

10 February 2015

Dr Kevin Pelan
Clerk Committee for Social Development
Room 144
Parliament Buildings
Belfast BT4 3XX

Dear Kevin

Volunteer Now appreciates the opportunity to provide a submission regarding the Regeneration Bill the purpose of which is to confer certain regeneration and community development powers on, and transfer of certain functions relating to Laganside, to the new district councils.

It is my understanding that this Regeneration Bill has relevance with regard to the strategic direction for regeneration and community development policy as set out in the DSD's Urban Regeneration and Community Development Policy Framework. I was disappointed to see that the Bill makes no reference in any of its sections to community development; this omission should be reviewed by the Social Development Committee. In relation to Part 1: *Powers in Relation to Social Need* I would suggest the following amendments to the wording contained in the Bill. I have highlighted suggested wording changes and additions.

Financial assistance to address social need:

1. (1) A council may provide financial assistance to any **person/organisation** (*Note: conditions at section 2; the wording would require amendment to include reference to organisations as well as 'any person'*) doing or intending to do, anything falling within Subsection (2) which benefits one or more areas of social need in its district.
- (2) Financial assistance may be provided under this section for –
 - (a) the promotion, development or regeneration of commercial, industrial or other economic activity;
 - (b) **the promotion and delivery of community development to address social need by engaging local people and communities in improving the neighbourhoods and communities they live and work in;**
 - (c) the improvement of the environment;
 - (d) the provision of housing;
 - (e) the provision of social or community facilities;
 - (f) the refurbishment or restructuring of buildings,

or for anything not falling within paragraphs (a) to (f) which the council considers will benefit the district.

I hope this is useful and would ask that you let me know when the Social Development Committee will be reviewing the Regeneration Bill.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Osborne OBE
Chief Executive

T: 028 9023 2020

W: www.volunteernow.co.uk

34 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast, Co. Antrim BT2 7DB E: info@volunteernow.co.uk

