

Re: Social Enterprise Policy for Ireland Public Consultation

Submission on behalf of:

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[REDACTED]

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Northside Partnership wishes to make the following observations with regard to the Draft Social Enterprise Policy for Ireland

Northside Partnership welcomes the publication of the government's Draft Social Enterprise Policy.

General Comments:

Northside Partnership is a member of the Irish Local Development Network ILDN, a network with over 40 designated social enterprise staff members in the Local Development Companies (LDCs) across the country. The ILDN represents the largest single body of work being done on the ground to support, expand and initiate social enterprises. We are of the view that the Department Policy should establish a new independent support entity for sectoral stakeholders. However, if it is considered that any existing organisation should be responsible for this important task, ILDN is best placed to represent the Social Enterprise sector as it already has active members and staff in every part of rural and urban Ireland. Local Development Companies, based on partnership structures, have full country coverage and understand the challenges and opportunities for Social Enterprise from directly supporting the establishment, development and growth and governance of social enterprises.

Specific Comments:

Policy Objective Three – Achieving Better Policy Alignment

It is significant that the draft policy recognises the critical role Social Enterprises and non-profit organisations play in delivering public services to disadvantaged areas and communities under contract to the public sector. It is also significant that the policy recognises the role of Social Enterprises in address market failures; particularly those that impact upon disadvantaged communities. In Achieving Better Policy Alignment particular focus should be given to the implementation of social clauses in public procurement processes.

Question: *Are there specific areas of Government policy which are causing difficulty for social enterprises, or which could be improved.*

Currently significant resources are levered by Social Enterprises, through a range of Government departments and programmes, in addressing disadvantage and in providing opportunities for those experiencing poverty and social exclusion. These include the Community Services Programme (CSP), the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and labour market activation schemes such as Community Employment (CE) and the Tús Community Work Placement scheme. In supporting Objective Three a review of policy, with regard to labour market activation schemes, should be conducted to clarify how such schemes can best be implemented in supporting social enterprise activities.