

## **Recommendations in the Social Economy Network Briefing Paper for the Draft Social Economy Enterprise Strategy**

Members may wish to question SEN officials further on the recommendations they are making for changes to the Social Economy Enterprise Strategy

### **General comments on the draft Social Economy Enterprise Strategy (Page 3)**

#### Recommendation (Page 4)

As the new super councils will have a key role in promoting and supporting enterprise it is imperative that local Councils are brought on board at the outset and are involved/represented on the S.E.P.G. throughout the implementation of this strategy. In this way, when responsibility for economic development and enterprise is transferred to Councils, the gains and successes achieved can be consolidated, continued and built on.

### **Objective one - Increasing awareness of the sector and establishing its value to the local economy (Page 5)**

#### Recommendation (Page 6)

The Network recommends that a social economy enterprise champion be identified within each government department to promote social economy enterprise as a viable business model and that it is taken account of in planning the delivery of services.

### **Objective two - Developing the Sector and increasing its business strength; and Objective three- Creating a supportive, enabling and environment. (Page 6)**

#### Recommendation (Page 6)

The Network recommends a two pronged approach to develop the sector; this will involve encouraging the establishment of new SEEs while at the same time building the capacity of existing SEEs.

### **Training (Page 6)**

#### Recommendations (Page 7)

SEN recommend that the Social Entrepreneurship Programme is available from the beginning of 2009 and that funding is secure for its continuance for the duration of this strategy.

SEN recommend that INVEST NORTHERN IRELAND sponsored business workshops are specifically promoted and targeted at the social economy sector to encourage uptake.

## **Management and Leadership development (Page 7)**

### Recommendations (Page 7)

All information on business support, training and management & leadership development programmes should be held centrally to facilitate access and promote uptake. As SEN provides a dedicated website for the social economy sector this issue could be addressed by ensuring that Departments and Agencies channel all relevant information to the Network.

All training and management & leadership development programmes should be evaluated to assess their relevance and impact and to inform decision making about future delivery.

## **Finance (Page 8)**

### Recommendations (Page 9)

The social economy sector in other parts of the U.K. has benefitted from and developed as a result of access to a fund such as Futurebuilders which helps build the capacity of companies. SEN recommends that DFP when developing a policy on the use of the unclaimed assets in dormant bank and building society accounts should consider:-

- Establishing a Future Builders fund for SSEs; and
- Channelling some of the funding into CDFIs for a social investment loan fund.

SEN proposes that consideration be given to the adoption of legislation in respect of credit unions which permits the inclusion of incorporated associations and corporate bodies as full members in credit unions so that small enterprises, community organisations and SEEs can access these services.

## **Procurement (Page 9)**

### Recommendations (Page 11)

SEN proposes adoption of a consistent approach to the measurement of social value which can be embedded in the practice and processes of public procurement.

SEN recommends the inclusion of social clauses into public procurement specifications to ensure a more equal playing field.

The strategy should explore innovative ways of increasing business opportunities for SEEs through public/social partnerships and private/social partnerships