

Title of Report:	Northern Ireland Business Start Up Programme (marketed as Go for It)
Committee Report Submitted To:	Leisure and Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	15th October 2019
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Accelerating our Economy and Contributing to Prosperity
Outcome	All people of Causeway Coast and Glens will contribute to and benefit from a thriving economy built on a culture of growth, entrepreneurship, innovation and learning
Lead Officer	Head of Prosperity & Place Business Development Manager Economic Development Officer - Enterprise

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	Cost to Council is £55,753 annually for 2 year programme (Jan 2021–Dec 2022)
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES
Capital/Revenue	Revenue
Staffing Costs	Within existing structure and costs

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals. The programme has been screened within the ERDF Programme, Invest NI and data-sharing agreements are in place.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members on future costs for participation in the collaborative 11 council Business Start/ “Go for It” Programme and to request commitment from Council which is required by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council (as Lead Council) by November 2019.

2.0 Context

There is a need for Councils to work at all stages of business start – convincing people to start in business, encouraging them to grow their business and promoting the regional economy via collaborative working.

The current Northern Ireland Business Start Up Programme (NIBSUP), which has been operational since September 2017 is a collaborative initiative between the 11 councils and contributes directly to the job creation objectives identified for Councils in the Programme for Government. The current iteration of the programme is scheduled to end in December 2020.

The overarching aim of the Business Start Programme is to ensure the most effective and efficient model for the delivery of business start-up support services in Northern Ireland that is best able to:

- Support new business starts in order to achieve economic growth and assist local councils in delivering on their responsibility for supporting enterprise awareness and activity.
- Provide an accessible and cost effective service that can seamlessly align with other Council and partner services.
- Identify high growth potential starts for referral to Invest NI’s client management services.
- Improve rates of start-up survival.

NIBSUP is recognised as the **primary** support programme to locally focused business-starts in Northern Ireland. It is expected by stakeholders that Councils will provide a similar programme going forward.

There are **no directly competing** Northern Ireland programmes offering a similar range of advice, guidance, business plan, aftercare and web-based information to that proposed and there is also a clear strategic case for the proposed initiative based on:

- A high degree of consistency with the aims of Economic Development policy at a NI level.
- Compelling evidence of market failures currently affecting enterprise development in NI.
- Strong support for a universal, high volume start-up support programme amongst relevant stakeholders which have been widely consulted.
- Clear guidance from the NI Executive that responsibility for delivering enterprise awareness and business start-up support now rests with Councils.

2.1 Programme Outputs

The primary objective of the NIBSUP is **job creation** and the programme will also contribute to the NI Executive’s Programme for Government (PfG) targets; the minimum target for PfG job creation is 1,625 across Northern Ireland per annum and this initiative is the single largest Council Programme contributing to the achievement of this target. Outputs are:

- NI-wide business start-up service tendered and delivered throughout 11 Council areas.
- Improvement in rates of start-up survival and sustainability.
- Referrals to Invest NI and other support agencies.

- Skills development and up-skilling.

2.2 Causeway Coast and Glens Key Annual Outputs

Statutory Job Target	128
Planned Programme Job Target	141
Planned Programme Business Plan Target	232
Total Delivery Cost for Council Area	£143,835
Cost to Council	£55,753
Cost per Job to Council	£395
Referrals to Invest NI	2

The key outcome measures for the proposed business start programme (BSP) are:

- Number of new businesses established.
- Number of business surviving after one year.
- Number of jobs created.
- Cost per job.

3.0 Delivery Model

The Councils will commission the delivery of the service through a public tender process, achieving maximum economies of scale and ensuring consistency of delivery.

The contract will articulate the full range of services to be delivered and Councils will retain responsibility for delivery of the necessary central services i.e. Programme/Contract Management, Finance and Administration functions.

The Business Start programme will deliver practical support to individuals seeking to establish a new business in NI and include the following elements:

- Initial Enquiry.
- One to One Mentoring.
- An online business support tool.
- Development of a viable bespoke business plan.
- Aftercare Support.
- Regional marketing campaign using a mix of media channels including local promotional activity at Council level.

This will be supported by a centralised enquiry handling system (contract managed) and a shared CRM/Management Information System.

3.1 Indicative Programme Cost

Total Programme Costs (2 years – Northern Ireland)	£3,692,500
Annual Programme Cost to Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council	£55,753

*Match Funding sought via application to NI ERDF Investment for Growth and Jobs Programme

3.2 Indicative Timeline

Jul/Aug 20	Publication of Tenders and Delivery Documents.
Aug-Oct 20	Delivery Awards
Jan 21	Enquiry Handling and Marketing Commences
Feb 21	Programme delivery to clients

4.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that Council agrees to participate in a further 2 year collaborative Northern Ireland Business Start-Up Programme commencing January 2021 to December 2022 at a cost to Council of £55,753 annually.