



## Belfast City Council response to Inner South Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership's Action plan (2007)

### Background

Inner South Belfast Neighbourhood Partnership (the Partnership) was established in June 2005.

It includes the inner city communities of Donegall Pass, Lower Ormeau and the Markets.

The Partnership comprises representation from the community, statutory and private sectors and is currently in the process of securing representation from elected members of Belfast City Council. Since its inception the Partnership has developed a Statement of Readiness (SOR) and Vision Statement and Framework (VSF), both of which have been approved by Government.

The Partnership is currently developing its Neighbourhood Action Plan with the support of South Belfast Partnership Board who are facilitating the process

### The council's input

A number of discreet actions in the plan identify Belfast City Council as either a lead or supporting partner in their delivery.

As part of their consultation process the Inner South Partnership have now asked the council to make an official response to the actions

Detailed below are each of these council-related actions and a combined council response (established after discussions with the council's departments).

There are some general comments on the plan:

**Parks/open spaces:** We are looking at playground provision; playing pitch provision, facilities management agreement as well as the establishment of a green corridor which links open space. We are also looking at increased events in parks.

In general though there will be management plans for each of our parks and it would seem to me a good opportunity to seek to integrate elements – a big aspect of the management plan will be community consultation and engagement.

**European funding:** European Unit will be rolling out community information roadshows on EU policy and funding opportunities. There may be many opportunities through Peace III for resources for many parts of this plan

**Good Relations:** We would be concerned that there is no reference in the document to 'A Shared Future' or the Race Equality Strategy.

### Belfast: The Masterplan 2004 to 2020

In its masterplan for the city, published in 2004, the council carried out a careful analysis of the social, economic and physical needs of the city and proposed a framework for the revival of Belfast in the period up to 2020. Within the plan five areas, including south Belfast, were identified for particular attention ensuring that neighbourhood renewal was integrated with the strategic citywide framework. In many ways this framework complements the Inner South Action plan and can offer a significant contribution to the plan's development.

The plan has a number of specific recommendations for south Belfast:

## Strategic Theme: Building strong, safe, attractive and sustainable communities

(1) Desired outcome: **1A** – A suitable and affordable range of housing is available across all tenures.

Action sought: **2 - An independent and integrated strategy will be developed to provide a framework for the future development of Inner South Belfast in relation to housing.**

Lead:

Support: NIHE, Planning Service, Housing Associations, Private Developers, Landlords, Neighbourhood Partnership

**Council response:** The Planning Service published a draft HMO Subject Plan for Belfast in 2006, to supplement BMAP, following a consultation exercise. The initial Issues Paper, on which the consultation was based, provided an overview of the impact of increasing HMO development in the Belfast City Council area, much of it related to their concentration in south Belfast. The Subject Plan Strategy and Policy Framework will form the planning context within which HMO development will take place, including south Belfast, and will need to be considered in the development of any integrated housing strategy for the area. (Public Health & Housing)

(2) Desired outcome: **1B** – Housing is of an acceptable standard and is repaired and maintained with reasonable responsiveness to need.

Action sought: **1 - NIHE will undertake an assessment of design flaws of existing housing stock in Inner South Belfast (e.g. No rear-door access to properties in Donegall Pass)**

Lead:

Support: NIHE

**Council response:** Belfast City Council Environmental Health staff respond to complaints from the public, primarily tenants in rented property, regarding disrepair that could be creating unhealthy conditions. Landlords, including social landlords, can be made to carry out the necessary repairs.

Under new legislative provisions, due to come into effect in April 2007, the Council will be able to deal with unfit dwellings in the private rented sector. (Public Health & Housing)

(3) Desired outcome: **1B** – Housing is of an acceptable standard and is repaired and maintained with reasonable responsiveness to need.

Action sought: 2 - NIHE will work to ensure that all residents have a suitable location to keep their bins.

Lead:

Support: NIHE

**Council response:** Where household rubbish is discarded or allowed to accumulate, even within the curtilage of a dwelling, the Council can require the occupier to remove it if it is giving rise to a public health nuisance. (Public Health & Housing)

(4) Desired outcome: **1C** - All stakeholders work in partnership to ensure there is effective provision to address the causes and effects of anti-social behaviour.

Action sought: **1 - A properly resourced community safety strategy which engages all relevant stakeholders will be developed for Inner South Belfast.**

Lead: Belfast City Council on set up of ASB fora

Support: NIHE, Neighbourhood Partnership, South Belfast Partnership Board, **Belfast City Council**, Local Community Organisations, BELB (Youth Service)

**Council response:** Belfast City Council would encourage local communities to work together to address issues of ASB. It will be important, however, that this local strategy seeks to integrate with work both at regional level (led by the NIO) and the Belfast Community Safety Partnership strategy for the whole of the city. Action: Work is underway to establish an ASB forum in the south of the city and it would be important also to link in with this local structure. (Community Safety)

Within Community & Recreation we also have initiated a 'Safer City Pilot' in 8 Council owned locations and facilities across the city in relation to tackling ASB and budget of £350K has been set aside for this pilot. (Community & Recreation)

(5) Desired outcome: **1E** - Local residents are fully aware of their rights, entitlements and responsibilities and will have access to appropriate advice and information on a range of issues.

Action sought: **1 - The "Five Areas" advice project will be maintained and properly resourced.**

Lead: Advice Centres

Support: **Belfast City Council**, Advice Centres

**Council response:** Belfast City Council currently provides Advice Services Funding to S. Belfast Independent Advice Services Working Group. In the Inner South NR area this is delivered by the 'five areas project'. (Community)

(6) Desired outcome: **1G** - The area is one in which young families feel safe and want to bring up their children.

Action sought: **1 - The Neighbourhood Partnership will lobby both Local and National Government to ensure that appropriate leisure and recreation facilities are provided in the area.**

Lead: Neighbourhood Partnerships

Support: Neighbourhood Partnerships, **Belfast City Council**

**Council response:** In relation to tackling anti social behaviour the council is currently running a pilot across 8 sites (Avoniel LC; Ballysillian LC & Playing Fields; Orangefield Park; Ormeau Park and Ozone / Cheeryvale; Whiterock LC and City Cemetry; Woodvale Park. (Community and Recreation)

## Strategic Theme: Helping people to move towards and into work as well as increasing the skills levels

(7) Desired outcome: 2A - There are proper incentives and programmes that encourage people to take up employment or training and come off benefits.

Action sought: **1 - Examine as a case study how many people from the 3 communities applied and were employed by Halifax. Identify why so few people: Applied and Were employed**

Address the areas identified – e.g. lack of affordable childcare, appropriate training, assisting in writing applications, interview skills etc.

Lead:

Support: Invest NI, DEL

**Council response:** BCC has provided funding to Belfast GEMs to maximise job opportunities in the Gasworks. Halifax has provided a number of jobs for local people (c. 200). BCC's EDU would like to link into this (Economic Development)

(8) Desired outcome: 2A - There are proper incentives and programmes that encourage people to take up employment or training and come off benefits.

Action sought: 2 - A comprehensive and coordinated economic development strategy will be developed for the Inner South Belfast area.

Lead:

Support: Invest NI, Private Sector, DEL, Social Economy Businesses, Training Providers, Community and Voluntary Sector

**Council response:** We would be keen that this would tie in with our overarching Local Economic Development (Economic Development)

(9) Desired outcome: 2B - There is appropriate support for community and voluntary organisations who wish to bid for public sector contracts to deliver services.

Action sought: **1 - The Economic Development Unit in South Belfast Partnership Board will work with and support local community based organizations to enable them to develop the capacity to bid for public service contracts.**

Lead:

Support: South Belfast Partnership Board

**Council response:** BCC runs an annual local sourcing programme which to date has been focused mainly on businesses but last year it was widened to include social economy businesses. We would be happy to provide information on this process and link in with SBPB on this. (Economic Development)

(10) Desired outcome: 21 - Affordable work space and appropriate advice is available to support local enterprise and business.

Action sought: 1 - Affordable business start-up and incubation units will be developed in Inner South Belfast.

Lead:

Support: Invest NI  
Private Sector

**Council response:** EDU is currently undertaking work with regard to the demand and supply of incubation in the city and we will address the inner south Belfast area within this (Economic Development)

## Strategic Theme: Improving community relations

(11) Desired outcome: **3A** - All people are encouraged to participate in the community in positive ways.

Action sought: **1 - Doegall Pass Community Forum and Lower Ormeau and Markets Forum will be given appropriate support to redevelop support structures within the community and to ensure that local residents are given the opportunity to participate in the area.**

Lead: South Belfast Partnership Board

Support: Belfast City Council/BCC Youth Forum  
South Belfast Partnership Board

**Council response:** DPCF is currently in receipt of revenue funding from BCC. LOMCF have a lease agreement with Council to undertake the management of Shaftesbury Recreation Centre. They receive annual revenue funding. Both organisations will have access to Community Development Professional support in the form of CDW and CSAM. (Community Services)

The Good Relations Unit (GRU) wishes to support interface workers and develop partnerships in this area. We are working with communities in relation to replacing mural re-imaging. We are involved with the Gasworks Community Network. BCC has supported the bonfire pilot scheme in Donegall Pass including a series of cultural diversity projects. It is anticipated that this work will continue. GRU is involved with the SB Roundtable on Racism. We are part funding a city wide diversity research project with BCC's CSP – there will be opportunities for the community to input. (Good Relations)

(12) Desired outcome: **3A** - All people are encouraged to participate in the community in positive ways.

Action sought: **2 - The Neighbourhood Partnership will undertake a review of how it connects with the range of stakeholders operating in the area, especially local residents, and develop an appropriate model for engagement and communication.**

Lead:

Support: Neighbourhood Partnership

**Council response:** The Good Relations Unit would welcome opportunities to share expertise in effective community engagement processes. (Good Relations)

(13) Desired outcome: **3A** - All people are encouraged to participate in the community in positive ways.

Action sought: **3 - A "Community Chest" will be established to provide small grants to local organizations that wish to deliver projects promoting cultural awareness, community participation, inter-generational work, or cross community work.**

Lead:

Support: DSD/BRO, Neighbourhood Partnership

**Council response:** Please note that Belfast Community Safety Partnership (BCSP) will be operating a small grants scheme until December 2007 which the board may wish to avail of. BCSP is also supporting an inter-generational workers through Age Concern and is working with VSB to developing volunteer good practice. (Community Safety)

GRU & (BCC generally) is keen to liaise with various government funding departments to ensure funding is not duplicated.

\*GRU has grant aid for projects around Section 75.2 (religion, race & politics)

GRU is open to sharing information experiences in delivering small grants. (Good Relations)

(14) Desired outcome: **3B** - The community encourages greater acceptance of and respect for cultural diversity.

Action sought: **1 - A dedicated community development worker will be employed in the Inner South Belfast area to work with local groups and residents to improve participation, develop community structures, and promote cultural awareness and cross community working.**

Lead:

Support: Neighbourhood Partnership, DSD/BRO, **Belfast City Council**

**Council response:** It is important that this worker integrates with the work of the Good Relations Unit and Shared Future Strategy led by Belfast City Council. (Good Relations)

The Community Development staff at Donegall Pass community Centre and Markets Community Centre can provide support in this area. (Community Development)

(15) Desired outcome: **3D** - The community has a forum in which the views of all people and groups of interest are sought and acted upon.

Action sought: **1 - The Neighbourhood Partnership will develop more effective and formal links with Donegall Pass Community Forum and the Lower Ormeau and Markets Forum.**

Lead:

Support: Neighbourhood Partnership, Belfast City Council / BCC Youth Forum

**Council response:** BCC community development staff are involved with both organisations and can assist with this action. (Community Development)

(16) Desired outcome: **3E** - People and organisations from different areas and backgrounds are encouraged to engage in collaborative work on common issues.

Action sought: **1 - Appropriate training, resources, and protective measures will be provided to ensure the Gasworks Community Network can operate effectively.**

Lead:

Support: Community Relations Council, Belfast City Council, DSD/BRO/VCU

**Council response:** Good Relations Fund grant aid was provided to support a strategic planning residential and some ongoing mobile costs. We would welcome any further applications (Good Relations Unit)

## Strategic Theme: Raising educational attainment

(17) Desired outcome: **4A** - Children and young people are encouraged to make the most of their educational process.

Action sought: **2 - (Lead Body) will conduct a needs analysis with schools serving the Inner South Belfast area to identify needs, relating to both schools and pupils, which can be addressed to encourage children and young people to engage more fully with their educational process.**

Lead: BELB

Support: BELB, Neighbourhood Partnership

**Council response:** BCC Community centres in Donegall Pass and Markets currently provide after school, homework assistance and youth projects. Given that young people are frequenting community centres we will assist with this project.(Community)

(18) Desired outcome: **4A** - Children and young people are encouraged to make the most of their educational process

Action sought: **4 - BELB, the Sports Council, the Neighbourhood Partnership, as well as other key stakeholders will work together to develop a more effective approach to the provision of sport and physical education in schools.**

Lead:

Support: BELB, Neighbourhood Partnership, Sports Council, **Belfast City Council**, Local Primary and Secondary Schools

**Council response:** BCC is already involved in projects with BELB such as 'schools swimming'. We are also currently developing and rolling out our City-wide Sports Development Strategy and we would be keen to expand and explore new opportunities for more partnership working.(Community & Recreation)

## Strategic Theme: Engaging young people, for example, through art, sports and physical activity

(19) Desired outcome: **5A** - There is an effective youth strategy for the area that facilitates a multi-agency approach to youth services and provision.

Action sought: **1 - A Youth Strategy Group comprising representatives from the Community and Voluntary Sector, the Statutory Sector as well as any other key identified stakeholders, will be established to oversee the development of a co-coordinated Youth Strategy for the area.**

Lead:

Support: BELB (Youth Service), Neighbourhood Partnership, Belfast City Council & BCC Youth Forum Local Community Sector Youth Providers, Sports Council

**Council response:** In developing and implementing the Youth Strategy the BCC Youth Forum could be used as a consultation medium.  
(Children & Young Peoples' Officer)

(20) Desired outcome: **5A** - There is an effective youth strategy for the area that facilitates a multi-agency approach to youth services and provision.

Action sought: **2 - A detached youth work team will be established to work with young people in the area and to ensure their views are fully reflected in the Youth Strategy.**

Lead:

Support: BELB, **Belfast City Council**

**Council response:** The BCC Youth Forum could be used as a consultation medium for this work (Children & Young Peoples' Officer)

(21) Desired outcome: **5B** - There is an effective mechanism that enables young people to become actively involved in decision making processes.

Action sought: **1 - A Young People's Fund will be established to facilitate joint working between young people and youth groups in Inner South Belfast. The fund will focus on initiatives that promote citizenship, volunteering, capacity building and inter-generational work. Young people will have a direct input into the disbursement of the fund.**

Lead:

Support: DSD/BRO, Neighbourhood Partnership, BCC Youth Forum

**Council response:** BCC already has a Council Youth Forum in place which is representative of young people from across the city. It would be useful to identify opportunities to formalise tap into the expertise that already exists within the Youth Forum. (Community & Recreation)

Suggest adding;

Promote creative and cultural means by which young people can become more active citizens (Culture & Arts)

(22) Desired outcome: 5D - Facilities exist to train and build confidence in young people through arts, sports and cultural activities.

Action sought: 1 - An audit of arts and sports equipment currently owned by youth providers in the area will be undertaken and organisations encouraged to share these resources.

Lead:

Support: Neighbourhood Partnership, BCC Sports Development Unit

**Council response:** The BCC Sports Development Unit could be used as a source of expertise when developing ideas in this area. (Community & Recreation)

Needs to focus on more than equipment. Capacity and skills resources are more important with arts and heritage. Suggest adding: facilitate engagement with arts and heritage organisations and practitioners to develop capacity and build skills.

Also suggest adding cultural sector providers/umbrella groups in key partners. (Culture & Arts)

(23) Desired outcome: 5D - Facilities exist to train and build confidence in young people through arts, sports and cultural activities.

Action sought: 2 - The construction of a new multipurpose Sports Facility at Shaftesbury Community and Recreation Centre will be properly supported and resourced.

Lead: LORAG

Support: Sports Council, DSD/BRO, BLSP, Belfast City Council, Neighbourhood Partnership, South Belfast Partnership Board, LORAG

**Council response:** A report will be presented to our Community & Leisure Sub Committee in Feb 2007 to seek approval to offer support in principal for this project. However no funding has been identified in existing Council budgets for this project. (Community & Recreation)

(24) Desired outcome: 5D - Facilities exist to train and build confidence in young people through arts, sports and cultural activities.

Action sought: **3 - The construction of the proposed new Youth Facility in the Markets will be properly supported and resourced.**

Lead:

Support: BELB, DSD/BRO, MDA, Neighbourhood Partnership, South Belfast Partnership Board, Belfast City Council

**Council response:** Community Services input via professional CDW support on the ground. (Children & Young Peoples' Officer)

(25) Desired outcome: 5D - Facilities exist to train and build confidence in young people through arts, sports and cultural activities.

Action sought: **5 - Support and resources will be provided to Donegall Pass Community Forum to ensure the provision of adequate Youth Facilities and activities in the area.**

Lead:

Support: BELB, South Belfast Partnership Board, Neighbourhood Partnership, DSD/BRO, Donegall Pass Community Forum, Belfast City Council

**Council response:** BELB youth service currently based at Donegall Pass Community Centre. Community Centre Committee supported by Council staff working with Donegall Pass Community Forum to secure facilities. (Children & Young People)

(26) Desired outcome: 5D - Facilities exist to train and build confidence in young people through arts, sports and cultural activities.

Action sought: **6 - An integrated strategy will be developed for the provision of Youth Facilities and activities in the Inner South Belfast Neighbourhood Renewal Area.**

Lead:

Support: BELB, South Belfast Partnership Board, Neighbourhood Partnership, DSD/BRO, Donegall Pass Community Forum, Belfast City Council

**Council response:** Community Development Worker's assisting in the strategy. (Community Development)

(27) Desired outcome: 5D - Facilities exist to train and build confidence in young people through arts, sports and cultural activities.

Action sought: **7 - Belfast City Council will open local community centres and facilities during evenings and weekends, as well as look at how young people can have better access to these facilities.**

Lead:

Support: Belfast City Council

**Council response:** Community Centres are already open in the evenings. If there is a further requirement to extend the opening hours to include weekends then a business case would need to be presented to the Council for consideration. No resources have allocated to this recommendation. (Community & Recreation)

## Strategic Theme: Improving health and well-being

(28) Desired outcome: **6A** - Local communities have an effective mechanism to improve local health and social service delivery.

Action sought: **1** - A health forum will be established to create more effective links between local service providers and strategic bodies to ensure strategic development is aligned to local priorities.

Lead:

Support: SEBT

**Council response:** It would be important to link with the likes of Investing for Health and Healthy Cities to ensure that there is not fragmentation of structures and services. (Health Development)

(29) Desired outcome: **6B** - The community has shared responsibility for health and takes action to help people improve their health.

Action sought: **1** - The Neighbourhood Partnership will lobby for the continuation of the South Belfast Highway to Health initiative as a community based approach to improving local health.

Lead:

Support: Neighbourhood Partnership, SEBT, DSD/BRO

**Council response:** NB EHHSB has secured £1m per year to support health living centres throughout the city already. (Health Development)

(30) Desired outcome: **6C** - Accessible, responsive and relevant health care services are available to all sections of the community.

Action sought: **1** - Local lay health workers will be trained to act as an intermediary service between the local community and GP's.

Lead:

Support: SEBT  
Highway to Health

**Council response:** The role of Pharmacies should also be considered as a vital resource. (Health Development)

## Contact

For more information on the council's approach area-based working and its neighbourhood renewal activity contact:

### **SNAP Team**

Development Department

Belfast City Council

Cecil Ward Building, 4-10 Linenhall Street, Belfast BT2 8BP

T: 028 9032 0202

F: 028 9027 0501

E: [snap@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:snap@belfastcity.gov.uk)