Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Social Economy Evaluation Assignment

July 2011

Contents

Glossary

Abbreviation	In Full
BiTC	Business in the Community
CDFI	Community Development Finance Institution
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFNI	Community Foundation for Northern Ireland
COC	Chamber of Commerce
CPD	Central Procurement Directorate
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DEL	Department of Employment and Learning
DETI	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment
DFP	Department of Finance and Personnel
DHSSPSNI	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety Northern Ireland
DSD	Department of Social Development
DTA	Development Trust Association
EDO	External Delivery Organisation
GB	Great Britain
IDSG	Inter-Departmental Steering Group
IREP	Independent Review of Economic Policy
LEA	Local Enterprise Agency
LED	Local Economic Development
LOO	Letter of Offer
LTU	Long Term Unemployed
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
NI	Northern Ireland

Abbreviation	In Full
NICVA	Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action
OFMDFM	Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister
RPA	Review of Public Administration
SE	Social Economy
SEC	Social Economy Coalition (England)
SEE	Social Economy Enterprise
SEF	Social Economy Forum
SEN	Social Economy Network
SEP	Social Entrepreneurship Programme
SEPG	Social Economy Policy Group
SSEC	Scottish Social Economy Coalition
SSEI	School of Social Enterprise Ireland
UCIT	Ulster Community Investment Trust
UN Ltd	Unlimited
VCS	Voluntary and Community Sector
VCU	Voluntary and Community Unit
WSEC	Welsh Social Economy Coalition

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

KPMG was commissioned by a DETI-led Steering Group to undertake an evaluation of the Social Economy in Northern Ireland (NI).

1.2 Background and Context

1.2.1 Independent Review of Economic Policy (IREP)

During 2009/10 DETI was subject to an Independent Review of Economic Policy (IREP) which included a recommendation that DETI should undertake a study into the social economy. It was suggested that this study should focus on the unique nature of this sector and in particular its potential contribution and added value in terms of delivering public sector policy. It was further highlighted that this study should also explore how the social economy might be further helped to reduce deprivation and increase labour force participation in disadvantaged areas within Northern Ireland. Accordingly, these themes of discussion were incorporated into the research for this evaluation.

1.2.2 The Origins of the Social Economy Enterprise (SEE) Strategy 2010/11

DETI had the lead role in the development and implementation of the Executive's first policy on the Social Economy. A three year cross-departmental Strategy was developed entitled "*Developing a Successful Social Economy" 2004 – 2007*, with annual action plans to deliver three strategic objectives:

- Increasing awareness of the sector and establishing its value to the local economy;
- Developing the sector and increasing its business strength; *and*
- Creating a supportive, enabling environment.

DETI put in place structures to support the development of a successful social economy including:

- The formation of an Inter-Departmental Steering Group (IDSG) to develop and implement the Strategic Plan;
- An inclusive Social Economy Network (SEN) to represent the sector; *and*
- The creation of the Social Economy Forum (SEF) where representatives from the SEN and officials from Government can work together to provide overall policy direction and monitor progress.

The Strategy expired at the end of March 2007 when an evaluation of the Strategy was undertaken to help inform next steps on future policy and the structures needed for delivery of that policy. The evaluation confirmed a sound rationale for Northern Ireland having a social economy policy although it did highlight some mixed views on the effectiveness and efficiency of the expenditure associated with the policy. The evaluation concluded that the three broad objectives in the first strategy (detailed above) should be again incorporated into a refreshed strategy.

The SEE Strategy 2010/11 represented the out-workings of the above process (albeit after a gap between the two strategy periods) and as such was based on the same three overarching strategic objectives. It was led by DETI working in partnership with stakeholders and the six departments represented on a new Social Economy Policy Group (SEPG), including representation from Invest NI, DSD, DEL, DHSSPSNI, DARD and Central Procurement Directorate in DFP. The SEE Strategy 2010/11 included a commitment to undertake an external evaluation of the impact of the Strategy.

1.2.3 Social Economy Network (NI) Ltd (SEN)

The development of a strong and sustainable network supporting the sector was a key element in the Executive's first Social Economy strategy, a commitment which followed through to the SEE Strategy 2010/11.

The network model evolved from that of a co-ordinating agent servicing members to the creation of a new corporate entity[1] in 2006 with a Board of Directors and directly employed staff. DETI is currently the sole funder with a Letter of Offer in place for a phased reducing grant of £600,000 to be paid over the four year period up to early 2011. This arrangement was intended to facilitate a transition to a more independent and income generating organisation.

A Director was appointed in July 2007 with two additional members of staff appointed during 2008 (Communications and Membership Officer and Office Administrator). These appointments were made to enable the SEN to deliver its advocacy and leadership role through lobbying and strategic promotion of the sector. Due to a delay in the establishment phase the Letter of Offer was amended to run to August 2011. During the period the SEN signed off on annual operating plans and associated funding for each year, running from September to August. The current membership of the SEN is circa 170, primarily consisting of including Community Businesses, Credit Unions, Housing Associations and Local Enterprise Agencies (LEAs).

[1] Incorporated as a Company limited by Guarantee.

1.3 Terms of Reference

The agreed terms of reference for the evaluation focused on the following key areas:

Terms of Reference
Examine the role of the Social Economy (SE) sector and its unique value in terms of the economic, social and environmental impact in the NI context.
Evaluate the Social Economy Enterprise (SEE) Strategy 2010/11 with an explicit focus on future direction and priorities
Evaluation of the Social Economy Network's performance in line with the DETI letter of offer dated 22 February 2007 and agreed annual operating plans

Each of the three areas are interlinked, in that the nature of any future strategy needs to be dictated by, aspirations and vision for the role of the sector in NI in the future, which in turn should influence the nature of any representative structure/ network for the sector.

1.4 Methodology

The methodology was based on the following approach:

1.4.1 Project Initiation

A Project Initiation Meeting was held with DETI led Project Steering Group.

1.4.2 Desk Based Research

The desk based review consisted of the following:

- Review of key strategic documents pertaining to the SE sector in Northern Ireland;
- Review of monitoring reports pertaining to constituent actions/ initiatives within SEE 2010/11 strategy;
- EDO Inspection Report in relation to the SEN;
- Review of press/ PR/ promotional materials pertaining to SEE strategy; SEN; SEN members; *and*
- Review of data captured in relation to the business/ trading performance of SEEs in the SE sector in NI. For instance, one key source that informed this was the Membership Audit undertaken by the SEN in 2009 in respect of their membership, which baselined the performance of their membership at this point in time.

The evaluation team also intended to review data held by CPD pertaining to the registration of SEEs in the Bravo e-procurement system and the success of same in securing public procurement contracts. However discussions with CPD indicated that data pertaining to SEEs could not be isolated, and therefore this activity was not progressed.

1.4.3 Primary Research

The following primary research was undertaken:

- Nine 1 – 1 Interviews with all SEPG members (DETI, Invest NI, DSD, DEL, DHSSPSNI, DARD and Central Procurement Directorate in DFP);
- 1 – 1 Interviews with SE Support Organisations (e.g. UCIT, UnLtd, Charity Bank, SSEI, and Enterprise NI);
- 1-1 interviews with DSD VCU and NICVA (to assess any 'spillover' benefits from SEE strategy for the VCS in NI);
- E-survey of SEN membership (survey attached at Appendix A). This was designed by KPMG and distributed by the SEN, using their membership database with automatic routing back to KPMG in respect of completed surveys;
- Interviews with comparative SE Units in Government across the other GB regions and corresponding networks/ representative bodies; *and*
- Two regional focus groups in Newry and in Londonderry/ Derry with SEEs, facilitated and organised through Local Enterprise Agencies active in delivery of the Social Entrepreneurship Programme (SEP) in NI. These captured new start SEEs; existing established SEEs; and organisations that were transitioning from the VCS to the SE sector. Some were members of the SEN and others were not.

It was important through the research process to capture as much input as possible from SEEs themselves, as they are the ultimate stakeholders for any future intervention strategy in respect of the sector. In this regard it became evident early on in the research process that the membership of the SEN could not be taken as a full proxy for the SEE community in NI, in that there are a number of prominent SEEs that are not members. Therefore it was as important, through the research, to engage with those outside the SEN membership as well as those inside the same, to understand both perspectives. Responses to the E-Survey were slow, in part due to issues with the accuracy of the SEN membership database and reported survey fatigue. All of this perhaps reflects the limited influence of the SEN and extent of active engagement within their membership. Accordingly the evaluation team decided to implement 1 to 1 telephone interviews amongst the SEN membership and to host two regional focus groups with SEEs (encompassing SEN members and non-members) to supplement input into the evaluation exercise. The topic lists that were used for the 1 to 1 interviews and focus groups are attached in Appendix B and C respectively.

Similarly there are other associations/ network bodies operating in aspects of the same arena as the SEN who are not members of the same. A key example in this regard is the recently established Development Trust Association (DTA NI.) The DTA NI is part of a UK wide network, supporting community based organisations to achieve sustainable regeneration in their area and reduce dependency on grant support by generating income through enterprise and the ownership of assets. Their key purpose is to encourage transfer of local authority and Departmental assets to appropriate SE organisations, with the proviso that ongoing trading surpluses are principally reinvested in the organisation or the community. It was important therefore for the evaluation exercise to engage with interests such as the DTA to inform future directions for the sector and any representative structure for the same.

Appendix D details all of the organisations and individuals that were captured through the evaluation process. In total, over 70 individuals have had an input into the evaluation from organisations representative of all the sub-sectoral interests in the social economy and related stakeholder interests.

Internal Review

The internal review phase of the evaluation consisted of:

- Interviews with SEN Chair, Board Members and SEN staff team;
- Review of current staffing model (in terms of the need for the 3 current roles going forward); *and*
- Review of financial arrangements/ controls and governance within the SEN, which was informed by EDO inspection report (March 2011).

1.4.4 Analysis and Reporting

All information gathered was analysed in order to formulate final recommendations in respect of the need for an Executive led Social Economy strategy, priorities therein and the requirement in respect of any associated representative/ network structures.

1.5 Report structure

Section	Content
Section 2	The role of the SE sector in NI and future potential/ needs
Section 3	The Performance and Impact of the SEE Strategy 2010/11
Section 4	Review of the Social Economy Network
Section 5	Summary of Recommendations

1.6 Acknowledgements

KPMG would like to thank those who have contributed to this evaluation report, including the SEPG Members, the Social Economy Network (SEN) Board, staff and membership and wider sectoral interests in NI and GB.

2 The role of the SE sector in NI and future potential/ needs

2.1 Introduction

This section of the evaluation report considers the role of the social economy sector, the impact it makes (in an economic, social and environmental context) and the main beneficiaries within the community of activity within the sector. This draws entirely on consultations/ primary research, in that there is limited hard evidence on the scale and size of the sector, and associated data in relation to economic, social and environmental impacts. This situation in NI is similar to that which prevails in the other GB regions because definitional issues remain about what/ who should be included in drawing boundaries around the sector.

This section also considers the potential for the SE sector as a delivery agent for public service policy. Finally it sets out ideas on the range of new support products required to increase the performance and impact of the sector.

2.2 Key Findings

2.2.1 Role and Impact of the Social Economy Sector

The key strengths of the SE sector in NI reported through the research:-

- provision of services needed by the local community in sectors and segments that are not provided by the wider public or private sector (thus addressing an evident market failure);
- creation of employment opportunities for those that may otherwise be removed from the labour market; *and*
- re-investment of profits back into the local community.

Allied to the above it was further highlighted that social enterprises typically create jobs for local people, resulting in direct and indirect impacts in the local supply chain and broader NI economy – all of which is viewed very positively in the current economic environment. NI has shed over 37,000[2] jobs over the past three years; the unemployment rate is at its highest rate for over a decade; and NI has the highest economic inactivity rate in the UK – all of which illustrate the challenge in creating employment and where the social economy is viewed to have a key role to play.

In particular, given that SEEs provide a supportive environment for those distant/ removed from the labour market, it is viewed that more potential exists to replicate

[2] Oxford Economics

the model of the pilot Social Economy Fund[3] (SEF) in West Belfast and Greater Shankill to other regions and sectors. Actions taken by DEL in respect of the introduction of Step Ahead (the waged strand of Steps to Work aimed at the Long-Term Unemployed) and the Short-Term Employment Scheme (STES) under Invest NI are already contributing to this potential, in respect of using SEEs as pathways to employment for those distant from the labour market. The STES was developed in the context of the NI Executive's strategic framework, and a priority therein to rebuild the economy, with a focus on the need to increase employment levels and improve employability, given that the recovery from the recession remains uncertain and fragile. Included within STES is one measure/ three streams focussing on SE activity, summarised in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1: Overview of STES SE Measure/ Streams

STES Measure	
Increased Support for Social Enterprise	Social enterprises often play a significant role in the regeneration of areas of high social need, by generating sources of income, promoting innovation and entrepreneurship and helping to create sustainable and cohesive communities. Invest NI's existing Social Entrepreneurship Programme (SEP) provides capability support and in some cases grant support towards the establishment of new social enterprises. This measure, which encompasses three streams of support, recognises the potential the social economy has in developing employment opportunities in an economic downturn. It will complement the existing SEP in terms of innovative approaches to 'pump priming' more business start-ups, ongoing development of successful established social enterprises and job creation opportunities for those most remote from the labour market. (1) **Area based approach:** this element will focus specifically on areas where there is limited Social Enterprise (SE) activity to date. It will identify the key challenges, promote good practice and potential business opportunities using best practice examples from areas where SE activity has been successfully implemented. Links with OFMDFM's Social Investment Fund will be important in the delivery of this element of support. (2) **Social Enterprise Franchising**: this element will support the development of franchise models and recruit and develop franchisees. Opportunities may include potential delivery of public sector services. (3) **LTU employment in Social Enterprises**: this element is aimed at bringing LTU into the labour market, maximizing the opportunity for linkages between Social Enterprises and employability interventions.

Source: Invest NI

[3] Which provided employment opportunities for individuals distant/ removed from the labour market and on the caseload of DEL employability initiatives in the area in social enterprises in the area, established through Invest NI's Social Entrepreneurship Programme.

A view was expressed through the research that the recent banking crisis and associated recession have perhaps caused people in society to question previous beliefs and values and reinforced more of a culture of self-help and collaborative work at local levels to get society out of 'economic troubles'. Allied to this the general sense was that the SE sector was, despite the recession, faring reasonably well, a view also reflected in interviews with the network and Government representatives across the UK.

In summary the difficult economic environment that has prevailed in the last three years has reinforced the role of the SE sector and indeed acted as stimulus to the same. It is widely viewed that the sector plays a significant role at present and that the potential for the future is 'moving in the right direction'. National policy developments in terms of the Big Society and Localism over the period are also viewed to have strengthened and reinforced the potential for the SE sector. Indeed the Big Society concept is already encompassed within the ethos of what the SE sector is in NI, in that it is all about helping local people to take local decisions that affect their communities. There are three main pillars to the Big Society agenda (promoting social action; community empowerment; and opening up public services), which are central to the further development of the SE sector in NI.

However despite the recognised role and potential detailed above, the precise cumulative impact of the sector in NI is not well understood, because it is perceived that only a proportion of the sector is visible. A contributing factor in this regard is that components[4] of the social economy sector do not typically present themselves as an economic prospect (i.e. they refer to being in receipt of grants for delivering services rather than having a contract for service delivery with Government). In this regard, it is viewed that a change in ideology/ mindset is required for the full reach of the sector to be visible.

A further factor highlighted in this regard was that the value of the social contribution of SE activity is not fully articulated and understood because the sector and Government are not yet sufficiently sophisticated in capturing the social return on investment associated with SE activity. Furthermore it is viewed that the sector is still fairly fractured, with a need to build more cohesion between the sub-interests therein e.g. credit unions, housing associations, co-operatives etc).

All of the above represent constraints in terms of the ability of the SE sector to realise it's future potential - which reinforces the need for strong leadership with respect to the SE sector within Government and from a representative body for the sector going forward.

4 An example in this regard could be an organisation providing refuge, advice and programme support to victims of domestic violence, who are contracted by Government to provide the services – and who are very much run as a commercial business and active in wider income generation activities and fund-raising. They may not typically present themselves as part of the SE sector.

2.2.2 Potential for the SE sector as a delivery agent for public service policy.

The research highlighted that only a fraction of the potential that may exist for the SE in this regard had been realised. Whilst there has been progress in terms of SEEs expanding further into various areas of public service delivery (e.g. recycling/ environmental activity; health and social care; community leisure provision) in recent years, beyond more of the traditional areas (e.g. childcare, training/ education etc), it is viewed that barriers remain in reaching the potential that should exist. Specifically it was highlighted that:-

- Opportunities in relation to procurement have been lost over the last couple of years, and while there has been activity focusing on the barriers to SEEs accessing public procurement (notably the Assembly Inquiry[5] which considered both SMEs and SEEs) it is viewed that there has not been sufficient progress with respect to outcome based commissioning, with weighting for social impacts/ social value. The environment in other GB regions is perceived to be much more progressive and enabling in this regard and the proposed Public Services (Social Enterprise and Social Value) Bill[6] could reinforce this further. In NI there remains an opportunity for the SE sector in respect of Local Council public procurement tenders, which may be more accessible in the short-term than NI wide CPD public procurement competitions;
- There is a perceived fear/ wariness in central and local government about the SE and public service delivery. Specifically it was highlighted that SE models could be viewed as a threat to in-house service delivery and related employment. This comment was made particularly in relation to the provision of some local authority services, where it was viewed that SEEs could play a key role in areas such as community based leisure provision and waste disposal/recycling, and may be in a position to provide better VFM, social impact and reach than in-house provision. Accordingly it was reported by some that '*Government is interested on paper in the concept but fearful on the ground'; and*
- Many SEEs lack the critical mass to meet capability/ coverage requirements for public sector contracts, and there remains a need for effective interventions to support partnership brokerage and consortium building.

Looking ahead in terms of potential for the SE sector to extend its reach in this context, interest was expressed in exploring whether some of the 'quangos' or Non-Departmental Public Bodies in NI that are at risk in terms of public sector expenditure cuts and/or RPA reform, could be reconstituted as SEEs. Furthermore, the focus in GB on encouraging environmental bodies (e.g. such as British Waterways) to be reconstituted as SEEs was viewed by consultees as another mechanism to extend the scope of the SE sector in NI in public service delivery.

[5] Inquiry into Public Procurement Policy and Practice in Northern Ireland 2009

[6] The headline aims of the Public Services (Social Enterprise and Social Value) Bill are to (1) Require the Secretary of State and local authorities to publish strategies in connection with promoting social enterprise and to enable communities to participate in the formulation and implementation of these strategies and (2) Require that public sector contracts include provisions relating to social outcomes and social values.

A key mechanism to significantly change the role of the SE economy in public service delivery is the concept of the social impact bond and the research highlighted a strong interest in piloting something similar in NI – drawing on the national/ international best practice in this area. The main reference point highlighted was the project in Peterborough centred on reduction of re-offending, but is viewed that potential exists in others areas (e.g. to cut school drop-out rates, reduce the number of children in care and alleviate homelessness). The concept is also gaining ground in the US, President Obama has recently announced $100m (£61.5m) for seven pilot programmes using social impact, or "pay-for-success", bonds. The case study below also illustrates the potential for greater penetration of SE activity in the justice/ home affairs sector in NI, which has not had representation on the SEPG to date.

Case Study: Social Impact Bond: Peterborough

A £5m bond was set up by Social Finance UK with cash from high net-worth individuals and foundations and funded charities to resettle 3,000 ex-offenders in Peterborough in a bid to reduce reoffending. If the scheme reduces crimes being committed by ex-offenders by at least 7.5%, then investors take a share of the savings made by the Government (in terms of policing, court time custody etc). In seven years' time the funders are aiming for an £8m payout. The concept has multiple benefits as it provides cash for social entrepreneurs; it transfers the risk to private investors; and it costs taxpayers only if the scheme works.

2.2.3 Future Support Products/ Areas

The main areas highlighted within the research for this evaluation, with respect to new products/ support areas for SEEs included the following:-

- There is a need for access to growth support for businesses that have the potential to grow and contribute strongly in a local economy context but who may never export – and therefore traditionally have not qualified for Invest NI mainstream support. In some sectors (e.g. social care and community based leisure provision) there is no potential for export because by their nature the services will only ever be locally based and yet the potential for local sustainable employment is viewed to be considerable. This is presently viewed as a gap in provision that needs to be serviced going forward and links in with an action arising from the IREP report that Invest NI needs to develop a wider business base, which is now being progressed;
- In order to help the SE sector scale up and grow quickly, there is a need to look at opportunities in relation to franchising and licensing, based on scanning nationally and internationally for opportunities. It was suggested that a series of seminars or a programme intervention around franchising/ licensing would be useful. This expressed need ties in with aspects of the SE franchising stream of the STES initiative detailed previously;
- There is an ongoing need for transition support to help VCS organisations make the transition to a social economy model (in full or in part), building on current activity within the Building Change Trust project. This demand is reinforced by the fact that charity law emanating from the Charity Commission in NI stipulates that no more than 25% of total income can be earned from enterprise – necessitating the establishment of a separate SEE from the charity operation.

This is perceived to be the key immediate source of start-up SEEs into the SE sector;

- It is viewed that the profile of the sector is dominated by the large established SEEs and that there needs to be more intervention to support the smaller SEEs to develop critical mass and capability. Accordingly it was suggested that a seedcorn fund could be established to encourage early stage/ growth potential SEEs to collaborate together to develop commercial project proposals; *and.*

- In respect of finance the research has indicated that the sector is characterised by under-capitalised organisations with inadequate reserves, and high levels of grant dependency. To date there has been a nervousness and immaturity within the sector to look at experimentation with new social finance products, such as equity or quasi equity. Looking ahead, it is deemed important, if the SE sector is to compete with the private sector, that actions are taken to ensure that the SE sector has the access to the same range of financial products as private sector organisations. Allied to this there is a need to support the provision of financial products with related advice and guidance. The dormant bank/ building society accounts remain a key source of untapped potential that could be channelled into a financial intervention for the SE sector.

3 The Performance and Impact of the SEE Strategy 2010/11

3.1 Introduction

The Terms of Reference for this evaluation required an assessment of the performance of the SEE strategy and related structures (SEPG, SEF etc) and the impact of both on the sector. Within this there was an explicit requirement to focus on future directions in respect of the same.

This section draws initially on the NI Government's Progress Report on the Social Economy Enterprise Strategy 2010/11 which concluded on progress achieved in the first six months of the 2010/11 Operating Plan. Thereafter it draws on the views of consultees in respect of the strategy and related structures. The findings are set out below, grouped under headings that map across to the Terms of Reference for this aspect of the evaluation.

3.2 Key Findings

3.2.1 Extent to which strategic objectives have been met

NI Government's Progress Report on the Social Economy Enterprise Strategy 2010/11 assessed the extent to which outturn against specific actions were met using a five point scale.[7] On this basis, Table 3.1 overleaf demonstrates that the vast majority of actions overall were reported to be 'on target' (n= 75, 75%) and that the highest proportion of 'on target' actions (n=37, 49%) related to the strategic objective of creating a supportive and enabling environment.

[7] 1 = target exceeded; 2 = target met; 3 = on target; 4 = not on target; 5 = significantly off target.

Table 3.1: Outturn Against Strategic Objectives (Status of Actions)

Objective	Actions	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL n= (%)
1. Increase awareness of the sector and establish its value to the local economy	1.1 Increasing our knowledge and understanding	0	*3*	*12*	*1*	*0*	*16 (16)*
	1.2 Measuring the impact	0	*3*	*6*	*0*	*1*	*10 (10)*
2. Develop the sector and increase its business strength	2.1 Providing support for business growth	0	*6*	*16*	*0*	*0*	*21 (21)*
	2.2 Building the business skills of SEEs	0	*1*	*4*	*1*	*0*	*6 (6)*
3. Create a supportive and enabling environment	3.1 Building the evidence base	0	*4*	*13*	*1*	*0*	*18 (18)*
	3.1 Fostering a SEE culture	0	*3*	*24*	*0*	*1*	*28 (28)*
TOTAL n= (%)		0 (0)	*20 (20)*	*75 (75)*	*3 (3)*	*2 (2)*	*100 (100)*

Source: NI Government's Progress Report on the Social Economy Enterprise Strategy 2010/11

There is however a need to 'drill down' a little more on some of the constituent actions incorporated in the analysis in Table 3.1. The approach deployed of a 'one size fits all rating range' does not fully work across the range of actions embodied in the strategy. It is also too output rather than outcome focused, which does not always allow scope for the impact of actions to be captured and assessed. Table 3.2 overleaf provides a range of examples to illustrate the point – drawing on some instances where the assessment of performance against target is deemed reasonable and others where this is not the case. It is also important to note that the sheer number of actions in the strategy (99 in total) meant that prioritisation of those that were most important or could have the most impact was lost within the volume of activity.

Table 3.2: Examples of Outturn Against Strategic Objectives/ Actions

Examples of Actions	Status of target (SEES Action Plan at 30/09/10)	KPMG assessment at June 2011
Fostering a SEE culture: support the development of a sustainable SEN until 2011 in line with its package of financial assistance	*2 (target met)*	The current evaluation does not demonstrate that the SEN is financially sustainable, given the continued reliance on DETI funding, which brings into question whether this target has, in fact, been met.
Building the evidence base: as part of an on-going programme of evaluation, measure the social, financial and economic impacts of the sector by measuring the social impact of enterprises supported within the SEP and SEF	*3 (on target)*	The assessment of this action includes an evidence-based impact assessment and is outcome orientated. For instance there was a baseline exercise done on social capital, which was updated to capture the additionality of the intervention. Accordingly it is viewed that the status of the target is accurate.
Monitor and report annually on the success of SEEs competing for the delivery of public service contracts	*3 (on target)*	During consultations for the current evaluation, CPD indicated they are unable to accurately determine whether competitors for contracts are SEEs. Therefore the commentary for this action should not be recorded as 'on target'.

Overall the views expressed within this evaluation suggest that this was too much of a 'tick-box' process of monitoring and that a more meaningful assessment of progress and related impact would be required in future. Consultees also highlighted that it was important for a future strategy to agree appropriate measurement metrics and referenced the focus of the Office of the Third Sector[8] in the UK on an outcome based approach that encompassed social return on investment. It was also viewed that future measurement metrics need to focus more on the additionality of a centralised strategy.

3.2.2 Effectiveness and extent to which social economy structures have contributed to the delivery of strategic objectives

While it was generally agreed that the existence of a centralised strategy for the sector had been important (amongst those who were aware of it), consultees had mixed views on the effectiveness of the structures around the same.

The DETI role in terms of leading the activity within the SEPG (and progressing actions therein) was viewed positively and there was clear consensus that a single policy lead/ champion was required. Furthermore the vast majority of consultees

[8] Replaced by Office for Civil Society in May 2010

acknowledged that it should be DETI in this role (rather than DSD). In this context, the input of the DETI Social Economy Unit was valued, albeit that it was acknowledged that the resources were limited.

Beyond the lead role, consultees felt that there was too much rotation/ substitution of more junior representatives from other Departments involved, and that this had impeded effective progress in terms of sustaining genuine and real buy-in to progressing activities within the strategy. Overall it was viewed that the SEPG and SEF needed to be more visible, and a key action suggested in this regard was hosting of more visits by SEPG members to SEEs to see at first hand the impacts of SEE activity 'on the ground'. The membership of the SEPG (i.e. InvestNI, DSD, DEL, DARD, DHSSPSNI, DFP Central Procurement Directorate and DETI) was viewed to be appropriate moving forward. However additional representation may be needed from OFMDFM (in respect of synergies with the Social Investment Fund[9]) and the Department of Justice (in respect of the potential for extension of SE activity in the justice/ home affairs sector, building on the evident potential in this regard in GB).

In respect of the SEF it was suggested that in terms of sustaining enthusiasm and making the meetings more worthwhile that they should be moved to annual rather than six monthly meetings.

3.2.3 Impact of the strategy on the sector

Turning to the impact of the strategy on the sector, it is important to note that awareness of the strategy was 'patchy' was amongst the SEEs interviewed for this evaluation. Several interviewees highlighted that the recent SE Awards have done more to raise awareness of the SE sector than the strategy.

Amongst those who were aware of the strategy (typically those more actively involved around the SEN activities), it is viewed more as a collation of existing Departmental activities/ ideas, rather than a genuine attempt to drive growth and development of the sector. Reference was made to an overemphasis on process and planning, with respondents less sure on tangible impacts arising. The lack of joint actions across Departments was also viewed to be a weakness. Consequently, the additionality of the strategy was viewed to be limited. The fact that there was no additional investment associated with the strategy was viewed to be a poor start in respect of the potential of the strategy to meaningfully impact on the sector.

The structuring of the strategy in terms of the three themes (i.e. increasing awareness of the sector, developing the sector and increasing its business strength, creating a supportive, enabling environment) was viewed as reasonable, in the context of a 'refresh strategy'. However respondents were of the view that the actions therein were not a priority for some of the Departmental representatives involved and that operational linkages to policy areas across the Departments involved were not sufficiently embedded.

[9] The aim of the OFMDFM Social Investment Fund is to reduce poverty, unemployment and physical deterioration in areas. It will address the problems of poverty through targeted employment and investment programmes and securing support from the business community and other organisations. It will also include improving the physical environment, linking areas to economic hubs and improving capacity and employability within communities.

In terms of Local Authority engagement around the strategy, the involvement was viewed to be limited and the research strongly highlighted the need for the locus of control in respect of any future strategy to reside with Central Government (and led by DETI) rather than Local Authorities. Indeed it was viewed that there was a challenge for DETI to educate and inform Local Authorities about what the sector is and the value of the same.

When considering the impact of the strategy, comparisons were drawn with other regions of the UK and the policy/ strategies in place therein. Allied to the views in terms of the performance of the sector viz-a-viz other regions, the prevailing view is that NI has lost ground in terms of the innovation within policy/ strategy development for the sector. Some of the long established SEEs in the sector in NI interviewed for this evaluation felt that NI was ahead ten years ago, but that the policy environment elsewhere in GB was now much more enabling and advanced relative to NI - in terms of public procurement, outcome based commissioning with weighting for social impacts, community asset transfer and civil society delivering public services. It was viewed that developments such as the 'Community Right to Bid' aspect of the Localism Bill, which is a cornerstone of the 'Big Society' strategy and the Public Services (Social Enterprise and Social Value) Bill currently in development, would further reinforce progress.

3.2.4 Continuance for an Executive-led strategic approach

Despite the views on the 2010/11 SEE strategy there was a strongly expressed wish for an Executive-led strategic approach moving forward to work towards achieving the potential for the sector in NI.

It is viewed that there is strong cross-party political support in respect of the sector in NI and that the challenge looking ahead is to secure the same level of senior support across the relevant Departments involved, as exists within the NI Executive. The key messages in relation to a future strategy highlighted through the research are as follows:-

- There is a need to be clear moving forward who the strategy is for and who needs it. There is a sense looking back that perhaps the strategy served the interests of Government more than that of the sector (i.e. SEEs on the ground). It was further highlighted in this regard that the sector in many ways is quite self-sufficient and resilient and that unless a more robust and less cosmetic approach is adopted going forward, it is not worth progressing;
- A separate strategy document for the sector is not required – an Executive-led strategic approach for the sector in future should sit as a component or strand of the overall Economic Strategy for NI being led by DETI. This reflects a desire amongst the SEEs interviewed for 'parity of esteem' between private sector businesses and SEEs, and consistent with the accepted definition of an SEE in NI, which is firmly founded on '*operating using a commercial business model*';
- From a timing perspective it is important that there is a limited gap between current arrangements and any future strategy;
- The three themes, within the 2010/11 SEE strategy were viewed to be reasonable looking back in the context of a 'refresh strategy'. However, it is

viewed that a future strategy needs to be radically different in terms of structure and that it needs to be much more informed by delivery on the ground in NI and by good practice (nationally and internationally). Looking ahead, a much simpler approach is required – stakeholders lost the overall sense of the SEE 2010/11 strategy because there were too many actions (99 in total). A future strategy needs to focus on a small number of 'big-picture' actions, which could be informed by the needs expressed for the sector and new support areas articulated in Section 2 previously;

- A future strategy should predominantly focus on joint-actions between two or more Departments and/or cross-cutting actions involving all Departments on the SEPG. This will help to reinforce the additionality of a future strategy;
- The performance monitoring metrics for a future strategy need to 'move up a gear' – away from activities/ outputs to be more focused on capturing outcomes and the social return on investment realised through activity in the sector. A useful reference point in this regard is the Strategic Action Plan for the Creative Industries in NI, which was a cross departmental response to a headline Programme for Government target, to grow the creative industries sector in NI by 15% between 2007 and 2011. Whilst there may be more difficulties in replicating this target precisely for the SE sector, as there is not the same baseline data available, this is the type of headline 'outcome' based target that is desirable to monitor the difference/ additionality that a future strategy could deliver. Discussions with policy representatives in the other GB regions acknowledged some of the same difficulties that have prevailed in NI in terms of accurately estimating the size of the sector. However they did acknowledge that this was not a reason not to do it. The Welsh Assembly Government for instance are committed to updating their recent baseline mapping exercise[10] on the size of sector every two years, with the view that, as long as consistent criteria and definitions are applied, it should be able to capture a degree of progression even if it not an 100% accurate return in terms of the overall size of the sector; *and*
- Potential 'action-areas' for a future strategy building on the research conducted for this evaluation include:-
  - *Access to public procurement – ongoing work to address barriers for SEEs and progress on the policy front in relation to outcome based commissioning with weighting for social impacts/ social value – to keep pace with the developments in GB for instance in relation to the Public Services (Social Enterprise and Social Value) Bill. The former should include support for a procurement brokerage service/ matchmaking service to bring social enterprises together to bid for public sector contracts and work together to upscale and successfully deliver the same.*
  - *Pilot testing of social impact bonds (e.g. similar to the re-offending initiative in the justice arena in Peterborough, detailed in Section 2).*
  - *Enabling actions for Community Asset Transfer –that is the transfer of under-used land and buildings from the public sector to community ownership and management - helping organisations to develop those assets and deliver long-term social, economic and environmental benefits for their communities. There are clear linkages in this*

[10] Which captured 3,000 enterprises engaged in SE activity.

regard to the OFMDFM Social Investment Fund and efforts therein to address dereliction and increase community services in deprived areas.

- *Baseline and ex-post mapping of the SE sector around a future strategy to establish size and scale of the sector, which should also include an element focused on the social return on investment within the sector.*

- *Pathways to employment – initiatives involving SEEs as a supportive environment for those distant from the labour market, building on initiatives such as the SEF in West Belfast and Greater Shankill, DEL's Step Ahead programme and the Short-Term Employment Scheme (STES) within Invest NI. Again there are clear linkages in this regard to the OFMDFM Social Investment Fund and efforts therein in relation to targeted employment initiatives to address deprivation.*

- *Enabling up-scaling and growth of SE sector – through growth initiatives for established, locally focused SEEs; through a programme intervention around franchising/ licensing to replicate established ideas external to NI within NI, which is reflected in the SE stream of STES; and through ongoing transition support for VCS organisations to become SEEs.*

- *Access to finance – ensuring that SEEs have access to the same range of financial products as private sector SMEs, which will involve experimentation with new social finance products (e.g. equity/ quasi-equity) and provision of related advice and guidance. Allied to this, ongoing focus on allocating some of Northern Ireland's dormant bank and building society accounts to a funding intervention for the SE sector.*

4 Review of the Social Economy Network

4.1 Introduction

As previously detailed, the SEN was established to provide a regional umbrella organisation for social enterprises in Northern Ireland that would represent the sector at all levels of government and would influence and shape policy.

The DETI Letter of Offer sets a range of objectives for SEN, as well as monitoring and evaluation arrangements to measure SEN's progress against achieving its objectives. Specifically, this included the requirement for an annual detailed Operating Plan and completion of a monitoring template reporting progress against the same.

This section draws on a review of the information provided by the SEN and DETI as part of the relevant monitoring and evaluation arrangements, as well as consultations with stakeholders, to evaluate the performance and impact of the SEN. The key findings are set out below, grouped under headings that map across to the Terms of Reference for this aspect of the evaluation.

4.2 Key Findings

4.2.1 Representation of Members (through lobbying and promotion of the sector)

In broad terms it is viewed that the SEN has made good progress in terms of promotion and awareness raising - reflected in the increased membership and in the perceived increased cross-party political awareness and interest in the sector over the period. In this regard the production of the '*Manifesto for the Social Economy in NI'* was viewed as a useful reference document to underpin discussions with political representatives. During the period the SEN has also facilitated good practice visits by counterpart[11] bodies to NI and visits by senior Government officials and politicians to SEEs – all of which have been successful in raising awareness in respect of support for the sector and strategic development of the same.

The SEN has been successful in raising awareness and promoting the sector, through the dedicated website www.socialeconomy.org and production of a dedicated newsletter for the sector (Network News). The published and printed materials produced by the SEN are broadly viewed to be of a high quality, underpinned by consistent branding and format, which has helped to reinforce a brand identity for the SEN. The only development area suggested in this regard was that the SEN could perhaps have developed more pro-active links with the media to showcase and promote the sector.

[11] Four Nations Social Enterprise Coalition involving WSEC, SSEC and SEC (England) with the SEN.

The partnership between the SEN and comparator bodies in GB (the Social Enterprise Coalition, the Scottish Social Enterprise Coalition and the Welsh Social Enterprise Coalition) in respect of the recent national Social Enterprise Awards 2011 – where two NI businesses[12] won top prizes - was very successful in raising awareness of the sector, within NI and externally. Similarly, the sponsorship by the SEN of the SEE award in the Belfast Business Awards also contributed positively to putting social enterprise 'on the map' at a mainstream private sector business event.

However in terms of representation it is critical to note that there are a few notable large-scale SEEs that have not joined the SEN, and who currently do not see the value of doing so. This is attributed to a view that it does not have the profile and impact that it should have and that opportunities have been lost - in terms of pro-active service delivery to members, scanning around UK comparators to replicate good practice and in terms of insightful input on key matters of debate within the sector (e.g. community asset transfer). Looking back it is suggested that the SEN would have been stronger with these interests on board. Therefore, addressing underlying barriers and issues that have precluded this to date must be a priority in respect of any future arrangements.

It is also viewed that the SEN has been more active in 'administering and co-ordinating views' rather than leadership on critical issues of debate. In this regard the expertise and influence of individual SEEs and/or individual Board members, is viewed to have had more of an impact in respect of lobbying than the collective force of the SEN. Comparisons were drawn between the respect and influence commanded by the SEC as an entity in Westminster and the SSEC as an entity in Scottish Government. By contrast it is viewed that the sector in NI has at times been more strongly represented in terms of lobbying by some of the larger SEEs (within and outside the SEN membership) than the SEN itself. This suggests that there has not been a strong unity of purpose/ collective shared vision within the SEN, particularly between Board members and staff about what the SEN is trying to achieve. In this context it is important to note that several Board members reported a 'disconnect' between their aspirations for the SEN in terms of activity and influence and the resources/ expertise within the staff base to effect aspects of the same. It is also clear that the Board have been very 'hands on' in operational matters which has constrained their time for strategic input and guidance.

Finally it was further highlighted that the core-funding arrangements by DETI do constrain the extent to which the SEN can effectively lobby. To date it is viewed that there has been a tendency for the SEN to respond to what Government wants them to do rather than what is necessarily in the interests of members and the SE sector. Reflecting particularly on the feedback from the regional focus groups, it is not clear that the SEN has had a material difference on the operations of SEEs working on the ground at local level. Indeed some reported that they were members but yet were not that actively engaged or impacted upon by activity to date. Looking forward, there needs to be as much value-added to members from having a representative structure as there is to Government from having one - which is viewed to be linked to

[12] Newington Credit Union was presented with the Social Enterprise of the Year Award, while John McMullan, Chief Executive of Bryson Charitable Group won the Social Enterprise Leader of the Year Award.

a need for any future arrangements to be more entrepreneurial than has been the case to date.

4.2.2 Success in building membership and in providing quality products and services

The DETI funding of the SEN has been successful in helping to build a critical mass of membership (circa 170) over the funded period. A contributing factor in this regard was the fact that start-up SEEs active on the core capability support strand of the SEP were offered 12 months free membership of the SEN. Furthermore there have been active efforts by SEN to extend membership throughout NI engaging urban and rural interests, and the current membership is viewed to reflect the diversity of business activities in the sector – all of which is positive.

The on-line trade directory (tradesocial.net) developed jointly by the SEN and WorkWest to promote trade between SEEs, and between SEEs and other sectors, which has just been launched has been broadly welcomed, as a concept. As it is just recently launched it is too early to assess any impact on the trading performance of SEEs involved.

Beyond this, the general view expressed through the research is that the SEN has not been sufficiently entrepreneurial in new product/ service development. It is interesting that this view of the SEN was evident in comparator network bodies in the UK (SEC, SSEC etc) as well as local stakeholders. Comparisons were drawn by local stakeholders with NICVA in this regard, who are perceived to have successfully expanded their product/ service offer, partly through proactive collaboration with other organisations.

In the early part of the funded period it is understandable that the focus was on establishing the SEN as an entity, establishing operational protocols and building awareness to create a critical mass of membership. However in the latter part of the funded period, there should have been more progress in new product/ service development, and it is perceived that the SEN is well behind the SEC and SSEC in this regard. Given that the WSEC is only recently established it was viewed too early to draw comparisons with the same.

Looking back it is viewed that the SEN should have leveraged more off the significant strengths and experiences of its member organisations, in new product/ service development over the funded period. Potential areas of opportunity identified through the research, which could have been progressed, included the following:-

- Brokerage of special offers/ discounted deals/ vouchers books for members (where SEN would take a cut);
- Using the SEN website as a portal to register interest for upcoming funding calls (on behalf of funders) and to promote the services of providers of finance (e.g. CDFI's/ community banking services of mainstream banks etc) – to generate referral and advertising revenue;
- Centralised facilitation of PR services for members (offering economies of scale for members over and above paying for their own PR services) with appropriate charging. This was suggested particularly in the context that the PR activity/ marketing outputs produced by the SEN itself to date are broadly viewed to be of

high quality. There are lessons that could be drawn upon in this regard in relation to the expertise of the NICVA Sector Matters team;

- Procurement brokerage service – matchmaking service to bring social enterprises together to bid for public sector contracts and work together to upscale and successfully deliver the same. Services would be provided on a commercial basis, in terms of bid-writing, contract negotiation etc, success fees etc. This idea has been promoted in recent years by UCIT/ Charity Bank, with support of SEN and others. In practice it is viewed that a representative body such as the SEN should lead this sort of activity on behalf of the sector;
- Knowledge sharing workshops and seminars – to date it was reported that SEN training events have been poorly attended, and that more leverage from expertise of members and associates in NI and externally may be helpful in this regard, again with SEN taking a cut from securing participation. An annual summer school for the SE sector was also suggested in this context;
- Hosting of social enterprise job opportunities on the SEN website (free/ discounted to SEN members with a market rate fee for non-members), along with issue of social enterprise jobs bulletin monthly to the membership;
- Charging for events – building on the successful charging policy for Social Enterprise Awards dinner; *and*
- Commissioned research.

Willingness to pay for new service areas was not viewed as a key issue amongst those interviewed for this evaluation – indeed neither was higher membership fees – the key issue highlighted was that members would want more for their money than has been delivered to date in terms of services and support.

It is further viewed that the position of the SEN in terms of not competing with its members in bidding for contracts/ opportunities was too restrictive and needs reviewed. Specifically, it was highlighted that in respect of opportunities where a consortium approach was required to provide NI wide coverage or critical mass to cover professional ability requirements, that a representative body such as the SEN should be the co-ordinating influence bringing interested parties together. This in turn would allow the SEN to be written into such opportunities in a project management capacity once a contract was up and running or at least be renumerated in terms of a success fee for bid-writing and contract negotiation.

It was broadly viewed that looking ahead some form of pilot-testing of new service delivery might be required, in that it would take time to scope and market test elements of the same. The feasibility of some may also be partly linked to progress being achieved in other areas. For instance, the procurement brokerage service would be much more effective in the context of more progress with respect to social clauses in procurement / weighting for social impacts in public procurement competitions.

4.2.3 Effectiveness of management (with emphasis on governance, financial management, flexibility to needs, customer service and ongoing professional development)

The SEN was subject to an EDO inspection by ASM Howarth in 2009, which provided a 'satisfactory' assurance level to DETI that the funds issued to SEN were used in accordance with the purpose intended by the Northern Ireland Assembly or Parliament. In this context 'satisfactory' is defined as "*there is some risk that objectives may not be fully achieved. Some improvements are required to enhance the adequacy and / or effectiveness of risk management, control and governance*."[13] Given the satisfactory level of assurance provided, DETI instructed KPMG to adopt a high level review of governance arrangements for this evaluation.

The EDO inspection report outlined five recommendations relating to the areas:

- Financial Reporting and MIS;
- Funding Arrangements;
- Corporate Governance; and
- Financial Controls.

Of these five recommendations, four were considered to be of low risk, with one (relating to funding arrangements) graded as medium risk. At the time of this evaluation in May 2011, all five of these recommendations have been addressed.

Drawing on consultations and the findings of the EDO inspection report, the financial management and governance arrangements in place at SEN appear to be appropriate to the size and scale of the organisation. There is a Board in place for the SEN, comprising 12 members and five committee working groups:

- Audit Committee,
- Staffing Committee,
- Membership and Marketing Committee,
- Research Committee; and
- Strategic Committee.

The Audit Committee has responsibility for corporate governance and management of risk and comprises three Board members. There is no Internal Audit function in place at the SEN, which is considered commensurate with the size of the organisation.

The Board meets monthly, with related papers being issued to Board members in advance of meetings. Meetings are formally minuted and attendance records kept.

The Board has been flexible and responsive to challenges faced throughout the year in terms of staffing constraints, at times assuming a more operational role than strategic. While this has occurred out of necessity, it is important to recognise that

[13] ASM Howarth, EDO Inspection April 2009

increased levels of operational engagement represent a potential risk to the independence (actual or perceived) of the strategic and oversight function of the Board. By way of example, the UK Corporate Governance Code[14] states that "*there should be a clear division of responsibilities at the head of the company between the running of the board and the executive responsibility for the running of the company's business.*" It is important to highlight that this is a principle to be adopted and failure to adhere to this principle in the case of SEN is not considered a 'breach' of good governance. However, it is important that, where Board members necessarily become involved in the operational aspects of the SEN activities, the need to do this is explained robustly and formally accepted by the Board.

Over the funded period there is some evidence of progression in terms of the approach adopted to organisational development over the evaluation period, with increased focus on strategy development for the organisation evident within the most recent Operating Plan and greater linkages through to actions for each strategic aim and related performance monitoring. Aligned to this, consultations have indicated that there is a positive working relationship between SEN and DETI over the period which has contributed to ensuring a professional approach to ongoing organisational development.

However, there continues to be a high degree of dependence by SEN on core funding by DETI rather than achievement of sustainability through revenue generating activities, which is intrinsically linked to the fact that the SEN has not been sufficiently entrepreneurial in new product/ service development. DETI funding in the last two years has been circa 75-80% of SEN income, and whilst this is an improvement on the first year (91%), it is viewed that much more progress could have been made. This is set in the context that a specific objective in the DETI LOO was that the SEN was '*to achieve a degree of sustainability through a focus on earned income targets, satisfactory to DETI*'.

4.2.4 Compliance with monitoring and evaluation arrangements set out in the Letter of Offer (and role/ contribution of SEN Board and DETI staff in that process).

In the Letter of Offer (LOO), DETI set a range of objectives for SEN and established monitoring and evaluation arrangements to measure SEN's progress against specified objectives, primarily through annual Operating Plans and Progress Reports and through a range of financial reports.

In line with the terms of the LOO, the SEN provided annual detailed Operating Plans, setting out priorities for each year and including targets, performance measures and key actions with resources allocated for each year. While the Operating Plans demonstrate progression in terms of some strategic thought[15] and, while links can be made between the objectives contained in the LOO and the aims and objectives contained in the Operating Plans, the alignment is not an easy 'read across'. This makes it difficult to accurately determine the extent to which SEN has met the

[14] http://www.frc.org.uk/documents/pagemanager/Corporate_Governance/UK%20Corp%20Gov%20Code%20June%202010.pdf

[15] e.g. a shift in emphasis in the 2007-2008 Plan on operational considerations such as establishing an operating base for the Network and developing membership towards the strategic aims contained within the 2010-1011 Plan of, for example, representing the needs and views of the sector to policy and decision makers

objectives it was set and suggests the Operating Plans in their current format may not be a fully effective monitoring tool.

Annual Progress Reports were provided by SEN, as required, and contained details of progress towards achieving the Operating Plan objectives as well as a copy of the signed audited annual accounts. The information contained in the Progress Reports included detailed and relevant commentary around the actions taken against each objective but could have benefited from a clear statement of whether each objective had been met or not. The Progress Reports would also have benefited from a clear statement around what impact the achievement (or otherwise) of the objectives had on those involved/ the SE sector. For example, the 2010-11 Operating Plan contained an output indicator to run two training workshops at the MTB/Supplier event with 20 participants attending each but a more impact focused indicator might also have included measurement of the number of leads generated, value of any downstream business generation and participant satisfaction with the event.

The research for this evaluation demonstrated active Board involvement in setting the strategic direction of SEN through the Operating Plan. However, it is acknowledged that Board Member involvement in more day to day matters has impacted on their ability to sufficiently focus on strategic matters. Furthermore, whilst DETI was active in oversight/ monitoring progress of activity within the Operating Plans and SEN complied with the monitoring templates and requirements set by DETI, the overriding view is that it was too much of a ‘tick-box’ exercise, without sufficient conclusions being drawn on whether the objectives were fully achieved and what the impact of funded activity was. With hindsight, a monitoring regime that progressed in the latter years of the funded period to also focus on outcomes, rather than just outputs, would have been desirable. In practice this would have required a regular programme of engagement with SEEs inside and outside the SEN to capture impacts arising. This mirrors the views expressed on the monitoring of the SEE Strategy 2010/11 itself, set out in Section 2, implying that both need to ‘move up a gear’ in future.

4.3 Future directions

The recurring theme of the consultations in respect of future directions was that the social economy sector required representation/ a representative structure. However there was a strong consensus that any future intervention needed to move the arrangements to a different space that is much more entrepreneurial and collaborative with other relevant bodies and network organisations. Many consultees highlighted that it was not viable for a network structure to be less entrepreneurial than many of the members it represents, which is presently viewed to be a risk with respect to the SEN if the current situation persists.

Reflecting back, the priority in 2008 was to establish a representative structure, which necessitated the three staff (a Director, Communications and Membership Officer and an Office Administrator) but the priority now has shifted a need for pro-active product/ service delivery to achieve sustainability. In this context it is interesting to note that a view was expressed that the current focus of debate on sustaining the network ‘as an entity’ was wrong, in that if the SEN was more effective in enabling the sustainability and growth of SEE members (e.g. through product/service delivery) a degree of sustainability for the SEN would follow.

In 2008, it was agreed that policy lead for the social economy sector should remain in DETI, rather than DSD, consistent with the accepted definition of an SEE in NI, which is firmly founded on '*operating using a commercial business model'*. This is viewed at the time to have reinforced the need for a separate representative structure for the SE sector from that already in place for the VCS in NI. With the benefit of hindsight, views are now mixed as to whether this was the right call or whether the SEN should have been a component of NICVA. For some, in an ideal world, NICVA would currently have the SEN interests and also the expertise in respect of Development Trusts, as part of an all-embracing 'third-sector' remit. The Development Trust Association NI is viewed as an attractive alternative representative structure for some SEEs, notably the larger ones, which is a source of competition for the SEN. It is interesting to note that in the SEC and WSEC, the equivalent Development Trust Associations in England and Wales are involved, either as Board members or on an Advisory Council, which is not the case in NI.

Looking ahead, and particularly at a time of scarce resources, it is widely viewed that a more united third sector movement is required. Opportunities have been lost because the SEN has not been sufficiently collaborative with other representative bodies and that there remains some influential SEEs that have opted out of being involved. Thus the collective weight of the social economy sector and broader third sector is not being harnessed by current arrangements, which ultimately will have an impact on the performance of the SE sector itself.

Leading on from the above, it is suggested that while a separate representative structure for the SE sector continues to be required, any future intervention from DETI to support a representative structure for the SE sector must:-

- **Provide the impetus for collaboration** – networking; sharing of information; and joint business development – between SEN interests and other third sector and private sector networks (e.g. NICVA, DTA NI, CFNI, BiTC and others). In practice this could mean joint programme delivery and co-operation on key cross-cutting policy issues impacting on NI economy and society (e.g. the current debate on reduction of Corporation Tax and Shared Future/ Cohesion, Sharing and Integration policy development). There are established models for collaborative networking in the private sector in NI, under the auspices of the Invest NI Collaborative Networks Programme[16] which may be a useful reference point of good practice in this regard; *and*
- **Move away from an approach of long-term core funding of staff to that of a 'seed fund' to pilot product/ service development –** This should help to build commercial sustainability of services to members serviced by a future representative structure. It is however important that sufficient seed funding is put in place for this two year period, to give the new arrangements a chance to develop traction and become established.

16 Which was set up in 2007 to support business-led collaborative networks and stimulate economic development .

Based on the above, it is recommended that there needs to be a significant departure in future arrangements from the current SEN model. There is a risk that 'tweaking' with the existing SEN model (i.e. the Board, Governance and staffing structures) will not be viewed as sufficiently different to encourage new parties to become involved. New models of collaboration are required to ensure that the collective weight and capacity of the social economy sector and broader third sector will be harnessed by future arrangements. As such, a Do Minimum option such as this is not considered.

There are two potential delivery mechanisms that could be implemented moving forward to bring about the substantive departure that is required from current arrangements, which are summarised in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Potential Delivery Options

	Advantages	Disadvantages	Recommended
Option 1: Encourage the Social Enterprise Coalition to set up in NI (and transfer SEN membership into the same). This would require pilot funding for a CEO type post and potentially support staff.	Ease of implementation. Opportunity for NI to leverage from national developments in counterpart bodies.	May not be sufficiently flexible to needs of NI SE sector and able to engage with all the existing interests that need to be involved. Maybe more difficult to implement a model of a seed fund for product/ service development. Counterpart bodies are predominantly based on core funded staff, alongside income generation.	No
Option 2: Tender a work programme, to pilot test product/ service delivery, aimed at a collaborative network/ consortium of existing SEE and wider third sector interests. This collaborative network should in turn be established as a new entity in due course, with the potential to transfer over the existing membership of the SEN into the same.	Potential to attract wider constituency of SEE and wider third sector interests into a consortium approach – i.e. more inclusive than current arrangements. Entrepreneurial in ethos.	May take time for arrangements to take shape/ be in place.	Yes

On balance it is suggested that Option 2 offers the best potential to move the arrangements for a representative structure for the SE sector to the context that it needs to be in to service the needs of the SEEs and wider third sector interests in NI. A series of recommendations in relation to the implementation of Option 2 are set out in Section 5 overleaf.

5 Summary of Recommendations

Table 5.1 sets out the key recommendations arising from this evaluation exercise, as they relate to structures, a future strategy for the SE sector (and priorities therein) and arrangements in respect of a representative structure.

Table 5.1 Summary of Recommendations

Recommendations relating to structures	
1.	The SEPG is valued and should remain with membership extended to also include OFMDFM (in respect of synergies with the Social Investment Fund) and Department of Justice (building on the evident potential in GB to pilot use of a social economy approach in the justice and home affairs sector). Council representation would also be desirable in view of public procurement potential therein for SEEs. The membership of the SEPG should ideally be Grade 7 or above. However the overriding issue is that it should comprise individuals with a professional interest in the SE sector and associated enthusiasm to drive forward activity.
2.	The SEF is also valued and should remain but should meet annually rather than bi-annually.
3.	Both the SEPG and SEF needed to be more visible and therefore it is recommended that there is an ongoing programme of visits by SEPG members to SEEs to enable them to see at first hand the impacts of SEE activity 'on the ground' - which in turn should feed through to policy for the SE sector.
Recommendations relating to a future Strategy	
4.	An Executive-led strategic approach for the sector in the future is required. However, a separate strategy document is not required. Specifically, it is recommended that the strategy for the SE sector should sit as a component or strand of the overall Economic Strategy for NI being led by DETI. This would also help to convey a message that a core focus of a future SE strategy would be on the economic value/ contribution of SE sector.
5.	It is important that the 'gap' between the SEE 2010/11 Strategy and a future strategy are minimised, given the gap that prevailed prior to current arrangements. This is particularly the case given the opportunity to maximise the potential for the SE sector in the current economic environment.
6.	Strategic responsibility for the sector needs to reside with Central Government, led by DETI. The research for this evaluation highlighted a strongly held view that any transfer of responsibility in terms of policy development and oversight of delivery interventions to the SE sector to local authorities (as envisaged under the RPA) would be detrimental - in terms of achieving consistency and leadership for a NI-wide approach. That said, local authorities remain an important constituency for the SE sector, particularly in respect of public procurement opportunities, where the scale of opportunities may be more accessible than some of the Central Government opportunities.
7.	A future strategy for the SE sector needs to be much simpler in design, with a small number of 'big-picture' actions (i.e. 10-15), rather than the approach in the SEE Strategy 2010/11 - which is viewed to be predominantly collating a large number of existing activity across Departments into a centralised framework and where 'big-picture' actions can be lost in terms of prioritisation amongst the volume of activity. The three themes within the SEE Strategy 2010/11 - which were 'pulled through' from the previous strategy period, are no longer valid. Indeed it is not clear that structuring into themes is necessary at all. The desire expressed from the research for this evaluation is for a future strategy to set an overarching vision for the growth/ impact of the SE sector in NI over the forward period, underpinned by a small number of 'big-picture' actions.
8.	A future strategy should predominantly focus on joint-actions between two or more Departments and/or cross-cutting actions involving all Departments on the SEPG. This will help to reinforce the additionality of a future strategy.

9. The performance monitoring metrics for a future strategy need to 'move up a gear' – away from activities/ outputs to be more focused on capturing outcomes and the social return on investment realised through additional activity in the sector. Whilst the difficulties in doing a baseline mapping exercise of the scale/ profile of the SE sector are acknowledged some baseline and ex-post assessment of this, around the timeline of a future strategy, would be useful. The work recently done in this regard by the Welsh Assembly Government pertaining to the SE sector in Wales is a useful reference point in this regard.

10. Potential 'action-areas' for a future strategy building on the research conducted for this evaluation include:-

    – *Access to public procurement – ongoing work to address barriers for SEEs and progress on the policy front in relation to outcome based commissioning with weighting for social impacts/ social value – to keep pace with the developments in GB for instance in relation to the Public Services (Social Enterprise and Social Value Bill). The former should include support for a procurement brokerage service/ matchmaking service to bring social enterprises together to bid for public sector contracts and work together to upscale and successfully deliver the same.*

    – *Pilot testing of social impact bonds (e.g. similar to the re-offending initiative in the justice arena in Peterborough, detailed in Section 2).*

    – *Enabling actions for Community Asset Transfer –that is the transfer of under-used land and buildings from the public sector to community ownership and management - helping organisations to develop those assets and deliver long-term social, economic and environmental benefits for their communities. There are clear linkages in this regard to the OFMDFM Social Investment Fund and efforts therein to address dereliction and increase community services in deprived areas.*

    – *Baseline and ex-post mapping of the SE sector around a future strategyto establish size and scale of the sector, which should also include an element focused on the social return on investment within the sector.*

    – *Pathways to employment – initiatives involving SEEs as a supportive environment for those distant from the labour market, building on initiatives such as the SEF in West Belfast and Greater Shankill, DEL's Step Ahead programme and the Short-Term Employment Scheme (STES) within Invest NI. Again there are clear linkages in this regard to the OFMDFM Social Investment Fund and efforts therein in relation to targeted employment initiatives to address deprivation.*

    – *Enabling up-scaling and growth of SE sector – through growth initiatives for established, locally focused SEEs; through a programme intervention around franchising/ licensing to replicate established ideas external to NI within NI, which is reflected in the SE stream of STES; and through ongoing transition support for VCS organisations to become SEEs.*

    – *Access to finance – ensuring that SEEs have access to the same range of financial products as private sector SMEs, which will involve experimentation with new social finance products (e.g. equity/ quasi-equity) and provision of related advice and guidance. Allied to this ongoing focus on allocating some of Northern Ireland's dormant bank and building society accounts to a funding intervention for the SE sector.*

Recommendations relating to a representative structure for the SE sector

11. The social economy sector needs representation/ a representative structure, but the arrangements need to move to a different space that is much more entrepreneurial and collaborative, with other relevant bodies and network organisations, than is currently the case. The collective weight of the social economy sector and broader third sector is not being harnessed by current arrangements, which ultimately will have an impact on the performance of the SE sector itself.

12. While a separate representative structure for the SE sector continues to be required, any future intervention from DETI to support a representative structure for the SE sector must provide the impetus for collaboration and sustainability (through seed funding to support pro-active product/ service development).

13. The preferred delivery model recommended is that of a tendered work programme, to pilot test product/ service delivery, aimed at a collaborative network/ consortium of existing SEE and wider third sector interests. This network should in turn be established as a new entity in due course, with the potential to transfer over the existing membership of the SEN into the same. A two-year package of seed funding should be provided and it is important that sufficient funding is put in place for this two year period, to give the new arrangements a chance to develop traction and become established. It is suggested that a minimum of £200-£250k per annum over a two year period would be required, informed by benchmarking research with other regions.
14. It is recommended therefore that the existing arrangements in respect of the SEN need to run their course as per the LOO to August 2011, but that a representative structure needs to be 'recast' thereafter, with the support and confidence from DETI to move forward. In practice therefore all of the existing arrangements in respect of staffing and governance of the current SEN should cease at that time.
15. In terms of immediate action planning, DETI need to communicate across the sector that the arrangements in terms of a representative structure for the SE sector are being re-launched/ reconfigured. In particular, there is a need for this campaign to reach some of the organisations that opted out of present arrangements to encourage them to be involved in future (either in a Board or membership capacity) so that the full weight of sectoral interests are behind any new arrangements. Within this, there is a need to also communicate with existing SEN membership that a representative structure for the SE sector is being re-launched and that they will have the opportunity to transfer their existing membership into the new arrangements in due course.

Appendices

Appendix A
E-survey of SEN membership

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI)
Social Economy Evaluation Assignment

KPMG has been commissioned by a DETI-led Steering Group to undertake an evaluation of the Social Economy in NI. In simple terms, there are three aspects to the evaluation, namely:

- Examining the role of the Social Economy sector and its unique value in terms of the economic, social and environmental impact in the NI context.
- Evaluating the Social Economy Enterprise Strategy 2010/11 with an explicit focus on future direction and priorities.
- Considering the implications of (1) and (2) above for a Social Economy network, as a representative body for the sector, informed by the performance of the Social Economy Network (SEN) to date

In this regard we have designed a short survey to capture input on all three dimensions above and would very much appreciate your response.

We would like to emphasise that the findings of the exercise will be reported at 'aggregate' level only and therefore we can provide you with assurance that your input will be treated in confidence. The findings of this survey will be used to help inform the future strategic direction and representation for the Social Economy Sector in Northern Ireland.

Q1 The SEE Strategy 09/10 was essentially a 'refresh' strategy of the previous programming period centred on three core themes. Please rate the impact of the strategy in these three areas:
(Please tick one response for each key area and explain)

	Very effective	Effective	Somewhat effective	Ineffective	Very ineffective	Don't have view
Increasing awareness of the sector and establishing its value to the local economy						
Developing the sector and increasing its business strength						
Creating and supporting an **enabling environment**						

Q2 In broad terms, do you think there is added value in a centralised Executive-led strategy versus each Department progressing their own activities? (Please tick one response and explain)

Yes – there is added value in an Executive-led strategy	
No – no perceived added-value in an Executive-led strategy	

Please explain your response given above

Q3 What do you view as the three key strengths of the Social Economy sector in Northern Ireland to be, and related to this, the potential for the sector to build on these, particularly in the current economic environment? (Please describe below)

Three Key Strengths:

1

2

3

Potential for the Sector:

Q4 Looking ahead, what do you see as the priority development needs for the sector e.g. procurement expertise, export development etc? (Please describe below)

Q5 Do you think that the same broad themes remain valid for a future strategy, or is more of a 'step-change' in terms of a future Strategy required? (Please tick one response only)

	Still relevant for future strategy? Yes	No
Increasing awareness of the sector and establishing its value to the local economy		
Developing the sector and increasing its business strength		
Creating and supporting an **enabling environment**		

Q6 Have you any thoughts on key areas that a future strategy might focus on? (Please explain below)

Q7 Have you any thoughts of how to further embed/ augment commitment to SE in future strategy period - within central government and / bringing local government to the table? (Please explain below)

Q8 Looking ahead, do you feel there is a continuing need for a representative body? (Please tick one response)

Yes		(Please go on to question 9)
No		(Please go on to question 10)

Q9 If yes, linked to your views on the potential for the sector and future strategy directions, what are the implications for the services that a network body could provide? Would you be willing to pay for these services? (Please tick all that are appropriate)

	Potential Service Areas	**Willing to Pay?** Yes	No
Dissemination of learning and best practice			
Improved accessibility to support services (e.g. accounting/ financing/ HR advice etc.)			
Increased availability of relevant information			
Increased independence of Social Economy Enterprises			
Increased interaction and cooperation between Social Economy Enterprises			
Lobbying for the sector / representation			
Policy formation			
Procurement opportunities			
Providing links with other networks			
Raising awareness of the sector			
Sectoral leadership			
Social Economy Enterprise development and business strength			
Sustainability			
Other (please specify)			
Other (please specify)			
Other (please specify)			

Q10 Have you any thoughts on the board, management and staffing arrangements for a network body going forward? (Please explain below)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Appendix B

Topic list for 1 to 1 interviews

Indicative Topic Guides

Social Economy Network Chairman/ Board Members/ Staff

KPMG has been commissioned by a DETI-led Steering Group to undertake an evaluation of the Social Economy in NI. The evaluation is being commissioned in the context of the potential recognised in the recent Independent Review of Economic Policy in Northern Ireland for the Social Economy sector to play an increasing role in efforts to reduce deprivation and increase labour force participation in NI.

In simple terms, there are three aspects to the evaluation, namely:

1. Examining the role of the Social Economy sector and its unique value in terms of the economic, social and environmental impact in the NI context.
2. Evaluating the Social Economy Enterprise Strategy 2010/11 with an explicit focus on future direction and priorities.
3. Considering the implications of (1) and (2) above for a Social Economy network, as a representative body for the sector, informed by the performance of the SEN to date.

As part of this exercise, we are seeking to capture the views of the Chairman, Board members and staff of the Social Economy Network. In this regard, key areas for discussion include the following:

Performance of the Social Economy Network

- Do you feel there is a need for a representative body for the social economy sector? If not, why not?
- What impacts do you think the Social Economy Network has had on the Social Economy sector in Northern Ireland?
- How would you rate the effectiveness of the Social Economy Network as a representative body for delivering the strategic aims outlined in Social Economy Enterprise Strategy 2010/11 given as follows:
  - Increasing awareness of the sector and establishing its value to the local economy;
  - Developing the sector and increasing its business strength; and
  - Creating and supporting an enabling environment?
- What is your view of the performance of the SEN viz-a-viz other regional SE networks in the UK?

Effectiveness of the Social Economy Network Structures

- What is your view on the organisational structure of the SEN and the distribution of current and future functions?

- What is your view of the current staffing structure (including levels, grades, deployment and hours of work)?

- Do you feel there are any issues associated with the current staffing structure (e.g.bottlenecks / surpluses etc.)?

- What is your view of the distribution of current workload across posts?

- How would you rate the existing skill-set and do you feel there are any gaps in relation to specialist areas?

- What are your views on the roles, responsibilities, reporting relationships and accountability of staff?

- What do you think works well about the current service delivery model? Are there areas which you feel could be improved or efficiencies gained by sharing resources?

Future Potential for a Representative Body for the Social Economy Sector

- Do you have any suggestions of how a representative body for the Social Economy sector should develop in the future?

- With a view to building financial sustainability, do you have any suggestions for new service areas for a representative body, and what are your views on the willingness to pay associated with each of these?

Appendix C

Topic list for focus groups

Background to the Evaluation

KPMG has been commissioned by a DETI-led Steering Group to undertake an evaluation of the Social Economy in NI. The evaluation is being commissioned in the context of the potential recognised in the recent Independent Review of Economic Policy in Northern Ireland for the Social Economy sector to play an increasing role in efforts to reduce deprivation and increase labour force participation in NI.

In simple terms, there are three aspects to the evaluation, namely:

1. Examining the role of the Social Economy sector and its unique value in terms of the economic, social and environmental impact in the NI context.
2. Evaluating the Social Economy Enterprise Strategy 2010/11 with an explicit focus on future direction and priorities.
3. Considering the implications of (1) and (2) above for a Social Economy network, as a representative body for the sector, informed by the performance of the SEN to date.

As part of this exercise, we are seeking to capture the views of individual Social Economy Enterprises through both a focus group approach and an on-line survey (which has been facilitated via the Social Economy Network) to their members. In this regard, key areas for discussion include the following:

Topics Related to the Social Economy Sector (Point 1 above)

- What is your view on the role of the SE sector in NI in terms of economic contribution?
- What is your view on the role of the SE sector in NI in terms of social impacts and addressing social needs in disadvantaged areas/ amongst disadvantaged groups?
- What is your view on the role of the SE sector in NI in terms of environmental contribution?
- How do you feel the role/contribution of the sector in the above areas in NI compares to other GB regions?
- What do you feel are the strengths / priority development needs of the SE sector?
- What is your view of the future potential for the SE sector as a delivery mechanism for public service delivery generally and in your own business area?
- Do you have any suggestions for new support products which would increase the economic, social and environmental impacts of the SE sector in Northern Ireland?
- What is your view on the potential for the sector expressed in the Independent Review of Economic Policy (IREP) report?
- What is your view on the role of Local Authorities in the SE given RPA situation?

Topics Related to SEE Strategy 2010 / 11 (Point 2 above)

- What are your views on the added value of a centralised Executive-led strategy to date for the SE sector, viz-a-viz Departments progressing their own agenda/ activities?
- To what extent has the SEE strategy been successful in building a more cohesive SE sector (particularly given the diversity of the sub-sectors therein)?
- How would you rate the effectiveness of the activity for the SE sector in line with the three objectives of the Strategy, given as follows:
  - Increasing awareness of the sector and establishing its value to the local economy;
  - Developing the sector and increasing its business strength; and
  - Creating and supporting an enabling environment?
- How would you rate the effectiveness of the overall structures (SEF/ SEPG/ SEN) with respect to delivering the strategic objectives within the SEE Strategy 2010/11?
- How effective are the operational linkages between the SEE strategy and the other key policy areas?
- What is your view on the progress against specific actions in the SEE strategy (related to your specific area)?
- How responsive do you feel the SEE strategy has been to current economic conditions?
- What do you feel are the merits / weaknesses of the Northern Ireland policy approach for development of the SE sector, versus that in place in other regions of the UK?
- Looking ahead, what do you view as the key policy priorities for the sector or for a potential future strategy?
- Have you any thoughts on how to embed ownership of a SE strategy on a cross-departmental basis?
- Do you have any suggestions for new support products?

Topics Related to the SEN (Point 3 above)

- Do you feel there is a need for a representative body for the social economy sector? If not, why not?
  - How would you rate the effectiveness of the SEN as a representative body for delivering the strategic aims outlined in SEE Strategy 2010/11 (i.e. increasing awareness of the sector and establishing its value to the local economy; developing the sector and increasing its business strength; and creating and supporting an enabling environment)?
- With a view to building financial sustainability, do you have any suggestions for new service areas for the SEN, and what are your views on the willingness to pay associated with each of these?
- Have you views on the effectiveness of the governance, management, staffing arrangements of SEN and have you any suggestions going forward in this regard?

- What is your view of the performance of the SEN viz-a-viz other regional SE networks in the UK?

Appendix D

Consultations

SEPG Members

The following table summarises the consultations undertaken with SEPG members:

Consultee	Organisation	Status	Details
Aileen Edmund	CPD	Completed	24th March 2011
Richard Leeman	DARD	Completed	24th March 2011
Stephen Jackson	DEL	Completed	29th March 2011
Stephen Macdonald	DETI	Completed	21st March 2011
Bernard McKeown	DETI	Completed	5th April 2011
Mike Thompson	DETI	Completed	21st March 2011
Roy McGivern	DSD	Completed	1st April 2011
Sharon Polson	Invest NI	Completed	28th March 2011
Charles Bamford	DHSSPS	Completed	6th April 2011
Total Completed		**9/9**	**100% complete**

Key Contacts

The following table summarises the consultations undertaken with other key contacts:

Consultee	Organisation	Status	Details
Sarah Quinn	BITC	Completed	11th April 2011
John McMullan	Bryson	Completed	29th March 2011
Niamh Goggins	Charity Bank	Completed	28th March 2011
Nicola Wilson	Craigavon Council	Unavailable	Scheduled 1st April but no response at that time – several follow-up calls made with no response.
Margaret Lee	Cresco	Completed	29th March 2011
John McGregor	Development Trust	Completed	29th March 2011
Marie Marin	Employers for Childcare	Unavailable	Scheduled 24th March but no response at that time – several follow-up calls and emails
Gordon Gough	ENI	Completed	1st April 2011
Carolyn Browne	Federation of Small Business	Unavailable	Despite several calls and emails, unable to schedule a consultation
Michael Gallagher	ILEX	Completed	6th April 2011
Aideen McGinley	ILEX	Completed	30 March 2011
Joanne Stuart	Institute of Directors	Completed	4th April 2011
Audrey Murray	Ledcom	Completed	24th March 2011
Seamus McAleavey	NICVA	Completed	5th April 2011
Eddie Kerr	SEEDS	Completed	31st March 2011
Ken O’Neill	SSEI	Completed	6th April 2011
Jonathan McAlpin	UCIT	Completed	30th March 2011

Consultee	Organisation	Status	Details
Ashley Whittley	UNLTD	Completed	7th April 2011
Liz Liston-Jones	Office of the Third Sector Cabinet Office Counterparts	Unavailable	Scheduled 12th April 2011 but no response at that time – several follow-up calls and emails
Karyn Pittick	Welsh Assembly Government Counterparts	Completed	12th April 2011
Geoff Pope	Scottish Government	Completed	12th April 2011
Antonia Swinson	SSEC Scotland	Completed	7th April 2011
Olof Jonsdottir	SEC London	Completed	Interviewed in place of Peter Holbrook who was unavailable
John Bennett	SEC Wales	Unavailable	Despite several calls and emails, unable to schedule a consultation at this time
Total Completed		**19/24**	**79% complete**

Social Economy Network Board Members

The following table summarises consultations undertaken with SEN Board members:

Consultee	Organisation	Status	Details
Anna McAleavey	Co-operative Forum NI Ltd	Completed	28th March 2011
Aisling Owens	Lisburn Enterprise Organisation	Completed	30th March 2011
Anne Walsh	East Belfast Mission	Completed	7th April 2011
Arthur Savage	Ulster Supported Employment Ltd (USEL)	Completed	31st March 2011
Carmel Morris	Irish League of Credit Unions	Completed	29th March 2011
Christopher Williamson	Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Association	Completed	28th March 2011
Kerry Patterson	University of Ulster	Completed	28th March 2011
Richard Henderson	North City Training	Completed	28th March 2011
Paul Roberts	Ashton Community Trust	Completed	24th March 2011
Trevor Wright	Extern	Completed	28th March 2011
Tommy Jeffers	Ulster Federation of Credit Unions	Completed	28th March 2011
Total Completed		**11/11**	**100% complete**

SEN Members and SEE Representatives

The following table summarises the response to the online survey with SEN members. It should be noted that at the outset of the evaluation assignment KPMG was advised to provide SEN members with a one week timeframe in which to complete the online survey, with only one reminder circulation to be sent by the SEN staff.

Status	
Number of surveys issued	138
Number of responses received	10
Total response rate	7%

The following table summarises attendance at the two focus groups undertaken with regionally based SEEs, some of whom were members of the SEN and some of whom were not:

Consultee	Organisation	Details
Dr Conor Patterson	Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency	Southern Region Focus Group - 25th May 2011
Sean O Maoilste	Cairde	
Fiona Robertson	Pawsitive	
Mairead White	Mourne Hostel	
Fiona McVerry	South Armagh Childcare	
Stephen McManus	Milford Museum Trust	
Raymond Jackson	Confederation of Community Groups	
Brenda Jackson	Newry Credit Union	
Eileen Havern	Newry Women's Aid	
Majella Gollogly	Southern Area Hospice	
Rose Coggle	Unknown	
Linda Hanna	The Grand Picture House	
Jim Murphy	Shopmobility Newry	
Stephen McClelland	Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency	
Ciara Ferguson	Greater Shantallow Area Partnership	North West Region Focus Group – 1st June 2011
Lynsay Mc Allister	NWLCD	
Donna McCauley	WCRP North West Outreach Development Worker	
Liam Griffin	Leafair Community Association	
Brian O'Neill	North West Marketing	
John Mc Gowan	North West Marketing	
Liam Milligan	The Churches Trust and Training Company	
Michelle Clarke	Workspace	
Total Completed	**22**	

Consultation Summary

The overall consultation process completed for the Social Economy Evaluation is summarised as follows:

Consultation Group	
Social Economy Policy Group	9 complete
Key Contacts	19 complete 5 consultees unavailable
SEN Board Members	11 complete
SEN Members	10 online surveys complete 2 focus groups completed with 22 in attendance
Sub-total – Completed telephone consultations	**39**
Online surveys	**10**
Attendance at focus groups	**22**
Total completed consultations	**71**