums in Belfast.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	Human: Officer time in terms of participation on the Regeneration Forums and co-ordination will be accommodated within existing responsibilities. Financial: None at this stage; however, there may be future implications in terms of the delivery of agreed regeneration plans.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no equality or good relations implications at this stage. Equality screening will be carried out as part of the Building Successful Communities programme development.

5	Recommendations
5.1	The Committee is asked to note the content of this report and at this stage to agree to the nomination of the Director of Development to the Building Successful Communities Programme Board and to the co-ordinated approach to support appropriate officer representation to each of the 5 pilot Regeneration Forums.

6	Decision Tracking
Further to Committees consideration of the report: Time line: March 2013 Reporting Officer: John McGrillen, Director of Development	

7	Key to Abbreviations
DSD – Department for Social Development MLAs – Members of the Local Assembly	

8	Documents attached
Appendix 1 – Letter from DSD	