



Social Economy Unit
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment
Netherliegh
Massey Avenue
Belfast
BT4 2JP

E-mail: socialeconomy@detini.gov.uk

30th April 2004

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: Developing A Successful Social Economy Consultation Document January 2004

In response to your call to provide feedback on the above document I wish to reply as follows:

- 1 The document has some very well meaning objectives but the absence of a clearly defined definition of the term 'social economy' it is difficult to grasp the exact nature of what action is being proposed.
2. Objective 1 contains a proposal to introduce community awards. This could only operate using a community development process.
3. The community sector in Northern Ireland has just completed extensive consultations on the Pathways For Change document. It is unclear how Developing A Successful Social Economy dovetails with Pathways For Change.
- 4 The rural community sector forms a significant part of the whole voluntary and community sector in Northern Ireland. The document make little reference to the rural sector and the various agencies that work within it.
- 5 There is a lot of action proposed in the document concerning the areas of research and assessment . Much information already exists on the community sector in Northern Ireland.
- 6 There seems to be a top down view running through what the document is proposing,
- 7 There are some plausible actions in Objective 3 about clearing up the grey areas around charity legislation and community companies. This also needs to be expanded to discrimination policies.

8 There is an existing impression, rightly or wrongly, that there has been very little community input into the preparation of this document. People really don't know what it is about. This contrasts sharply with Pathways For Change which experienced high levels of community awareness. There are quite a few structures proposed to be put in place, but in the absence of people involvement, who would they be servicing?

In conclusion I trust this summarises the key thoughts that have surfaced in my discussions about this document with interested parties.

Best of wishes with the consultation process.

Yours Sincerely
Patrick Kelly

Patrick Kelly
Manager