

DEPARTMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING

Business Plan

2012/13

Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Strategic Context**
- 3. Our Commitments**
- 4. Resources**

ANNEXES

- 1. List of Key Commitments 2012-13**
- 2. Savings Delivery Plan 2012-13**
- 3. Barroso Task Force Action Plan**
- 4. Legislative Programme 2012-13**
- 5. Organisation Chart**

Introduction

The Programme for Government (PfG) 2011-15 sets out the Executive's Key Priorities for the next three years. These are:

- growing a sustainable economy and investing in the future;
- creating opportunities, tackling disadvantage and improving health and well being;
- protecting our people, the environment and creating safer communities;
- building a strong and shared community; and
- delivering high quality and efficient public services.

As the PfG acknowledges, up-skilling the workforce is critical to the attraction and creation of the new high quality jobs that the local economy needs and on which its future prosperity will rest. This is not solely an economic agenda. It also contributes to the need to tackle social disadvantage and economic inactivity so that everyone is equipped to participate fully in the economy, to supporting access to job opportunities and to ensuring people have the training and development opportunities to fulfil their potential. These priorities clearly lie at the heart of the Department's purpose. But in pursuing that agenda the Department also contributes to many of the Executive's other key priorities – in helping to create a shared future, ensuring sustainable development, promoting equitable access to services across our rural and urban population, promoting a fairer society and delivering well governed high quality services.

This Plan sets out the key contributions that the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) and its related delivery bodies will make to that agenda in the Financial Year 2012-13.

Aim

The Department's overall aim is "to promote learning and skills, to prepare people for work and to support the economy". It is responsible for further and higher education, training and skills, employment programmes and employment law. In pursuing its aim the Department's key objectives are:

- to promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and
- to help people into employment and promote good working practices.

It seeks to achieve these through four key areas of activity:

- promoting the provision of learning and skills, including entrepreneurship, enterprise, management and leadership;
- encouraging research and development, creativity and innovation in the Northern Ireland economy;
- helping individuals to acquire jobs, including self employment, and improving the linkages between employment programmes and skills development; and
- the development and maintenance of a "fit for purpose" employment law framework.

2. Strategic Context

Economic Overview

Over the period of the Department's previous Corporate Plan Northern Ireland's economic performance worsened considerably as businesses and Governments across the globe have had to face up to record public sector budget deficits, weaker growth and higher levels of unemployment. The economic downturn has dealt a severe blow to the Northern Ireland economy and the underlying picture points towards a challenging recovery.

The global downturn has also compounded a number of Northern Ireland's existing economic weaknesses including productivity levels that are too low and high economic inactivity (the highest in the UK). The Northern Ireland labour market has deteriorated sharply and particularly for those long term unemployed and the younger age groups. Low employment amongst older people also remains a problem.

The Northern Ireland skills profile, while improving, remains too weak. Compared to other developed countries Northern Ireland continues to have proportionately more people with low or no qualifications and too few with high level qualifications. Historically the region has also been challenged by relatively low levels of Business Expenditure on Research and Development, however; the recent trend is more promising as Northern Ireland continues to close the gap with the UK average.

Progress and Achievement

Despite these economic challenges, progress has been made over the last number of years on a number of important fronts. Notable achievements which have been supported by the Department's work include:

- the new Skills Strategy, '*Success through Skills – Transforming Futures*' has now been launched. The process of moving the skills agenda further forward has continued with phase 1 of a rolling implementation being commenced by

the publication of an Employer Engagement Plan containing a number of projects.

- since April 2008, the number of adult learners achieving a qualification in literacy, numeracy and information, communication and technology (ICT) skills has increased by just over 80,000;
- in the three years ended March 2011, the Employment Service has helped almost 97,000 working age benefit clients to find work;
- over the last three years, the number of people of working age that are qualified to level 2 and above has increased by 51,000;
- Northern Ireland stands out as having the best participation rates in higher education from young people and the strongest representation from socio economic groups 4-7 in higher education in the UK;
- the Employment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 has changed fundamentally the way workplace disputes in Northern Ireland are resolved and introduced measures designed to improve the effectiveness of employment tribunals;
- the quality of provision of further and higher education, training programmes and the Employment Service, has increased (as independently evaluated and reported upon by the Quality Assurance Agency and the Education and Training Inspectorate);
- we are on target to have created an additional 300 PhD graduates in economically relevant subjects by July 2013;
- in 2009/10, the Northern Ireland higher education institutions remained substantially ahead in terms of spin offs per institution – an average of 20 per institution in Northern Ireland (with some university ownership and which are still active after three years) compared to the UK average of five;

- the skills base, including management and leadership competences, of some 800 companies and over 3,000 individuals has been enhanced, helping them through the economic downturn;
- the Careers Service has increased the number of interventions with adult clients from 3,506 in 2009/10 to 13,000 in 2011/12; and
- the implementation of '*Preparing for Success*', the Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy, launched by the Department of Education (DE) and DEL in 2009 is progressing well.

Much progress has been made. But more needs to be done. As we look to the future, however, the financial environment has changed dramatically. The Budget 2010 settlement represents a very significant challenge for the Executive with a real reduction in current resources of 8% per annum by the end of 2014-15 and 40% reduction in planned capital expenditure. The final Budget 2010 resource allocation for the Department for the financial year 2012-13 was £789.8m. Whilst this was an increase on the 2011/12 figure of £787m, this was largely as a result of the Executive's decision not to increase tuition fees by more than inflation and still represents a real term decrease.

This is at a time when demands on our services are increasing and the need for additional investment is greater than ever. The Department has sought to mitigate the impacts of this by an extensive savings plan so that frontline services are protected as far as possible. But the message is clear.

Constraints on resources will mean that we will not always be able to respond to need in the way that we wish, and that we must ensure that the available resources are prioritised and deployed as effectively as possible if we are to maximise our contribution to economic development and tackling social disadvantage.

Importance of Investing in Skills and Employment

Skills and employment are key drivers of sustainable economic growth and shared prosperity. A high and appropriately skilled workforce has a crucial role to play in a modern, knowledge intensive, export driven economy. Skills and employability support the exploitation of other key drivers of economic success. They help economies make the most of new opportunities in high valued-added activities, they encourage greater investment (including inward investment) and innovation, they help firms compete successfully in export markets and, ultimately they support economic growth and enhanced productivity. Skills, employment and innovation commitments underpin the Executive's Economic Strategy and will be central to delivering its economic vision.

Skills and employment are not just good for the economy, they are good for social inclusion and for addressing poverty. For most people the best route out of poverty and welfare dependency is through work. The absence of educational attainment and skills in the workforce is aligned with a lack of economic activity and investment in the most deprived areas. Tackling skill barriers and other barriers to employment is essential if social inequalities are to be addressed and if economic opportunities are to be opened up to all in society.

Need for Action

Within the Executive's PfG 'Growing a Sustainable Economy and Investing in the Future' along with 'Creating Opportunities and Tackling Disadvantage' are two of its highest priority areas for the period to 2015. These priorities are reflected in the 82 commitments set out in the PfG, five of which are to be delivered by DEL:

- increase uptake in economically relevant Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics places;

- up-skill the working age population by delivering over 200,000 qualifications;
- develop and implement a strategy to reduce economic inactivity through skills training, incentives and job creation (in partnership with Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment);
- support people (with an emphasis on young people) by providing skills and training; and
- ensure there are no increases in student fees beyond the rate of inflation for NI students studying here.

The aim of the Department set out earlier is right at the heart of these priorities and commitments. The Department has developed a Strategic Framework to encompass its work and maximise outputs from the delivery of policy and its frontline services. Within this framework the Department's work around skills and employment are reflected in its overarching strategic themes of:

- Improving Productivity, Enhancing Skills;
- Addressing Barriers, Supporting People;
- Improving Quality, Raising Standards;
- Understanding Demand, Responding to Need;
- Improving Engagement, Developing Partnerships;
- Delivery Governance, Maximising Value; and
- Leading People, Improving Performance.

In the section below we set our key commitments in 2012-13 under each of these themes. Clearly our ability to deliver on all of these is subject to economic conditions.

3. Our Commitments

Improving Productivity, Enhancing Skills

The case for developing the skills and employability of our workforce is compelling. While improving, our skills profile remains weak compared to many other developed economies. There are too many with low qualifications and not enough with higher level skills. Countries such as Finland and Sweden have been found to rely heavily on their superior skills profiles to drive export growth and innovative capacity^{1 2}.

Research shows that if we are to close the productivity gap with the UK, over 50% of jobs in 2020 will require higher professional and technical and other higher education level qualifications – up from about a third currently. The number of jobs available to those with low level qualifications will fall away dramatically – down from 27% to 10% by 2020.

‘Success through Skills – Transforming Futures’ is the overarching strategy for much of the work of the Department in that it focuses on the range of people the Department serves. It includes those who are entering the workforce for the first time through the further education, higher education and training sectors; those already in the workforce; and those who are unemployed or economically inactive. As set out in *‘Success through Skills – Transforming Futures’*, of particular importance is the need to increase the number of people with higher level skills, management and leadership skills and people with skills in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics or STEM subjects. While the Strategy recognises the importance of developing further the work-based skills base here at all levels, it also points to the substantial economic returns and productivity gains that can be gained by improving employability skills (such as problem solving and team working) and the Essential Skills of literacy,

¹ Building Economic Competitiveness – Lessons from small peripheral European States’ (DETI, 2011)

² Productivity, Innovation and Competitiveness in Small Open Economies’ (DETI, 2011)

Note Essential Skills qualifications are included under the Strategic Theme of ‘Addressing Barriers, Supporting People’

numeracy and ICT. Raising the skill levels for the least skilled has been shown to help them into work, stay in work and to progress in work. To deliver the economic and skills vision articulated in '*Transforming Futures*', a number of supporting strategies have been developed and are being implemented including: '*Further Education Means Business*'; '*Success Through Skills*'; '*Leading to Success*' – the Management and Leadership Strategy; '*Working for Success*' – the Strategy for the Employment Service; '*Preparation for Success*' – the Strategy for Careers Education; Information, Advice and Guidance; and '*Success through Excellence*' – the Quality Improvement Strategy. '*Transforming Futures*' will also be complemented by the emerging Strategy for Higher Education.

To improve productivity and to enhance the skills base of Northern Ireland, our key commitments for 2012-13 are:

- to deliver 45,000 qualifications at level 2 and above through DEL Training, further education, and higher education;
- to continue to showcase a varied and innovative programme of support to local industry - including small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) - through active engagement with at least 600 employers to encourage the up-skilling of the local workforce. We will provide, subject to demand and resources, a range of training opportunities;
- to make available £3 million to deliver the Assured Skills project to support the inward investment activity of Invest NI;
- to begin to implement phase 1 of the Employer Engagement Plan for '*Success through Skills – Transforming Futures*';
- to develop, publish and commence implementation of a Higher Education Strategy for Northern Ireland;

- through the Connected programme, the HE and FE sectors to undertake 51 projects with local companies to help them meet their knowledge transfer needs;
- to achieve at least 20% representation as measured over the period to 2014-15 from the most deprived areas in DEL provision; DEL provision comprises Essential Skills, employment and training programmes, further education and higher education. Most deprived areas comprise those in the lowest quintile on the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure;
- to continue to support the roll-out of 300 additional postgraduate places in our local universities and sustain our investment in the higher education research infrastructure; and
- to make available £1million for additional higher education places in STEM subject areas.

Addressing Barriers, Supporting People

Equal access to DEL's services is fundamental to ensuring that all can share in and contribute to the economic success of Northern Ireland. However, recovery from the economic downturn is likely to take some years and there are many who have been adversely impacted by the recession.

Northern Ireland has the highest level of economic inactivity in the UK, whilst around 40% of working age inactive people have no qualifications. Given the expected shift in the skills requirements of jobs here – towards higher level skills – the opportunities for this group of people to engage effectively in the labour market will become more limited over the next decade. There is a pressing need therefore to up-skill those currently in employment and re-engage and up-skill the considerable number of individuals without a job that have no or low qualifications.

Improving basic skills is also vital to the prosperity of the economy. In addition, a lack of ICT and 'technology literacy' also presents a significant barrier to social inclusion. Evidence shows these essential qualifications give individuals an increased opportunity to get a job for the first time, move into higher value added jobs and improve their quality of life.

Support for these groups will be key in terms of the opportunity to address barriers to allow them to enter employment, stay in employment and move up the skills ladder. The Employment Service Strategy '*Working for Success*' aims to provide an individualised approach to addressing barriers to employment to take account of the much more diverse client base who are accessing their services. In addition the Executive has commissioned a Strategy for young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). Evidence suggests that there is a tendency towards persistent disengagement from the labour market once the initial pattern is established. Labour Force estimates for the period July to September 2011 indicate that 16.4% of 16 to 19 year old young people and 21.4% of 16 to 24 year olds are not in full time education, government supported training or employment. These young people can face a variety of barriers and the Executive recognises that tackling the root of the issue is not the job of a single department or organisation. The Executive agreed a draft strategy '*Pathways to Success*' which was issued for consultation in 2011. The draft strategy is designed to:

- prevent young people from becoming NEET; and
- re-engage those young people aged 16-19 who are already in the NEET category and are at risk of remaining there long term (that is, those young people with specific barriers).

The consultation responses are informing development of a refreshed NEET strategy.

Support will also be needed for those groups who do not traditionally consider or enter further education or higher education. Although Northern Ireland has an enviable record in widening participation to further and higher education there remains some under-representation from certain groups in society.

Our key commitments for 2012-13 in this area are:

- to further enhance achievement rates in Essential Skills and aim to deliver an additional 7,500 level 2 qualifications in literacy, numeracy and ICT skills;
- to assist 35,000 working age benefit clients into employment;
- to develop a strategy, in partnership with the Department for Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) to reduce economic inactivity through skills, training, incentives and job creation with a view to implementing the Strategy in 2013/14 and beyond;
- to develop and implement a strategy to address youth unemployment that links employment outcomes to skills development for economic growth;
- to put in place new contracts for the Workable (NI) and Work Connect programmes which will enable people with health and disability related barriers to employment find and retain a job;
- to sustain the current levels of participation in higher education amongst students from disadvantaged groups and to publish an integrated Regional Widening Participation Strategy in the first quarter of the year;
- together with DE, following the review of the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) scheme, to bring forward proposals to better target the resources associated with EMA at those most in need;
- together with other Departments, to produce a cross-departmental strategy for young people not in education, employment or training by Spring 2012;

- through the European Social Fund, to work with 82 organisations to reduce economic inactivity and improve access to skills training for 89,000 by the end of the programme;
- to assist over 20,000 young people and conduct over 14,000 interviews with adults to help them make informed choices about their future through the provision of a professional careers service;
- together with DE to continue the implementation of '*Preparing for Success*', in particular to address issues in relation to the effective use of labour market information in career decision making, improving access through the use of technology and developing impact measures and quality standards; and
- to identify and ensure implementation of the optimum delivery model, including appropriate resources and ICT infrastructure, for individualised work focussed support for clients claiming Universal Credit who have work-related requirements.

Improving Quality, Raising Standards

The Department undertakes an analysis of the quality and performance of its programmes and provision, assessing performance against its own key targets and PfG Executive commitments as well as identifying key actions to be taken forward to address any issues highlighted. This analysis supports the work and annual report of the Department's Quality Improvement Adviser.

Our key commitments for 2012-13 in this area are:

- to apply a rigorous continuous quality improvement framework across all our providers including publication of the fourth DEL Quality and Performance Assessment Report by March 2013;

- to continue to modernise the Employment Service, through the refinement and implementation of the Employment Service Strategy, '*Working for Success*' and the development of a parallel Quality Improvement Plan for the Service; and
- to progress policy proposals which will make professional registration compulsory for all further education lectures and empower the General Teaching Council to act as an independent regulator.

Understanding Demand, Responding to Need

Understanding the needs and demands being placed on our services is a key ingredient to being able to deliver the skills required by industry, the help and support needed by individuals in terms of employment, careers information advice and guidance. A strong message from the consultations on the PfG is the need to progress an employment law agenda that promotes business growth through the creation of a strong and flexible labour market. Understanding these demands and ensuring that the systems can respond to that demand with speed and flexibility is critical to Northern Ireland's economic fortunes. Availability of timely, high quality and meaningful Labour Market Information will be an important aspect of understanding the demand for skills for instance, an area which has been substantially enhanced by the Department over recent years and with the focus on that area continuing.

Our key commitments for the 2012-13 in this area are:

- to publish a DEL Research Agenda for the period 2012 – 2015. Conduct a programme of research and evaluation and publish a range of statistical bulletins on aspects of our services, so that policy decisions and programmes are informed by a robust evidence base;
- to assist in the implementation of the Northern Ireland Economic Strategy;
- to conduct a fundamental review of the rules governing the operation of employment tribunals;

- to identify support mechanisms that address the challenges faced by SMEs in relation to employment law based on commissioned research;
- to conduct a pilot to establish an agreed methodology for reviewing all NI employment regulations that is consistent with Better Regulation principles;
- to conduct a pre-consultation with key stakeholders to determine the scope of a NI review of employment law;
- to monitor the impact of student fees policy across the UK and, if appropriate, develop proposals to mitigate the effect of this for Northern Ireland;
- in partnership with DE, to develop a framework which will set out how jointly we can respond to the needs of the 14-19 age group; and
- to complete the review of the provision and funding arrangements for training adults in the workplace, including apprenticeships in order to establish a final policy and funding position during 2012-13.
- to conduct a study of the teacher education infrastructure in Northern Ireland. .

Improving Engagement, Developing Partnerships

The Department has a diverse range of partners with whom it develops and delivers its services. DEL recognises that it cannot deliver on its strategic priorities alone and places value on the relationships it has established with key stakeholders. DEL will also encourage others to work together in collaboration, based upon identified best practice models, to deliver upon the skills, employment and innovation agendas in Northern Ireland.

Our key commitments for 2012-13 in this area are:

- to consider the potential for reducing costs associated with our divided society;

- to further develop an approach to Shared Future policy proofing;
- to develop a programme of collaborative work on a North-South basis;
- to work closely with the Department for Social Development, the Social Security Agency and the Department for Work and Pensions to develop the Northern Ireland response to GB Welfare Reforms;
- to continue to participate in cross-departmental strategy and policy development groups working towards better joined-up working across Government;
- to work with the FE sector to explore the potential to develop an approach for the provision of shared services across the sector;
- to enhance our engagement with the European Union (EU) and play a full role in the activities of the Barroso task force seeking to influence policy development at EU level in order to maximise the funding opportunities that present under European programmes. The Department will continue to be represented on three of the four Barroso Thematic Groups, i.e. Competitiveness and Employment, Innovation and Technology, and Social Cohesion and will chair the Competitiveness and Employment group;
- to continue to work with the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, and its other GB sponsor Departments, to support its role as a vehicle for sustainable economic growth and social partnership, through giving leadership to business on skills, raising employer ambition and assisting with the development of employer-led initiatives;
- to review our structures and approach for engagement with the disability sector;

- to work with the Labour Relations Agency, the Equality Commission and the Gangmasters Licensing Authority to raise awareness of employment rights and redress amongst the most vulnerable workers;
- to continue to strengthen our partnership arrangements with key stakeholders to include the community and voluntary sectors as well as trade unions and employer representative bodies and those bodies that promote the interests of migrant workers and other disadvantaged groups; and
- to establish a stakeholder group to provide ongoing advice on the review of the NI employment law framework.

Delivering Governance, Maximising Value

The Department is committed to improving the performance, quality and value for money of all its services and provision within the context of a sound governance framework. The principles of 'Managing Public Money Northern Ireland' around honesty; impartiality; openness; accountability; accuracy; fairness; integrity; transparency; objectivity; and reliability will be adhered to in deploying the resources available to the Department. This will be complemented by the guidance on good Governance in the 'Code of Good Practice on Corporate Governance in Central Government Departments'.

Our key commitments for 2012-13 for this area are:

- to develop a revised performance-based funding model and contract management arrangements for the next generation of employment programmes;
- to further strengthen and support governance in the FE sector by concluding the Review of Governance, commence implementation of its recommendations and promote best practice across the FE sector;

- to undertake a review, consultation and legislative changes relating to the qualification regulatory framework of examinations in Northern Ireland in partnership with DE;³
- to implement a savings plan which will generate reductions in expenditure of some £91.2m to provide for investment in priority services and ensure we live within our budget;
- to ensure that our Provisional Outturn (Capital and Resource) is at least 99% of the Final Budget;
- to produce the annual Resource Accounts on time and to professional standards;
- to continue to ensure compliance with Equality Legislation, the Disability Discrimination Act, the Human Rights Act, sustainable development and Better Regulation policies, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, United Nations Centre for Regional Development and relevant EU charters; and
- to agree with the Department of Justice the administrative and financial arrangements to facilitate the transfer of the Industrial and Fair Employment tribunals.

Leading People, Improving Performance

We value our staff. They are our most important asset. Our responsibility is to create the conditions under which they can operate effectively, promoting individual and team development that drives organisational improvement.

Our key commitments for 2012-13 in this area are:

³ Draft Note – DE & DEL are working in partnership on the review of regulation. It has been agreed that any legislative changes required will be introduced by DE hence no reference to this in Annex 4 and/or the notes.

- to implement the recommendations of our comprehensive learning needs analysis to enhance leadership and management skills across the Department;
- to continue to implement our people strategy and maintain our Investors in People;
- to reduce the days lost per member of staff through sickness to 8.9 days by March 2013 through robust application of absence management policies and to support staff to maintain and improve their health and wellbeing; and
- to take forward a Business Improvement Programme which will review the way we do our business across a range of service areas contributing to efficiency and productivity savings in staffing and accommodation related costs amounting to £5m per annum by 2014-15.

4. Resources

The Budget 2010 settlement represents a very significant challenge for the Executive with a real reduction in current resources of 8% per annum by the end of 2014-15 and 40% reduction in planned capital expenditure.

The final Budget 2010 resource allocation for the Department for the financial year 2012-13 was £780.3m, a decrease of £7m from 2011-12. This represented a 0.9% reduction in cash terms and a 2.9% real terms reduction (assuming inflation of 2%) in resources available, the equivalent of some £22.7m. This allocation was on the predication that there would be an increase in tuition fees.

In the event, the Executive decided not to increase tuition fees by more than inflation, and also agreed to partially meet the funding gap this decision created. This meant a further allocation of £9.5m to the Department in 2012-13. The revised 2012-13 allocation for the Department is therefore £789.8m. This still means that there is a real terms reduction of some £13.2m.

Department for Employment and Learning – Current Expenditure

Table 1

Objective and Spending Area	2011-12	2012-13	
		£m	%
Objective A			
Employment and Skills	359.1	356.1	-0.8
Higher Education (including Teacher Training)	206.3	209.4	1.5
Student Support and Postgraduate Awards	109.6	193.6	1.6
Labour Market Services	31.3	30.6	-2.0
Total Objective A	787.3	789.7	0.3
Total	787.3	789.7	0.3

Given this allocation the Department faced a number of service pressures associated, for example, with increased demand for student support, and the cessation of central funding for innovation. To live within our resources and to provide for investment in a

number of inescapable pressures a savings plan which will release £91.2m has been developed. Details are provided at Annex 2.

Capital Investment

The capital allocation for 2012-13 is £32.3m, a reduction of £8.9m on the 2011-12 allocation. The bulk of this year's allocation is in the further education sector within Employment and Skills. £18.3m will be provided for existing contractual commitments at Belfast Metropolitan College's projects in Titanic Quarter and Springvale. £2m will be made available to Further Education colleges for Health and Safety and Minor works. There is £11.5m available for investment in the higher education estate and £0.5m for two Departmental IT infrastructure upgrades. Details are provided at table 2 below.

Table 2

Objective and Spending Area	2012-13 £m
Objective A	
Employment and Skills	20.3
Higher Education (including Teacher Training)	11.5
Student Support and Postgraduate Awards	-
Labour Market Services	0.5
Total Objective A	32.3
Total	32.3

List of Key Commitments 2012-13

1. To deliver 45,000 qualifications at level 2 and above through DEL Training, further education, and higher education.
2. To continue to showcase a varied and innovative programme of support to local industry – including small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) - through active engagement with at least 600 employers to encourage the up-skilling of the local workforce. We will provide, subject to demand and resources, a range of training opportunities.
3. To make available £3m to deliver the Assured Skills project to support the inward investment activity of Invest NI.
4. To begin to implement phase 1 of the Employer Engagement Plan for '*Success through Skills – Transforming Futures*'.
5. To develop, publish and commence implementation of a Higher Education Strategy for Northern Ireland.
6. Through the Connected programme, the HE and FE sectors to undertake 51 projects with local companies to help them meet their knowledge transfer needs.
7. To achieve at least 20% representation as measured over the period to 2014-15 from the most deprived areas in DEL provision. DEL provision comprises Essential Skills, employment and training programmes, further education and higher education. Most deprived areas comprise those in the lowest quintile on the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure.

8. To continue to support the roll-out of 300 additional postgraduate places in our local universities and sustain our investment in the higher education research infrastructure.
9. To make available £1million for additional higher education places in STEM subject areas.
10. To further enhance achievement rates in Essential Skills and aim to deliver an additional 7,500 level 2 qualifications in literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.
11. To assist 35,000 working age benefit clients into employment.
12. To develop a strategy, in partnership with DETI to reduce economic inactivity through skills, training, incentives and job creation with a view to implementing the strategy in 2013/14 and beyond.
13. To develop and implement a strategy to address youth unemployment that links employment outcomes to skills development for economic growth.
14. To put in place new contracts for the Workable (NI) and Work Connect programmes which will enable people with health and disability related barriers to employment find and retain a job.
15. To sustain the current levels of participation in higher education amongst students from disadvantaged groups and publish an Integrated Regional Widening Participation Strategy by June 2012.
16. Together with DE, following the review of the EMA scheme, to bring forward proposals to better target the resources associated with EMA at those most in need by June 2012.
17. Together with other Departments, to produce a cross-departmental strategy for young people not in education, employment or training by Spring 2012.

18. Through the European Social Fund, to work with 82 organisations to reduce economic inactivity and improve access to skills training for 89,000 people by the end of the Programme.
19. To assist over 20,000 young people and conduct over 14,000 interviews with adults to help them make informed choices about their future through the provision of a professional careers service.
20. To continue to implement '*Preparing for Success*', in particular to address issues in relation to the effective use of labour market information in career decision making, improving access through the use of technology and developing impact measures and quality standards.
21. To identify and ensure implementation of the optimum delivery model, including appropriate resources and ICT infrastructure, for individualised work focussed support for clients claiming Universal Credit who have work-related requirements.
22. To apply a rigorous continuous quality improvement framework across all our providers.
23. To continue to modernise the Employment Service, through the refinement and implementation of the Employment Service Strategy, '*Working for Success*' and the development of a parallel Quality Improvement Plan for the Service.
24. To progress policy proposals which will make professional registration compulsory for all further education lecturers and empower the General Teaching Council to act as an independent regulator.
25. Publish a DEL research agenda for the period 2012-2015. To conduct a programme of research and evaluation and publish a range of statistical bulletins on aspects of our services, so that policy decisions and programmes are informed by a robust evidence base.

26. To assist in the implementation of the Northern Ireland Economic Strategy.
27. To conduct a fundamental review of the rules governing the operation of employment tribunals.
28. To identify support mechanisms that address the challenges faced by SMEs in relation to employment law based on commissioned research.
29. To conduct a pilot to establish an agreed methodology for reviewing all NI employment regulations that is based on Better Regulation principles.
30. To conduct a pre-consultation with the key stakeholders to determine the scope of a NI review of employment law.
31. To monitor the impact of student fees policy across the UK and, if appropriate, develop proposals to mitigate the effect of this for Northern Ireland.
32. In partnership with DE, to develop a framework which will set out how jointly we can respond to the needs of the 14-19 age group.
33. To complete the review of the provision and funding arrangements for training adults in the workplace, including apprenticeships, in order to establish a final policy and funding position during 2012-13.
34. To conduct a study of the teacher education infrastructure in Northern Ireland.
35. To consider the potential for reducing costs associated with our divided society.
36. To further develop an approach to Shared Future policy proofing.
37. To develop a programme of collaborative work on a North-South basis.

38. To work closely with the Department for Social Development, the Social Security Agency and the Department for Work and Pensions to develop the Northern Ireland response to GB Welfare Reforms.
39. To continue to participate in cross-departmental strategy and policy development groups working towards better joined-up working across Government.
40. To work with the FE sector to explore the potential to develop an approach for the provision of shared services across the sector.
41. To enhance our engagement with the EU and play a full role in the activities of the Barroso task force seeking to influence policy development at EU level in order to maximise the funding opportunities that present under European programmes. The Department will continue to be represented on three of the four Barroso Thematic Groups i.e. Competitiveness and Employment, Innovation and Technology, and Social Cohesion and will chair the Competitiveness and Employment group.
42. To continue to work with the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, and its other GB sponsor Departments, to support its role as a vehicle for sustainable economic growth and social partnership, through giving leadership to business on skills, raising employer ambition and assisting with the development of employer-led initiatives.
43. To review our structures and approach for engagement with the disability sector.
44. To work with the Labour Relations Agency, the Equality Commission and the Gangmasters Licensing Authority to raise awareness of employment rights and redress amongst the most vulnerable workers.
45. To continue to strengthen our partnership arrangements with key stakeholders to include the community and voluntary sectors as well as trade unions and

employer representative bodies and those bodies that promote the interests of migrant workers and other disadvantaged groups.

46. To establish a stakeholder group to provide ongoing advice on the review of the NI employment law framework.
47. To develop a revised performance-based funding model and contract management arrangements for the next generation of employment programmes.
48. To further strengthen and support governance in the FE sector by concluding the Review of Governance, commence implementation of its recommendations and promote that best practice frameworks are in place across the FE sector.
49. To undertake a review, consultation and legislative changes relating to the qualification regulatory framework of examinations in Northern Ireland in partnership with DE.⁴
50. To implement a savings plan which will generate reductions in expenditure of some £91.2m to provide for investment in priority services and ensure we live within our budget.
51. To ensure that our Provisional Outturn (Capital and Resource) is at least 99% of the Final Budget.
52. To produce the annual Resource Accounts on time and to professional standards.
53. To continue to ensure compliance with Equality Legislation, the Disability Discrimination Act, the Human Rights Act, sustainable development and Better Regulation policies, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons

⁴ Draft Note – DE & DEL are working in partnership on the review of regulation. It has been agreed that any legislative changes required will be introduced by DE hence no reference to this in Annex 4 and/or the notes.

with Disabilities, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, United Nations Centre for Regional Development and relevant EU charters.

54. To agree with the Department of Justice the administrative and financial arrangements to facilitate the transfer of the Industrial and Fair Employment Tribunals by December 2012.
55. To implement the recommendations of our comprehensive learning needs analysis to enhance leadership and management skills across the Department.
56. To continue to implement our people strategy and maintain our Investors in People.
57. To reduce the days lost per member of staff through sickness to 8.9 days by March 2013 through robust application of absence management policies and to support staff to maintain and improve their health and wellbeing.
58. To take forward a Business Improvement Programme which will review the way we do our business across a range of service areas contributing to efficiency and productivity savings in staffing and accommodation related costs amounting to £5m per annum by 2014-15.

Budget 2010: DEL 2012/13 Savings Delivery Plan

Description	12/13	Notes
	£m	
2011/12 savings carried forward	3.0	1
Central Budget reduction	8.5	2
Reduced commitments re employment provision	4.0	3
Reduced commitments re training	7.5	4
Pay & price restraint	22.5	5
Budgetary easements - Higher Education Division (HE)	8.0	6
Operational efficiency – Further Education sector (FE)	4.0	7
Operational efficiency - Higher Education sector (HE)	28.5	8
Adjustments to HE funding	3.0	9
Staffing and accommodation efficiencies	2.2	10
Total Departmental reductions	91.2	

The Savings Delivery Plans are subject to change and will be subject to review on an annual basis

Notes

1. In June 2010 HM Treasury imposed reductions of £128m across the NI Block. The Department's share of this reduction amounted to some £6m which was removed from the 2010-11 budgets. £3m of these are available to carry forward from 2011-12 onwards.

2. This represents a general tightening of budgetary provision across spending areas through improving efficiency and squeezing discretionary spending areas. It will not impact directly on existing services but it will reduce the Department's flexibility in responding to new and as yet unforeseen demands over the period.
3. The aim will be to maintain as far as possible existing capacity in the Employment Service and its provision for those out of work. But given the overall position some reductions are unavoidable. The reduction will be delivered through improved targeting of resources to measures which are deemed most effective in enhancing individuals' opportunities to return to work.
4. Enhancing skills levels in the economy are essential if the recognised productivity gap in the local economy is to be addressed and NI plc is to be supported in attracting foreign investment and maintaining a competitive position in the global economy. But again, a reduction in this budget is unavoidable. This will be effected by a range of measures including reducing the support infrastructure associated with the current arrangements, revised funding for adult apprenticeships and consequently encouraging employers to bear a greater proportion of the costs associated with the delivery of adult programmes. Support for young people including the training guarantees for 16-17 year olds will be maintained at current levels.
5. In order to avoid reductions in service provision and jobs the Department will seek to contain costs by bearing down on annual pay and price uplifts across its own cost structures and its service providers. This will be affected initially in the Department by the Executive's freeze on annual cost of living increases for all of those Departmental staff earning over £21,000 for two years. External providers and arms length bodies will be expected to exercise similar disciplines in containing costs.
6. This represents a tightening of budgetary provision to HE of £8m per year.
7. Maintaining capacity in the FE sector throughout the period will be critical to maintaining an acceptable response to the economic downturn. But given the overall financial position the FE sector cannot be fully protected from reductions in

expenditure. £4.0m per year will be delivered through a further 3% improvement in efficiency by the sector. This is on the back of efficiencies of some 20% delivered over the last few years.

8. Given the need for the Employment Service and training capacity to be maintained as far as possible if these services are to cope with the increasing demands they will face as a result of the economic downturn, it is inevitable that in line with decisions elsewhere HE must bear a significant proportion of the necessary reductions in expenditure.
9. This represents the re-phasing of the HE funding in 2012-13. In addition, from 2012-13 there is a reduction in funds originally set aside to meet pressures in Notional Loan Subsidies had HE tuition fees been increased. The decision not to increase HE tuition fees above inflation means that these funds are now available to help finance the gap in tuition fees.
10. In addition to pay restraint, the Department has developed a Business Improvement Programme which will seek to achieve improvements in staff and accommodation efficiency over the period 2012-15 whilst maintaining service quality. This should contribute to the release of some £5m per year by 2014-15.

DEL Contribution to Barroso Taskforce**1. Build architecture to achieve short, medium and long-term goals, beginning with developmental activity**

- Working in conjunction with the newly appointed desk officer in the Office of the Northern Ireland Executive in Brussels, take forward research into areas for further development/ engagement and provide regular update on calls for proposals
- Raise awareness of the priority of the Barroso Taskforce

2. Share best practice, increase transnational co-operation, raise profile and participate in open days

- As lead Partner of EU Empowerment and Inclusion Learning Network, work towards the production of a tool to help measure empowerment, for potential use by other Member States
- Employment Service – improve links with the EU Public Service Employment Network
- Engage in Europe on skills working through the European Regional Skills Network to identify partners for future projects in support of the themes in the NI Skills Strategy
 - Continue to work with Directorate-General (DG) Education and Culture in their research project in North Carolina examining the role of the Community College System in supporting economic and workforce development
 - Engage in Europe on skills working through the Regional Skills Education and Training (RESET) network to identify partners for future projects in support of the themes in the NI Skills Strategy
- Participation in Thematic working group on Quality Assurance in Adult Learning under the Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020)

- 3. Through and with DFP as Member State, discuss the new Structural Funds round 2014 and engage early with the Commission**

- 4. Participate in Lifelong Learning Programmes (LLP)**
 - Play an active role in co-ordinating the promotion of the Lifelong Learning Programmes (LLP) through the NI Advisory Group meetings
 - Encourage/promote participation in Lifelong Learning Programmes
 - Continue to make the NI contribution to the UK funding of the LLP

- 5. Participate in European Qualifications Framework (EQF)**
 - Participate in the UK EU coordination group for Vocational Education and Training (VET)
 - Participate in four cross-UK coordinated projects
 - Communications with employers in particular
 - Produce an EQF digest for wide circulation
 - Sectoral engagement with the EQF and the promotion of the recognition of prior learning
 - Facilitate technical exchanges between key EU member states

- 6. Promotion of awareness of and participation in the ERASMUS programme by Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions and students**

- Participate in the UK Erasmus Consultative Group
- Encourage/promote participation in ERASMUS

7. Management of European Social Fund 2007 – 2013 in Northern Ireland

- Efficiently and effectively manage the ESF Programme 2007/2013 in order to achieve its objectives. Priority 1 will increase employment and reduce unemployment and inactivity by improving the employability of those groups experiencing significant employment gaps such as people with disabilities and health conditions, lone parents, older workers, young people not in education, employment or training, women and people with no or low qualifications, and other disadvantage groups, including people experiencing multiple disadvantage. Priority 2 will develop a skilled and adaptable workforce by improving the qualifications and skills of workers without essential (basic) skills and low or no qualification. In particular over the duration of the programme;
 - ensure the total allocation of €165,777,300 ESF will be drawn down in accordance with approved timetable
 - achieve the target of assisting 89,000 participants by the end of the programme

8. Explore funding opportunities for example under the PROGRESS and INTERREG programmes

- Participate in EU PROGRESS project with partners - Project Title: 'Social Inclusion Regional Group: Regional partnerships activating untapped talent to deliver New Skills for New Jobs'
- Seek to identify if there are potential opportunities within these or other programmes

9. Continue participation in EURES

- Explore opportunities to engage in the roll out of the 'Your First Job' initiative

10. Increase NI engagement in Framework Programme (FP)

- Maintain the EU Framework Support Fund to encourage increased participation by the universities in the FP
- Contribute to greater involvement from NI Departments in promoting FP7 within respective sectors including the creative industries

PLANNED LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME 2012-13

Subordinate

Subordinate Name	Type	Division	Deadline
1. The Industrial Training Levy (Construction Industry) Order (NI) 2012	Statutory Rule (Negative Resolution)	Skills and Industry	To come into operation on 31 August 2012.
2. The Employment Rights (Increase of Limits) Order (Northern Ireland) 2013	S.R. Not subject to any Assembly procedure	Strategy, European and Employment Relations Division	To come into operation in February 2013
3. The Labour Relations Agency Arbitration Scheme Order (Northern Ireland) 2012	S.R. Negative Resolution	Strategy, European and Employment Relations Division	To be made approx May/June 2012
4. The Labour Relations Agency Arbitration Scheme (Jurisdictions) Order (Northern Ireland) 2012	S.R. Draft Affirmative	Strategy, European and Employment Relations Division	To be made approx May/June 2012
5. The Employment Relations (NI) Order 1999 (Blacklists) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012	S.R. Confirmatory resolution	Strategy, European and Employment Relations Division	Subject to Ministerial and Executive approval, to be made mid-late 2012, and debated no later than six months from making date.
6. Public Interest Disclosure (Prescribed Persons) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2012	S.R. Negative resolution	Strategy, European and Employment Relations Division	Mid-2012
7. Working Time (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013	S.R. Negative resolution	Strategy, European and Employment Relations Division	Early 2013
8. Further Education (Student Support) (Eligibility) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012	Statutory Rule (negative resolution)	Further Education	To come into operation April / May 2012
9. Further Education (Student Support) (Eligibility) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012	Statutory Rule (negative resolution)	Further Education	To come into operation on 1 September 2012

10. Maternity and Parental Leave Etc. (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012	Statutory Rule (Confirmatory Procedure)	Strategy, European and Employment Relations Division	To be in operation by 08 March 2013
11. Education (Student Support) (No.2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012	Statutory Rule (negative resolution)	Higher Education	To come into operation on 21 March 2012
12. Education (Student Loans) Repayment (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012	Statutory Rule (negative resolution)	Higher Education	To come into operation on 6 April 2012
13. Student Fees (Amounts) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012	Statutory Rule (negative resolution)	Higher Education	To come into operation in November 2012
14. Education (Student Support) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012	Statutory Rule (negative resolution)	Higher Education	To come into operation in November 2012
15. Education (Student Loans) Repayment (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013	Statutory Rule (negative resolution)	Higher Education	To come into operation on 6 April 2013

SUBORDINATE

1. The Industrial Training Levy (Construction Industry) Order (NI) 2012

This Order is made annually and enables CITB-ConstructionSkills NI (formerly known as the Construction Industry Training Board) to collect a statutory levy from employers. The purpose of the Board is to encourage the training of those employed or intending to be employed in the construction industry in Northern Ireland.

2. The Employment Rights (Increase of Limits) Order (Northern Ireland) 2013

This Order increases the limits applying to certain awards of industrial tribunals, and other amounts payable under employment legislation, in line with inflation. Such legislation is made on an annual basis.

3. The Labour Relations Agency Arbitration Scheme Order (Northern Ireland) 2012

Following an extensive review of systems for resolving employment disputes, including a full public consultation, the Department determined that it was appropriate to bring into operation a revised Scheme extending the availability of arbitration to the full range of employment law jurisdictions on which the

Labour Relations Agency is presently empowered to offer conciliation. This Rule is required to give effect to such plans.

4. The Labour Relations Agency Arbitration Scheme (Jurisdictions) Order (Northern Ireland) 2012

Following an extensive review of systems for resolving employment disputes, including a full public consultation, the Department determined that it was appropriate to bring into operation a revised Scheme extending the availability of arbitration to the full range of employment law jurisdictions on which the Labour Relations Agency is presently empowered to offer conciliation. This Rule is required to give effect to such plans.

5. The Employment Relations (NI) Order 1999 (Blacklists) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012

This proposed S.R. would prohibit the compilation, use, sale or supply of blacklists containing details of trade union members and activists, where the purpose of the list is to discriminate against workers on grounds of trade union membership or activities. The Regulations would provide for remedies for breach of statutory duty, refusal of employment, detriment and unfair dismissal. The S.R. is still subject to Executive clearance.

6. Public Interest (Prescribed Persons) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2012

The Public Interest Disclosure (Prescribed Persons) Order (Northern Ireland) 1999 is a 'whistleblowing' provision, and provides for a worker to be protected if he makes a qualifying disclosure in good faith to a person prescribed in the Order, reasonably believing that the failure disclosed falls within the matters in respect of which that person is prescribed, and that the information disclosed, and any allegation contained in it, is substantially true. The proposed Amendment Order will amend the list of prescribed persons to whom a protected disclosure can be made.

7. Working Time (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013

The Working Time Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1998, provide, among other matters, for annual leave entitlement for workers in Northern Ireland. The Department will shortly go out to public consultation of policy proposals to implement certain judgements of the Court of Justice of the European Union in relation to the interaction of annual leave with sick leave and parental leave. It is anticipated that resulting amendments will come into operation in early 2013.

8. Further Education (Student Support) (Eligibility) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012

The Further Education (Student Support) (Eligibility) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011 provides for financial support towards tuition fees to institutions of further education for students who are domiciled in a part of the United Kingdom, other than Northern Ireland, in the European Community, or the European Economic Area, but are studying at a FE college in Northern Ireland for the 2010/11 academic year. This proposed amendment will add a further category to the Schedule of eligible persons for whom FE colleges may claim this financial support, extending the current provision to include asylum seekers.

9. Further Education (Student Support) (Eligibility) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012

This Statutory Rule provides for financial support towards tuition fees to institutions of further education for students who are domiciled in a part of the United Kingdom, other than Northern Ireland, in the European Community, or the European Economic Area, but are studying at a FE college in Northern Ireland. The Schedules of these regulations will list the categories of eligible persons for whom FE colleges may claim this financial support.

10. Maternity and Parental Leave Etc. (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012

These Regulations will extend the period of parental leave entitlement from three months to four months as required by Council Directive 2010/18/EU. This Directive was to be implemented by each Member State by 8 March 2012. However, Article 3(2) provides that Member States may take up to an additional year if required and this option has been taken up on a UK-wide basis. The proposed changes must now be in place by 8 March 2013.

11. Education (Student Support) (No.2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012

These Regulations will make provision for support (e.g. grants and loans) for eligible students taking designated higher education courses in academic year 2012/13.

12. Education (Student Loans) Repayment (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012

These Regulations provides the statutory framework for the collection and repayment system for income-contingent repayment (ICR) student loans. Annual amendments are usually of a technical nature and reflect changes required by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HRMC) as a result of changes to UK wide tax legislation.

13. Student Fees (Amounts) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012

These Regulations will prescribe the basic and higher amounts which higher education institutions in Northern Ireland may charge by way of tuition fees in academic year 2013/14 to qualifying persons on qualifying courses.

14. Education (Student Support) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012

These Regulations will make provision for support (e.g. grants and loans) for eligible students taking designated higher education courses in academic year 2013/14.

15. Education (Student Loans) Repayment (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013

These Regulations provides the statutory framework for the collection and repayment system for income-contingent repayment (ICR) student loans. Annual amendments are usually of a technical nature and reflect changes required by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HRMC) as a result of changes to UK wide tax legislation.

Organisational Structure

Annex 5

March 2012

