

# **SUMMARY OF RESPONSES RELATING TO SOCIAL ENTERPRISES**

**April 2019**

## **1. We Asked**

- a. Towards the end of 2018, the Department for Enterprise (DfE) undertook an informal information gathering exercise to find out more about current activity on the Isle of Man relating to social enterprises;
- b. Information was collated using the consultation hub;
- c. This was supplemented by a series of meetings, workshops and interviews.
- d. Views from members of the public, government departments, third sector representatives, the Chamber of Commerce, businesses, local social enterprises and not for profit organisations are all included;
- e. A wide range of views, experiences and opinions have been collated and are reflected in this summary.

## **2. You Said**

- a. 27 responses were received using the consultation hub;
- b. 40% of these responses were from individuals, 25% from third sector organisations, 15% from the private sector and 15% from social enterprises;
- c. 52% of respondents who used the consultation hub could identify social enterprise activity on the Isle of Man and 48% could not;
- d. 21 organisations were alluded to which might be considered to be social enterprises currently doing business on the Island;
- e. Additionally, plans for several potential new social enterprises were shared;
- f. A range of positive views were expressed about the potential value that social enterprises could bring to economic growth, social inclusion, creativity, collaboration and community engagement.

### **Features relating to social enterprises on the Island included:**

- a. Government funded initiatives which are income generating but not for profit and are open to the public;
- b. Businesses that commit to a proportion of profits being reinvested in social good;

- c. Not for profit co-operatives which use commercial strategies to improve financial and social well-being whilst having both business and social goals, whose surpluses are principally reinvested in delivering social objectives;
- d. Not for profit organisations benefiting the local community and economy;
- e. Community owned organisations including shops and cafés;
- f. Charities with a social enterprise business arm;
- g. Charities which participate in profit making activity and reinvest;
- h. Religious organisations which provide services to the community;
- i. Leisure facilities which invest in and maintain elements of our social, sport and recreation infrastructure;
- j. Teams of highly committed stakeholders often give lots of time for no tangible return and are prepared to commit at huge personal cost;
- k. Each individual contributes to the collective goals and social good according to their attributes and resources;
- l. Collective team ethos, with non-hierarchical mind-set;
- m. Purpose to serve the community in the broadest sense, achieving the purpose is the reward itself;
- n. Professional approach to management and service delivery;
- o. Ethical and compassionate approach to staff and customers;
- p. Giving people a chance or opportunity they may not otherwise have;
- q. Links to Corporate Social Responsibility were identified;
- r. Create a community around places so that people see it as their space;
- s. Actively engage and get involved in the wider community;
- t. Default position to respond positively to requests and opportunities – only say ‘no’ if there is a clear reason to do so;
- u. Role of social enterprises are complementary (not competitive) to what else is going on locally.

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION INCLUDED**

### **Collaborate, include and engage**

- a. Having a government that takes an interest in this model fills me with faith that we can find better and more sustainable ways of living and working together;
- b. Social enterprises are an excellent way of developing the Island and making sure our community develops and prospers alongside our economy;
- c. Social enterprises support a vision for a society where everyone works together to tackle challenges and create opportunities;

- d. There is a cost to doing this but a greater cost to doing nothing. Improving the wellbeing, economic prosperity and environment for our residents and communities is everyone's priority;
- e. Let's work together to maximise the potential social value of our combined resources. Government could do more to support marginalised individuals;
- f. Promote an ambition / aspiration to enhance the Island's intrinsic value back with actions of substance;
- g. Prioritise the longer term view and encourage preventative spend, investing early in the cycle to provide support, reducing the need for most costly intervention later on;
- h. Explore if/how social enterprises might improve delivery of services, for example health and social care. This is an area that could be given greater attention and support;
- i. We need easy to access funding bids and an enabling planning dispensation that effectively protects the Island's heritage and natural environment against inappropriate development;
- j. Government should not interfere in day-to-day decisions or inflict strict regulation on social enterprises which would run the risk of losing motivation and volunteers;
- k. There are many groups on the Island willing to help provide services to the most marginalised and they need access to joint premises and funding to be truly effective;
- l. Support informed decision making at a local level;
- m. The key is finding a core team that have the vision and want to be directly involved;
- n. Vulnerable people must be at the centre of improvements;
- o. Dialogue about social organisations has to include all relevant parties, including charities.

## **Incentivise and communicate**

- a. In these critical times, it is more important than ever for us to invite a social and environmental consciousness to the way we do business. Social enterprises bring untold benefits economically and socially;
- b. Social enterprises can create a virtuous circle that benefits the society we live in. By recognising these positive impacts, government can provide as much help and support as possible for entrepreneurs who are invested in social enterprise;
- c. It seems that funding options provided by the government are currently the same for companies that keep all of their profits as it is for those committed to investing it back into their communities, which could in turn be worth a review;
- d. It makes sense for social enterprise groups to be supported by government to provide support to encourage sustainability and self-

- reliance and more opportunities for funding. Access to start-up schemes for social enterprises, offering incentive for entrepreneurs to take this approach towards business;
- e. Joint funding mechanisms for the most vulnerable could be considered for the Island as a whole to take responsibility for the most vulnerable in our midst;
  - f. Partnerships need to be built on trust;
  - g. Raise awareness of social enterprises. Develop a clear model and support with printing, advertising and marketing;
  - h. Social enterprises need a definition identifying – we all need the same definition to work to;
  - i. We need a common language to articulate what we already do well so that we can build on our success and share transferable best practice with others.

### **3. We Did**

- a. Ideas generated from the consultation process are currently feeding into a mapping exercise which is being undertaken by the Social Inclusion work stream of the British Irish Council;
- b. Options are being developed for consideration within DfE identifying synergies with creativity, inclusion, collaboration and social value;
- c. Representatives from the British Irish Council will visit the Island in coming months which will support the sharing of transferable best practice in this area;
- d. Findings and options will be fed into the policy making process to underpin alignment and identify opportunities for joined up working with a range of strategic partners and stakeholders.