

Public Document Pack

Democratic Services Section
Chief Executive's Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS



Belfast
City Council

12th October, 2016

MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room - City Hall on Wednesday, 12th October, 2016 at 5.15 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Routine Matters

- (a) Apologies
- (b) Minutes
- (c) Declarations of Interest
- (d) Schedule of Meetings 2017 (Pages 1 - 2)

2. Matters Referred Back from Council/Notices of Motion

- (a) Notice of Motion re: High Speed Rail Connection Belfast - Dublin (Pages 3 - 4)

3. Presentations

- (a) Ulster University Economic Policy Centre - Growing the Belfast Economy
- (b) Javelin - Retail Impact Study (Pages 5 - 6)

4. **Requests to present to Committee**

- (a) Transport NI and NI Water (Pages 7 - 8)

5. **RESTRICTED ITEMS**

- (a) Update on City Centre Investment Fund Acquisition (Pages 9 - 12)
- (b) Belfast Zoo - Options Report (Pages 13 - 20)

6. **Strategic Issues**

- (a) Committee Plan Update (Pages 21 - 42)

7. **Tourism, Events and International Relations**

- (a) International Relations Framework (Pages 43 - 48)
- (b) NI Science Festival Update (Pages 49 - 54)

8. **Business and Economy**

- (a) Employability and Skills Update (Pages 55 - 82)
- (b) Proposed ERDF-funded Business Start and Business Growth activity (Pages 83 - 88)
- (c) Innovation Factory Update (Pages 89 - 94)
- (d) Enterprising Britain Awards (Pages 95 - 100)

9. **Operational**

- (a) Public Transport Arrangements - Christmas (Pages 101 - 112)
- (b) Routes Europe Sponsorship 2017 (Pages 113 - 116)



Subject:	Dates of Future Meetings 2017
Date:	12 th October 2016
Reporting Officer:	Louise McLornan, Democratic Services Officer
Contact Officer:	Louise McLornan, Democratic Services Officer

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To advise the Committee of the dates and times of the meetings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee during 2017.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the schedule of meetings for the City Growth and Regeneration Committee during 2017; and • Note that the Committee had previously agreed to hold regular strategic meetings of the Committee in order to receive presentations from outside bodies and that these would be scheduled as and when required.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>Members will be aware that the monthly meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee is normally held at 5.15 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month. However, due to holiday periods and the timing of the monthly Council meetings and, in</p>

3.2	<p>order to assist with the decision-making process, it has been necessary on occasions to move some of the meetings to later in the month.</p>
3.3	<p>Accordingly, the following dates have been identified for meetings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee for the period from January to December, 2017:</p> <p>Wednesday, 11th January Wednesday, 8th February Wednesday, 8th March Wednesday, 12th April Wednesday, 10th May Wednesday, 14th June No meeting in July Wednesday, 9th August Wednesday, 13th September Wednesday, 11th October Wednesday, 8th November Wednesday, 6th December</p> <p>(All meetings will commence at 5.15 p.m.)</p>
3.4	<p>The City Growth and Regeneration Committee had previously agreed, at its meeting on 11th November 2015, to hold regular strategic meetings in order to receive presentations from outside bodies.</p>
3.5	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
3.6	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
4.1	<p>None</p>



Subject:	Notice of Motion: High Speed Rail Connection Belfast – Dublin
Date:	12th October, 2016
Reporting Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager
Contact Officer:	Louise McLornan, Democratic Services Officer

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To bring to the Committee’s attention the Notice of Motion re: High Speed Rail Connection Belfast – Dublin which was referred to the Committee by the Council on 3rd October.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the Motion and take such action thereon as may be determined.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>Key Issues</p> <p>The Council, at its meeting on 3rd October, considered the following Notice of Motion which had been moved by Councillor McVeigh and seconded by Councillor Long:</p> <p>High Speed Rail Connection Belfast - Dublin</p> <p><i>“This council recognises the importance of high quality transport connections across these Islands and to this Island. Good Connectivity facilitates and encourages trade and commerce.</i></p> <p><i>The council believes that a high speed rail connection between Belfast and Dublin, reducing traveling time to one hour each way, would help transform the Island economy to the specific benefit of both Belfast and Dublin and indeed the towns and cities that run along the eastern</i></p>

3.2	<p><i>corridor between the two cities. Such a connection would facilitate a daily commute between the two cities for employees and business persons.</i></p> <p><i>Such a development would cost in excess of £2 Billion. The Council believes that the European Juncker Fund, a multibillion Euro fund designed to finance major infrastructure projects throughout the EU, is ideally placed to assist with this ambitious project.</i></p> <p><i>The Council will explore with others, particularly the Department for Infrastructure and Dublin City Council, the potential for a joint feasibility study to be carried out into this proposal, and to prepare a possible funding application to the Juncker Fund.”</i></p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	None.



Subject:	Presentation – Javelin Retail Impact Study
Date:	12 October 2016
Reporting Officer:	Nuala Gallagher, Director of City Centre Development
Contact Officer:	Michael McKenna, Urban Development Officer

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update Members on the findings of a recent Retail study undertaken by Javelin Group. The study was commissioned to inform the Council's approach to delivering the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy and improve our understanding of the ongoing challenges facing the city's retail sector. The Retail study supplements the original Javelin report undertaken for Council in 2015.
1.2	Javelin will present to committee the report's key findings.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the findings of the report, particularly the ongoing challenges faced by the city centre and the need to continue work to support city centre retail
3.0	Main report
3.1	<i>Background</i> To help us fully understand the key issues facing City Centre retail issues and what impact they are likely to have on the City Centre, Council recently asked Javelin to undertake a further retail study as an addendum to their 2015 retail positioning piece focussing on:

<p>3.2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current catchment and shopping patterns • Impact of the changing retail landscape • Department store analysis – importance of anchoring on retailer performance and their impact on venue performance • Future shopping patterns <p><i>Key Issues</i></p> <p>Javelin will present the report’s key findings to committee which will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belfast’s retail ranking • Retailer sales performance comparison • Access to the catchment area • Retailer presence • Future scenarios • Other key issues for city centre retailing
<p>3.3</p>	<p><i>City Centre Retail developments</i></p> <p>Work is ongoing to manage and support the city centre retail offer in line with the aspirations of the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy. The Royal Exchange development continues to have a live planning consent for major retail-led development and Council are considering how best to bring this development forward.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p>None</p>



Subject:	Requests to present to Committee: Transport NI and NI Water
Date:	12th October, 2016
Reporting Officer:	Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Louise McLornan, Democratic Services Officer

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The Committee is asked to consider requests from TransportNI and NI Water to attend a future meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree to hold a Special “infrastructure” meeting, with both TransportNI and NI Water being invited to present, and to which all Members will be invited to attend.
3.0	Main report
3.1	Transport NI TransportNI (formerly known as DRD Roads Service) had historically made twice yearly presentations to special meetings of the former Town Planning Committee and it was now considered that it should instead present to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee biannually.

3.2	<p>TransportNI last attended the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 8th June, 2016, where it presented its Spring 2016 Report. It now wishes to present its Autumn 2016 Report to the Committee.</p>
	<p>NI Water</p>
3.3	<p>NI Water has also undertaken a commitment to present to the Council annually and has contacted the Council seeking a suitable date for it to provide the Committee with a short briefing on its investment priorities and activities within Belfast.</p>
3.4	<p>Members are reminded that the City Growth and Regeneration Committee agreed, at its meeting on 11th November 2015, to hold regular strategic meetings in order to receive presentations from outside bodies.</p>
3.5	<p>It is therefore suggested that a Special “infrastructure” City Growth and Regeneration meeting should be held, with both Transport NI and NI Water being invited to attend.</p>
3.6	<p>All Members would be invited to attend this Special meeting.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> There are no financial or resource implications associated with this report.</p>
3.8	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> None.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	None

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Subject:	Committee Plan Progress Report
Date:	12 October 2016
Reporting Officer:	Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development Nuala Gallagher, Director of City Centre Development

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress against the key actions contained in the City Growth & Regeneration Committee Plan, as agreed by Committee in October 2015. This will provide Committee with a baseline on which to discuss and agree priority action areas at the upcoming Committee Planning workshop.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the progress to date against the agreed actions within the Committee Plan and Agree that Officers continue to progress, subject to further consideration at the Committee Planning workshop.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<u>Key Issues</u> The 2015 plan was developed in line with the Council's existing Corporate Plan and the emerging Belfast Agenda, the community plan for Belfast. The Belfast Agenda has at its core a commitment to inclusive growth and the importance of growing the local economy to

improve the quality of life. The Agenda has four main pillars, which summarise the city priorities (see below). The pillars for ‘Business and the Economy’ (Growing the Economy) and ‘City Development’ are the focus of this Committee. Thus the Committee continues to take the lead in ensuring that the narrative of the agenda balances the need for economic growth with the purpose of this growth – to connect people to opportunity and reduce inequality.



3.2 The 2015 plan and ongoing work also aligns with and complements the works of our key partners. In this way we expect to achieve the greatest impact in terms of jobs and opportunities for the people of Belfast. Key documents include the Programme for Government and particularly priority ‘1: growing a sustainable economy and investing in the future’ and priority ‘2: creating opportunities, tackling disadvantage and investing in the future’; and the Northern Ireland Economic Strategy and associated Skills Strategy for Northern Ireland.

3.3 Last month Members noted some of the additional projects and programmes that have developed from the work of the Committee over the last year, in line with the Belfast Agenda. In particular, under the Growing the Economy theme, initiatives such as a clear city proposition, a concierge service for investors, a city Economic Forum, and the recently agreed wider 10-year Employability and Skills Framework. The upcoming Committee Planning workshop will provide an opportunity to test and shape the emerging thinking on these issues in the context of the economic briefing provided by Professor Neil Gibson (at this Committee meeting), emerging priorities within the Belfast Agenda, and the progress with the current Committee Plan. The workshop will then shape the ongoing work and agenda of the Committee, the new Corporate Plan and the budget setting process for 2017/18. The date for this workshop is still to be confirmed but is likely to be in early

November.

3.4

The City Growth and Regeneration Committee is responsible for the development and implementation of strategies, policies, programmes and projects directed towards regeneration and growth of the city in the context of outcomes agreed in the community and corporate plans and other corporate strategy decisions. The Committee also has oversight of the Council functions in relation to economic development, urban development, tourism, culture & arts, European and international relations, car parks, city markets, city events, Belfast Castle, Malone House and Belfast Zoo.

3.5

The Committee is currently working to an ambitious Committee Plan, aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan and emerging Belfast Agenda. The current plan was created after discussion with Members about the role of the Committee and its priorities for the City. The following priorities were agreed by Members in November 2015:

- Place positioning and maximising the opportunities for investment, tourism and regeneration;
- The Employability & Skills Framework (& Year 1 Action Plan);
- Integrated Tourism Strategy;
- City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy;
- Investigate the feasibility of a City Deal for Belfast;
- Develop a car parking strategy;
- Ensure the above strategies give consideration to connecting neighbourhoods to the city centre, ensuring that the whole city enjoys the benefits.

3.6

An update on the progress with the key actions contained in the plan is attached as Appendix One. Members are also aware that a number of detailed reports on key work streams for Growing the Economy have recently been considered and will continue to feature regularly on the Committee agenda.

3.7

A separate item on the Committee agenda provides an Economic Briefing from Professor Neil Gibson. This provides an opportunity for Committee to contextualise the planning and priority setting for the ambition to Grow the Economy as part of the Belfast Agenda and the work of the Committee.

Members are also aware that the factors that influence economic growth do not solely lie within local government's control therefore strengthening business relationships and local-

3.8	<p>central government relationships is a central tenant of the Belfast Agenda and the city's ambitions to Grow the Economy.</p>
3.9	<p>A key element of the Committee's role is therefore to shape and influence the major strategies and developments of our partners in the city to ensure that the benefits of city-region growth are maximised. As such, the Committee has received presentations and deputations over the year, from the Department for Infrastructure, the Titanic Signature Project, Central Library, and Transport NI, amongst others, to agree how better to align improvement activities for maximum economic growth.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Overview of Progress</u></p> <p>As previously noted by Committee, Members have played a leading role in shaping the Belfast Agenda, the community plan for Belfast. The Belfast Agenda has at its core a commitment to inclusive growth. The Committee has played a key role in ensuring that the narrative of the agenda balances the need for economic growth with the purpose of this growth – to connect people to opportunity and reduce inequality. For this reason, the key actions within the Committee Plan are aligned to the delivery of the key themes that have emerged from the Belfast Agenda. The following provides a snapshot of some of the highlights and challenges over the period of the Committee Plan to date within the context of Growing the Economy.</p>
3.11	<p><u>Fostering Business Growth and Strengthening Business Relationships</u></p> <p>Members will be aware that, on 1 April 2015, Council assumed statutory responsibility for a range of business start-up and growth functions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Our activities helped to support almost 550 new jobs during 2015/16. These activities included a suite of support for businesses from pre-start, to start, and then growth in addition to programmes to help people into work. Attendance at these various programmes for the year 2015/16 was 2,200. - Ongoing efforts to increase local procurement opportunities including delivery of the Smarter Procurement programme and information sessions. Council have agreed the 2015 local multiplier baseline figures - for every £1 of Council expenditure, 70pence is spent or re-spent in the Belfast economy which increases to £1.34 across the regional economy. - Establishment of two Business Improvement Districts in the city centre – BID One and Destination CQ. The Belfast One bid is expected to deliver more than £5 million pounds of additional investment over the next five years. Destination CQ expects to

generate £1.7 million over the five years. Work is also underway to support the creation of the Linen Quarter BID. BIDS enable businesses within their area to work together and prioritise initiatives such as marketing, additional cleaning and public realm improvement. These are led by the BID for the businesses and help them to increase their competitiveness and grow their customer base.

- Enhancing the city's economic infrastructure, with the development and opening of the Innovation Factory. This is a 55,284 sq ft building, in a deprived area of the city, with Grade A accommodation innovation space aimed at accelerating business growth through collaboration and networking. It will support up to 400 jobs. The Innovation Factory also includes social and community regeneration opportunities and this model is being considered for other developments. A separate report on the Committee's agenda provides more detail on this.
- Engagement with public, private and skills sectors to identify creative sector growth opportunities for the local Belfast economy. This has helped to identify the need to provide appropriate work/office space for the sector. This will help to support growth and job creation in animation, app/mobile development, games development, music and children's television production.

Attracting Investment and Positioning the City to Compete

In an increasingly competitive global environment, Belfast must emphasise its distinct competitive advantage if it is to continue to compete and successfully attract FDI, tourists, and business to the city.

3.12

- The launch and opening of the Belfast Waterfront in April 2016 as an international conference and convention centre and the establishment of the Council Owned Company and appropriate governance arrangements. This £29.5m investment will enhance Belfast's position in attracting business tourists to the city. It will generate £100 million for Belfast and create 1,500 new jobs by attracting 50,000 conference delegate days each year by 2020.
- The city hosted the successful Tall Ships 2015 event, which generating an estimated £16 million for the local economy through the 520,000 visitors to Belfast Harbour over the four days and 130,000 to the Tall Ships Parade. The annual programme of city events (comprising St Patrick's Day, Lord Mayor's Event, Marathon, Autumn Fair, Monster Mash and Christmas Lights Switch On) has to date attracted a further 94,450 attendees to the city.
- Delivering the Belfast Year of Food 2016, which included the Focus on Food conference and running a second successful Twilight Market at St Georges Market in

May 2016 The latter boosted the footfall in St George's Market to 248,599 (target 205,000) for the first quarter of the year. This makes St George's one of the top attractions in the region and helps to directly support over 350 jobs.

- Developed a hotel prospectus for the city. The Council has now approved 11 planning applications for hotel developments in the city.
- Showcased Belfast at MIPIM in March 2016, promoting the city as a compelling location for investment and growth. Fifteen follow up visits to the city by significant investors are being followed up relating to Grade A office space, retail, hotel and residential developments.

City Centre Regeneration and Maximising the Opportunities for Growth & Regeneration

As the capital city and gateway to the region, many of the key growth issues, such as the need for effective infrastructure that supports growth also need to be considered and feature strongly in the Committee's plan.

- 3.13
- The City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy was approved by Council in September 2015 and adopted by Department for Social Development (now Department for Communities) as the policy framework for the development of the city centre in 2016.
 - Agreed a Vision for the Linen Quarter, aligned to the plans for the development of the Transport Hub at Great Victoria Street. Work is underway to develop proposals for the Western Quarter and Oxford Street/East Bank Special Action Areas, as identified in the City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy.
 - Developed a city car parking strategy which is currently being consulted upon. Members are asked to note that a public consultation event was held on 4 October in City Hall and the consultation will close on 21 November 2016.
 - Successfully launching the Belfast Bike Share scheme in April 2015. This has accounted for more than a quarter of a million healthy and environmentally friendly cycle journeys being undertaken around the city. There are more than 4,000 annual subscribers. The scheme was awarded the Best Integrated Community Hub or Cycle Scheme at the annual Cycle Planning Awards. Work is currently underway to identify options for future expansion and to review the pricing structure.
 - The Employability & Skills Framework, as approved by Council in June 2016. This aims to help an estimated 14,200 Belfast residents into work by 2025. It will become a vital workstream to enhance opportunities for communities and the growth of the city. With approval to develop a Council led employability model for the city, combined with the Council's role as the planning authority which provides greater opportunity to plan

	<p>effective and integrated interventions around employability, there is a need to ensure a long term strategic approach to delivering the Framework. Therefore, this is likely to feature prominently in the Committee’s agenda moving forward.</p> <p>This Committee has a central role in building and influencing external partnerships with key city stakeholders and transforming the city to secure future success, therefore it is important that the work of the Committee and the Committee Plan evolves on an ongoing basis to take account of developing and new opportunities for Growing the Economy within the city.</p> <p>3.14 <u>Finance & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The Committee Plan has been developed in the context of the resources available to Committee.</p> <p><u>Equality & Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>3.15 Programmes and actions within the Committee Plan are developed and delivered in consultation with the Council’s Equality & Diversity Officers.</p> <p>3.16</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	Appendix 1: Report on Progress against the CGR Key Actions

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City Growth and Regeneration Committee Plan 2015-17 – Update on Progress

September 2016

Ref	Activity	Responsible	Update
2	Business and the economy		
2.1	Attract investment into Belfast		
2.1.1	Develop a city investment and development proposal (City Deal)		
.1 .2 .3 .4	Initial research into City Deals Engagement with Core Cities and councils that have secured City Deals Negotiations with central Government Appoint specialist expertise to develop a city deal proposal Compile research and the evidence base to support proposals for a city deal e.g. updating the 'Competitiveness Study' Produce a city deal proposal	Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive Team: Sharon McNicholl, Caroline Wilson	Following the Notice of Motion raised at Council in February 2015, Committee considered a report on taking forward a potential Belfast City-Region Growth Deal in April 2016. Specialist expertise has been commissioned into developing a city-region growth deal proposal. In addition to discussions at Committees, discussions have taken place with Party Leaders, Belfast MPs, the Secretary of State and Permanent Secretaries to test and build the concept of developing a city-region growth deal. Initial research into city deals presented to SP&R Committee and CGR Committees in Quarter 1. Officers are continuing to engage with 'core cities' and councils who have secured city deals. Engagement is underway with surrounding councils at an officer and political level to assess the appetite and potential opportunities to take forward a collaborative approach on identified issues. This work is being factored in to the Council's response to the draft programme for Government Outcomes Framework and associated Economic, Investment and Social Strategies as well as ongoing ministerial engagements. Political bi-lateral meetings are scheduled with city-region party group leaders and the city-region workshop will be held in late 2016. Plans are in place to undertake an advocacy strategy including wider business sector stakeholders and Westminster briefing. Work will continue towards developing a city region growth deal proposal in early 2017.
	Deliver the International Relations Framework		
.1 .2 .3	Deliver the action plan (agreed by Development Committee August 2013) Review the completed programme and develop options for future work Deliver new framework as appropriate (subject to the review)	Donal Durkan, Director of Development Team: Lisa Toland, Laura Leonard & EUID	In February 2016, Committee noted the progress and completion of the International Relations Framework 2012-2015 and approved the development of a new framework. It's estimated that £4 in every £10 of sales by Belfast Companies (INI clients) are exports; overnight tourists contribute £278M to the economy; and Belfast has secured over 20,000 inward investment jobs in the past decade. While these figures are encouraging, the new Framework will allow Council officers to work with City partners to further promote Belfast proactively on the international stage to attract more trade and investment, increase visitor and student numbers and build the networks necessary to support growth. This will build on recent activity such as MIPIM, the China and USA visits. It also

Ref	Activity	Responsible	Update
			considers internal resource and organisational issues to ensure we are in a position to deliver on commitments and take advantage of future opportunities. Committee have received the presentation on initial findings for comment and input in September 2016.
Deliver the 'Go to Market' programme			
.1 .2 .3 .4 .5 .6 .7	Develop a business case for attending MIPIM Sponsorship programme for MIPIM Attend MIPIM Evaluation of MIPIM Research and scope requirements for a City investment Portal Trial draft portal Launch portal at MIPIM	Donal Durkan, Director of Development Team: City Centre Development	Council successfully led a city delegation to MIPIM on 14-17 March 2016. 53 delegates from 23 organisations attended, with £163,000 of private sector sponsorship secured. 100% of delegates agreed MIPIM provided a robust profile for the city, and 91% strongly agreed it helped them develop new connections. As reported to Committee in May 2016; three key outcomes have been achieved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the strong Belfast proposition has put the city back on the investment map; the coherence of the Belfast partnership has been strengthened; and 15 expressions of interest from significant investors were received. Committee have agreed £60k to support MIPIM 2017. Following feedback from delegates a larger 50sqm stand has been booked; and tenders for a combined events management, PR & Comms, and Design contract is currently being evaluated (appointment mid-October). A sponsor's launch event is scheduled for mid-November, with public launch in Feb 17. To support MIPIM an online investment portal was launched in March 2016. This contains up to date marketing collateral, including information about the sectors we want to attract, investment opportunities in the city, a map of ongoing developments, Belfast's key selling points, and contact details. Property agents have recently agreed to contribute to a new section hosting strategic development and investment opportunities across the city. http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/business/investinginbelfast/investinginbelfast-about.aspx
City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy			
.1 .2 .3 .4 .5 .6 .7	Take a phased approach to developing detailed plans for the identified Special Action Areas e.g Linen Quarter Vision, East Bank and Western Quarter. Supporting City Development, including Transport Hub and Royal Exchange. Utilise the City Centre Investment fund for key strategic regeneration investments e.g. Belfast Telegraph Building Develop Proposals for a City Centre Visitor Attraction Support the retail sector	Suzanne Wylie Chief Executive / Nuala Gallagher Team: City Centre Development	Since Council published the City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy in September 2015 work has been underway to establish a city centre development team and deliver the aims of the Strategy. The Linen Quarter Public Realm Vision and Analysis has been developed and finalised and is beginning to influence emerging development in this part of the city including multiple hotel and office developments. A consultant team has been appointed to take forward a Development Framework for the East Bank area as identified in the City Centre Strategy. Western Quarter is currently benefiting from positive private sector investment, including the Primark extension, purchase of Norwich Union House, and planning for a boutique hotel in Bank Square. To support this a three stage action plan is being developed, incorporating marketing of the area to improve footfall, taking steps to address ASB, and animating the area with projects for meanwhile use.

Ref	Activity	Responsible	Update
.8 .9	Car Parking Strategy 3D Model		<p>The City Centre team are actively engaging with public and private developers on key city projects, including the £150m Transport Hub and the proposed mixed use development at Royal Exchange. We aim to integrate this with emerging activity within the city centre strategy to ensure a consistent vision and approach.</p> <p>Council officers have been working with McAleer & Rushe to set up an appropriate partnership to jointly take forward the council approved CCIF investment in the Belfast Telegraph site. Council have now entered into a partnership arrangement with McAleer & Rushe and in early October 2016 the site was acquired by the partnership as part of the project's first phase. Phase 2 of the Belfast Telegraph project will focus on developing proposals for the site.</p> <p>The vision for a new international tourist attraction is centred around the Belfast Story. One option is to create an experiential based attraction that showcases the best of Belfast music, art and literature. The option of a municipal or regional art gallery will also be evaluated. One of the key aims is to drive tourism to the city, with an objective to double average tourist nights from 1 to 2. Next steps for the project are to progress stakeholder engagement, develop the funding model, and take forward the master planning of the wider site (to integrate with other developments and provide a consistent approach to the area).</p> <p>In 2015 Javelin Group, a retail consultancy owned by Accenture, completed a retail positioning study for Belfast City Centre to help inform the City's approach to proposed retail development in the North-East Quarter and other potential developments. To help us fully understand issues originally identified and what impact they are likely to have on the City Centre Council recently asked Javelin to undertake a further retail study as an addendum to their 2015 retail positioning piece. This work is now in the final stages of completion and Committee will be receiving a presentation from Javelin on the report's key findings.</p> <p>To assist in shaping future developments and regeneration plans, the Committee recently supported the initial development of an interactive 3D Model of the City which will also enhance the ongoing promotion of Belfast as a place to invest (September 2016).</p> <p>Council Departments are jointly working on the Car Parking which is currently out for public consultation until November this year and looks to improve car parking in the city and assess what opportunities current car park sites provide for city regeneration.</p>

Ref	Activity	Responsible	Update
2.2 Foster business growth in Belfast			
Manage the transfer and transformation of business start-up programmes			
.1	Complete Regional Economic Appraisal	Donal Durkan, Director of Development Team: Lisa Toland, Colin McCabrey & Economic Development	In the first year (to March 2016) of statutory responsibility being transferred to Council, the number of jobs promoted through start-up activity was 445 (against a target of 325). The ERDF funding application has been appraised and is being reviewed by Invest NI for consideration of future funding. Delays with the appraisal process and the implication of BREXIT means that the regional programme will not be in place by the conclusion of the existing Regional Start Initiative (RSI) by October 2016. Officers have developed an interim solution to be operational from October 2016, until the regional programme is in place. Aligned to this, the Council is scoping out a central CRM solution for the region. Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council are leading on the staffing and procurement of the new programme and Derry City and Strabane District Council are managing marketing and communications. In addition Officers are continuing to deliver pre-enterprise activities across Belfast and in June launched a Social Enterprise Support Programme 'Go Social'. Work is underway to develop proposals to deliver the Council's 'Notice of Motion' to support start up and expanding small business, as agreed by Committee in August 2016. This includes options such as a Small Business Commissioner, an investment fund, rates incentives, and expert support for start-ups.
.2	Secure Committee approval for preferred option		
.3	Submit funding application for ERDF/LED and INI funding		
.4	Develop plans for interim business start up provision		
.5	Submit scoping documents for ERDF/LED and INI funding		
.6	Agree and implement interim arrangements for business start up provision		
.7	Submit joint ERDF funding application with other Councils		
.8	Respond to any ERDF requests for further information on application		
.9	(If ERDF application succeeds) Commence procurement process for replacement business start-up programme		
.10	Manage small business programme delivery		
Deliver business growth initiatives			
.1	Deliver various programmes such as superconnected, smarter procurement, go for growth and BEN, etc	Donal Durkan, Director of Development Team: Lisa Toland, Colin McCabrey & Economic Development	We continue to offer a range of programmes to support businesses and encourage growth. From April 2015 to March 2016 there was attendance of over 2,200 people on our business support programmes and networking events. This helped to support almost 550 new jobs. The range of programmes was reviewed through a series of workshops with previous delegates. Programmes now include, among others - Interim Mentoring, Procurement Advancement, Business Growth, Interim marketing, Start Up Marketing, Social Economy, Pre Enterprise Activity, BEN, Enterprise Awareness, Creative Accelerator, Creative Entrepreneurs Club, Women's Tec, WIB, Springboard, Digital DNA, and BID Development. Work has also started on options to deliver the Council's 'Notice of Motion' to support start up and expanding small business, which was considered by Committee in August 2016.
.2	Workshop with previous users to determine appropriateness of programmes and identify potential new programmes		
.3	Support the delivery of economic infrastructure projects including the Innovation Centre and Cleantech Park		
Increase local procurement with Belfast based suppliers			

Ref	Activity	Responsible	Update
.1 .2 .3 .4 .5 .6 .7 .8 .9	Complete analysis of spend Undertake review of procurement unit Develop a sustainable procurement strategy Launch the next wave of the Smarter Procurement Programme Calculate the economic impact of expenditure for the 2014/15 financial year Explore market testing pre-qualification/tender Deliver information raising and capacity building workshop and information sessions Develop Outcomes Framework in line with overall Investment Programme Outcome Framework	Gerry Millar, Director of Property & Projects Team: Donal Rogan, Procurement & Economic Development	The local multiplier, has identified that for every £1 of council expenditure 70 pence is spent or re-spent in the Belfast economy, which improves to 96 pence when considering the wider Greater Belfast economy, and £1.34 across the regional economy. In January 2016, it was agreed that this would be the baseline position on which future reviews would be based. Comparisons with other council areas suggest that, spending with local suppliers by Belfast City Council exceeds the benchmarks of other councils for local purchasing within Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK. Based on this work, Council agreed that a key area for development is to view procurement as a tool to create social value rather than just purchasing which will be taken forward through the development of a Social Value procurement Framework. This will be developed in the context of the Belfast Agenda. The 2016 figures are currently being validated.
Develop a Creative Sector Strategy			
.1 Page: 33 .4 .5 .6	Initial research into the current position and opportunities for the sector Engagement with the sector Develop TOR for a 'task force' of key players to take forward improvements Establish the task force Develop and agree an action plan Deliver action plan	Donal Durkan, Director of Development Team: Lisa Toland, Colin McCabrey & Economic Development	A meeting took place in May 2016 at Google Innovation Labs with the Council and the key Creative and Digital Industry (CDI) stakeholders in the City. The purpose was to consider recommendations detailed within Belfast City Council commissioned report ' <i>Accelerating the Creative & Digital Sector in Belfast</i> '. Attendees included: NI Screen, Belfast Metropolitan College, Ulster University, BBC, UTV, Creative and Cultural Skills, Invest NI, PWC, Belfast City Council, Deloitte & MakeMatic. Other invitees to the group include Kainos, Queens University, Generator NI, 16 South, Inlifesize and the Oh Yeah Music Centre. It was recommended that the Council (& stakeholders) identify primary sub-sectors within the wider creative digital sector to focus on as key to the local economy. These included animation, children's television production, app / mobile development, games development and music. It was also recommended that the group identify three priority actions to successfully deliver within the first year. This included the availability of creative industries workspace as the provision of suitable office space for the sector was vital for the growth of the sector. Opportunities are currently being investigated to identify potential options to support/provide collaborative workspace. All of this will help to support growth and job creation in animation, app/mobile development, games development, music and children's television production.
2.3 Strengthen business relationships			
Support the process to create Business Improvement Districts (BIDS)			
.1	Engage with Belfast BID teams to determine	Donal Durkan,	BIDs provide a mechanism for businesses to form an arrangement to decide on the

Ref	Activity	Responsible	Update
.2	process Establish base line service provision for frontline services in Belfast BID area	Director of Development	improvements they want to make to an area, how they will manage and deliver the improvements and the associated costs.
.3	Establish options for BID ballot and secure council agreement	Team: Lisa Toland, Colin McCabrey &	Following the successful ballot for the Belfast One BID in 2015, permission was obtained at December's Committee to subcontract management of the BID ballot to Electoral Reform Services. The ballot for the Cathedral Quarter BID was held on 15th April 2016 and was agreed by an 84% majority by number and 91% by rateable value. The Belfast One bid is expected to deliver more than £5 million pounds of additional investment over the next five years. Destination CQ expects to generate £1.7 million over the five years.
.4	Commission 'Belfast One' BID ballot process	Economic Development	The Belfast One bid is expected to deliver more than £5 million pounds of additional investment over the next five years. Destination CQ expects to generate £1.7 million over the five years.
.5	Secure council agreement on how to vote on the 'Belfast One' BID		The Cathedral Quarter BID levy will be collected using the same approach as used for Belfast One (i.e. BCC managing the process). Both BIDs now have BID managers in post.
.6	Establish baseline for discretionary spend services in BID 'Belfast One'		BCCM have also instigated the development of a BID for the Linen Quarter and the Council has agreed to fund a BID Development Manager post for a period of one year from summer 2016. The vote is currently planned to take place in March 2017.
.7	Vote on 'Belfast One' Bid		
.8	Establish base line service provision for frontline services in CQ BID area		
.9	Establish baseline for discretionary spend services in BID (CQ Bid)		
.10	Vote on CQ BID		
.11	Oversee the management of the CQ Bid Ballot (Cathedral Quarter)		
	Establish options for BID levy collection		
	Ongoing support as required		
4	Working and learning		
4.3	Improve skills and employability		
	Deliver the Employability and Skills Framework and establish an Employability & Skills Partnership		
.1	Secure Committee approval of draft framework	Donal Durkan, Director of Development	After extensive consultation, the revised Employability and Skills Framework was adopted by the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee in June 2016; along with an associated year one action plan and budget. The Framework aims to help an estimated 14,200 Belfast residents into work by 2025. An employability pathway model was also approved. In particular; this includes further development of partnerships and projects that facilitate the pathway model for supporting those furthest from the labour market into a job. Engagement will continue with key city stakeholders to develop this.
.2	Complete consultation and equality screening of framework		The pathway model includes a wide range of projects and activities but initial efforts will involve a joint pilot with Sport Changes Life, Active Communities, and other such projects with a track record of delivery, as approved by SP&R Committee in August 2016. We will also be working with key employment sectors to capture potential jobs for those who go through the pathway, including a tailored skills development pilot project with the hospitality sector.
.3	Review consultation responses and amend framework	Team: Lisa Toland, Colin McCabrey &	
.4	Secure Committee approval for final framework	Economic Development	
.5	Develop an action plan to deliver the framework		
.6	Engage with key city stakeholders		
.7	Secure agreement for the Employability and Skills framework		
.8	Deliver action plan		

Ref	Activity	Responsible	Update
5	City development		
5.1	Attract tourists to Belfast		
	Deliver the Tourism Strategy "Tourism Growth Plan"		
.1	Implementation - agree Delivery Plan with partner agencies	Donal Durkan, Director of Development	<p>Tourism is estimated to support 9,300 full time jobs in the city. Our current strategy aims to double the value of visitors' spend in the city by 2020. The Year 2 action plan was approved by Committee in May 2016. Projects and plans with associated budgets are now being delivered by officers. Key activities include delivery of the business tourism subvention fund; developing an approach for the Ideas Factory using lessons from the pilot project; investigating the Beyond Peace proposal; promoting the Year of Food initiative; and establishing a Leadership Academy for the industry.</p> <p>Additionally we have developed a Hotel Prospectus, which was launched at MIPIM in 2015. The prospectus has since been utilised to proactively contact hotel brands and also in response to specific development queries. The prospectus is currently being circulated to property agents in the City. Since the Council assumed planning responsibility, it has granted planning permission for 11 new hotel developments. The average monthly hotel occupancy level for the first six months of this financial year was 84.1%.</p> <p>In terms of specific events, we have delivered a range of events in support of the NI Year of Food. These include the 'Focus on Food' conference and a second Twilight Market in May. This helped to boast the footfall in St George's Market to 248,599 (target 205,000) for the first quarter of the year. This makes St George's one of the top attractions in the region and helps to directly support over 350 jobs.</p> <p>To measure progress with the Strategy, officers are working with NISRA and have an agreed approach to monitoring visitor numbers and spend in the City.</p>
.2	Develop place positioning narrative (see 5.2.1)		
.3	Secure Business Tourism Subvention Fund 15/16		
.4	Scope options for a tourism leadership programme	Team: Lisa Toland & TCHA Unit	
.5	Scope options for the 'Beyond Peace' agenda		
.6	Complete Hotel Survey		
.7	Approve 'Ideas Factory' concepts		
.8	Put in place 'Year of Food' Plans		
.9	Agree action plan for the 'Beyond Peace' agenda (with key partners)		
.10	Determine new research brief		
.11	Put new conference subvention scheme in place		
.12	Develop a Tourism Leadership Programme for the city		
.13	Provide recommendations to address hotel bedroom deficit in the city by 2020		
.14	Progress an economic appraisal for a Contemporary Arts Gallery in the City		
.15	Develop and deliver further actions to deliver the Tourism Strategy 2015-2020		
	Develop a framework for city events and festivals		
.1	Agree scope of project with stakeholders	Donal Durkan, Director of Development	<p>Highlights of the 2015-16 City Events programme include the successful delivery of the Tall Ships and the Sports Personality of the Year. An evaluation of Tall Ships estimated that it attracted 520,000 visitors to Belfast Harbour over the four days and another 130,000 to the Tall Ships Parade; it generated an estimated £16 million for the local economy, which equated to a £12.30 return for every £1 of the Council's investment.</p>
.2	Develop and issue quotation specification		
.3	Assess applications		
.4	Appoint consultants		
.5	Sign off Project Initiation Document	Team:	

Ref	Activity	Responsible	Update
.6	Carry out desk based research	Lisa Toland/ Gerry Copeland	The events programme for 2016-17 approved by Committee in February 2016 included the regular annual events plus the UK National Pipe Band Championships (delivered in June) and the All Ireland Irish Dancing Championships. The annual events to date (April-Sept) have attracted attendance of 94,450 with an economic impact of £1,678,643. Attendance for the themed events to date is 163,810 with an economic impact of £4,512,100. (Note: these do not include the figures for the Carl Frampton event or the Boucher Road Euro Fanzone, which have still to be validated). Currently officers are working to establish financial options to attract and support future international events to be considered by Committee.
.7	Carry out stakeholder research/consultation		
.8	Produce draft recommendation report		
.9	Secure Committee approval of draft framework		
.10	Equality screen draft Framework		
.11	Issue draft framework for public consultation		
.12	Review consultation response and amend as necessary		
.13	Secure Committee approval of final framework		
.14	Apply framework to future decision making		
Deliver the Cultural Framework			
.1	Take forward the remaining actions within the framework	Donal Durkan, Director of Development Team: Lisa Toland & TCHA	Committee approved the development of the action plan to deliver the existing Cultural Strategy and Vision up to 2020. Estimates have suggested that the sector support approximately 1,000 jobs in the city. Through our various support mechanisms we expect that, for every £1 we invest, a further £8 will be generated. This will support 300 full time jobs a year. Progress against the original strategy was reviewed and extensive consultation was undertaken with the sector to determine how best to address the outstanding priorities from the strategy. The draft action plan was approved for consultation by Committee in December 2015. The consultation closed in March 2016. At least 84% of respondents fully or mostly agreed to the proposed plans and actions within each theme. The revised Cultural Framework Action Plan 2016-20 was approved by Committee in April 2016. The actions 2016/17 are designed to deliver on four main themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distinctly Belfast - Deliver a "City as a Gallery" initiative launched in September 2016; develop international support programme to showcase Belfast's culture, arts and heritage. ▪ Inspiring Communities - conduct an audit of cultural activity; deliver capacity building programme for community-led arts projects; develop artists in communities programme. ▪ Attracting Audiences - set up Strategic Attracting Audiences Steering Group; develop and deliver audience development and marketing initiatives; create opportunities for collaborative marketing and clustering to increase the profile of events across the year. ▪ Strengthening the Sector – deliver skills development & training programme and review non-core funding streams to launch revised programme. 90 grants were awarded in quarter 1 (2016/17) to support the culture and arts sector.
.2	Secure Committee approval to develop an action plan 2016-20		
	Secure Committee approval for multi-annual funding 2016-20		
	Open call for small grants and multi-annual grants		
.5	Engage with the community on the new action plan		
.6	Evaluate the programme to date and develop a draft action plan for Committee consideration		
.7	Conduct public consultation on the draft plan		
.8	Obtain Committee approval of the new plan		
.9	Launch new action plan 2016-20		
.10	Assess and award new grants		
Deliver an improvement plan for key			

Ref	Activity	Responsible	Update
	Commercial assets e.g. Castle, Malone House, Stables and the Zoo		
.1 .2 .3 .4 .5 .6	Pre market testing on catering contract Tender process for catering contract Commercial review of assets including performance review and benchmarking analysis Draft improvement plan Identification of quick wins, income growth opportunities, use of promotions, pricing and programmes, etc to increase throughput Ongoing improvement	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of City & Neighbourhoods Team: Jacqui Wilson, Parks & Leisure	An update on the improvement plan was presented to June Committee and further work has been requested in relation to the longer term options for the Zoo which will be presented to Committee in the next couple of months. A tender process is underway to replace the catering arrangements at the 4 sites which will include investment from the contractor and a focus on improving the performance of the sites.
	Support the expansion and ongoing success of Belfast Waterfront		
.1	Support the expansion of the Waterfront and ensure marketing and programming are in place for launch. Ongoing management of the Belfast Waterfront up to and beyond the building extension programme.	Donal Durkan, Director of Development Team: Susie McCullough & WF Team	Under oversight of the Board of Directors and the Shareholders Committee the Belfast Waterfront is now operational with Quarter 1 of 2016 delivering on all targets. A one year plan, within the context of a five year strategy up to 31st March, 2021, was approved by Committee on 21st June, 2016. This included the financial plan for the management company. The future business plan will be presented to the Shareholders Committee on the 21st November 2016 along with an update on the performance of the company in Quarter 2. Members have been advised that the focus of the 2016/17 Business Plan was to generate increased income and as such it was important to be able to sell Belfast as a destination as well as the venue itself. The Company have been working with Visit Belfast to update information and marketing materials regarding travel connections to the city, in order to challenge perceptions about Belfast's accessibility in the international conference market. The Business Plan also includes details of the Corporate Social Responsibility elements, which include reduced rates for charities and not-for-profit events; and promoting work experience for local young people, offering experience in the catering industry, front-of-house, sales and marketing with low barriers of entry. The Company will also nominate a charity each year and ensure that the venues were used to benefit that charity as much as possible. As part of the conditions of the funding, targets were set for the company to achieve by 2020. These are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> attract 50,000 delegate days (35,000 of which should be from out-of-state); host an average of 6 Large/National Association and 6 European/International Conferences per annum; and reduce the annual operating deficit by £1.6m from the baseline.

Ref	Activity	Responsible	Update
			In terms of the ICCA (International Congress and Convention Association) league rankings, Belfast Waterfront is doing well in its first year, when compared to similar sized cities.
5.2	Promote and position the city		
	Develop a 'city positioning' narrative and implementation plan		
.1 .2 .3 .4 .5 .6 .7	Consult with key city stakeholders Produce an initial draft narrative Host Member workshop on emerging key themes Position Belfast to attend MIPIM in 2016 (see 2.1.3) Develop an implementation plan Secure Committee approval for the narrative and implementation plan Confirm the stakeholders for the 'Place Board' Commence 'Place Board'	Donal Durkan, Director of Development Team: Lisa Toland, TCHA & City Centre Development	Working with key city partners, an initial City Narrative has been developed and tested with stakeholders and others at various events during the year. Central to this has been on ensuring that the narrative is authentic, takes account of Belfast's unique characteristics and history, embodies the changes taking place in the City and capture a shared ambition for the future. This is currently being refined to focus on developing a number of sector specific propositions; focusing on investment, tourism and education. An outline implementation plan/framework has been developed which includes action plan. This is being reviewed by senior officers and will be brought to Committee for consideration.
5.3	Key strategic projects and policies		
38	Deliver Renewing the Routes		
.1 .2 .3 .4 .5 .6	Project initiation for York 2 and Shankill 1, presentation of condition survey, initial drawings Value engineering and agreement of final costs Legal agreements, final drawings in place Commencement of onsite works for York Road and Shankill Road Ongoing delivery of Renewing the Routes on York Road and Shankill Road Job completion and end of project letters sent	Donal Durkan, Director of Development Team: Urban Development	The 2015/16 Renewing the Routes programme on York Road and Shankill Road was completed on target. Following the analysis on potential future schemes, it was agreed that the RTR programme would not go forward at this time, and should be considered in the context of the Council's approach to area working, city centre development and the realignment of staff resource as a result of the Council's new responsibilities in terms of planning.
	Develop the operating model for the Forthriver Innovation Centre (Innovation Factory)		
.1 .2 .3	Commence construction Development of spec for competitive dialogue process Commence competitive dialogue process to appoint operator	Donal Durkan, Director of Development Teams involved:	The new £9.1m Innovation Factory on Springfield Road will officially open at the end of September. This will be a pioneering creative business space for start-up businesses and expanding firms specialising in innovation, research and development and other creative solutions. It will support up to 400 jobs in a deprived area of the city. The Innovation Factory will be operated by Oxford Innovation (OI), a company with

Ref	Activity	Responsible	Update
.4 .5	Continue construction Appointment of operator	PMU, Estates, Procurement, & Economic Development	experience in running similar innovation centres across the UK. Community engagement, shared space and social regeneration plans have been developed and consulted upon. The contract will be closely monitored to ensure that the Innovation Factory delivers on the key objective, particularly job creation. It is expected it will support at least 145 jobs by 2018 and 187 by 2020.
6	Infrastructure and services		
6.1	Physical regeneration of the city		
	Support the development of effective policies and plans to shape the development of the city and neighbourhoods		
.1 .2 Page 39	Receive and input to regular updates on progress with key policies and plans for city and neighbourhoods development Ensure a co-ordinated approach to the development of the city and neighbourhoods across Council Provide strategic investment frameworks and initiatives at key sites across the city centre e.g. Linen Quarter, Western Quarter	Phil Williams Director of Planning and Place Team: Planning & Place, City Centre Development, Property & Projects, Development	Members have instigated the delivery of a major programme of capital investment and physical improvement across our neighbourhoods. In total this represents some £300 million of investment, including significant investment in the Council's leisure estate, some of which is in the heart of our most challenged communities. Council officers have been working with partners to secure synergies with other major capital schemes, e.g. the stadia. People and Communities Committee have been looking at how these assets can improve the achievement of outcomes for local people in terms of reduced health inequalities and improvements to quality of life. There are opportunities to optimise the achievement of economic opportunities, including employability opportunities and the creation of better local tourism product. This will be a key issue moving forward to ensure that an integrated approach to development across the city is planned and implemented. The Committee has been working with key partners to shape, influence and better coordinate improvement activity and priorities across the city. For example, presentations and representations from NI Water/DRD re the city's infrastructure. Additionally, progress has been made with the implementation of the City Centre Regeneration & Investment Strategy and updates are regularly reported to the CGR Committee. Key projects include the Cultural Hub, Western Quarter and Linen Quarter.
6.3	Ensure fit for purpose infrastructure		
	Develop a car parking & transport strategy		
.1 .2 .3 .4	Complete a baseline review Undertake an analysis of current issues, challenges and trends Complete an assessment of options Formulation of strategy and action plan	Nigel Grimshaw Director of People & Neighbourhoods/ Siobhan Toland Assistant Director of City &	The draft Car Parking Strategy and action plan was approved by Committee in June 2016 for public consultation which will close on 21 November 2016. Following the analysis of the consultation results, a revised strategy will be brought back to Committee for consideration. The draft strategy has 4 main objections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring appropriate provision and location of car parking to support and improve the economic vitality of the City Centre and district centres.

Ref	Activity	Responsible	Update
.5	Finalise draft strategy through consultation and member approval	Neighbourhoods Team: City Centre Development, Urban Development, Planning & Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring car parking provision does not encourage less sustainable commuter travel, especially for journeys into the City Centre and supports access by public transport, cycling and walking. Minimising the potentially negative impacts of parking on residential communities in the city particularly in inner city areas. Working with stakeholders to improve the quality of parking and information available, ideally through technology and in particular develop a new parking signage and information system that supports parking and wider applications. <p>These are supported through a number of recommendations that the Council will undertake with its partners.</p>
Manage and develop future plans for the Belfast Bike Share scheme in the city centre			
.1 .2 .3 .4 .5 .6	<p>Launch the new scheme</p> <p>Market and promote the scheme</p> <p>Develop options to expand the scheme into new areas</p> <p>Start construction of additional bike stations in key areas</p> <p>Monitor usage of the scheme, costs and performance</p> <p>Explore options for future expansion</p>	<p>Donal Durkan, Director of Development</p> <p>Team: Urban Development and Property & Projects</p>	<p>The bike share scheme has been in operation since April 2015 and consists of 35 docking station across the city centre. During the first 15 months 4,000 annual subscribers, 3,000 casual memberships and 250,000 journeys have been made. We have recently launched a survey to gain public feedback on the scheme and ideas for improvement.</p> <p>Due to the success of the scheme, Committee approved plans to expand it across the city. In August, new docking stations were opened at both the Royal and City hospitals. A third station, at the Mater Hospital, will come online in the autumn 2016. The new stations mean that the number of docking stations, and bikes, has increased by 20% since the scheme was launched.</p> <p>Discussions are ongoing about options to extend the scheme. BSuC funding has also been secured to provide stations in Lower Shankill & Brown Square, Lower Oldpark (inc one at Girdwood Hub) and Lower Falls. Options for expansion depend on securing additional resources and Council approval. A Members workshop on the future approach is scheduled for October 2016.</p>
7	Fundamental enablers of success		
7.1	Strong city leadership		
	Ensure that key strategies and plans align and deliver on the economic growth agenda for the city e.g. Belfast Agenda, Local Development Plan etc.		
.1 .2	<p>Ongoing representation of economic information, programmes and progress at regional, city and council planning events</p> <p>Influence and shape the development of key</p>	<p>Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive</p> <p>Team:</p>	<p>Members have played a leading role in shaping the Belfast Agenda, the community plan for Belfast. The Belfast Agenda has at its core a commitment to inclusive growth. The Committee has played a key role in ensuring that the narrative of the agenda balances the need for economic growth with the purpose of this growth – to connect people to</p>

Ref	Activity	Responsible	Update
	strategies e.g. developing of the Belfast Agenda, Local Development Plan, planning and development proposals etc.	City Centre Development, City & Neighbourhood Services, Development Planning & Place, Property & Projects,	opportunity and reduce inequality. The process for the Local Development Plan is a four year process and Members will have key role in shaping this as it progresses. Internally, officers have been working to ensure that the various activities across Council are aligned with each other and the overall Corporate Plan and Belfast Agenda. The Committee Planning Workshop in the autumn 2016 will provide a key opportunity to input to the future priorities for the Committee in terms of the key strategies to deliver economic growth for the city.
7.2 Work close together			
	Implement regular 'strategic' committee meetings to consider key strategic issues for the city e.g. transport, city infrastructure, housing etc.		
.1 Page 41	Finalise arrangements for bi-monthly strategic committee sessions Ongoing strategic sessions with key partners on major city issues such as transport, housing, skills, etc.	Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive Team: Democratic Services and other services across Council	These are now firmly established and provide the opportunity for Committee to receive updates on key developments and to inform and influence strategic issues and the work of key partners in the city. This helps the Council to fulfil its city leadership role and ensure that key city stakeholders are aware of and aligned to our priorities. Sessions to date have included presentations and representations from NI Water/DRD relating to the city's infrastructure; exploratory drilling at Woodburn Forest; the public realm improvement works which have formed the first phase of the Streets Ahead programme; Student Accommodation; the 'Bike Life' Report; car parking; public hire taxis; and Transport NI. The Committee's agreement in August 2016 to secure support to develop a specification for a City Infrastructure Plan will be a significant piece of work moving forward that will help to ensure that the City's infrastructure plans can support the scale and pace of development in Belfast.

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Subject:	Update on Development of International Relations Framework 2016-2020		
Date:	12 October 2016		
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development		
Contact Officer:	Laura Leonard, European & International Relations Manager		
Is this report restricted?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of the report is to update Members on the development of the International Relations Framework for the period 2016-2020.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the content of this report • Agree to hold a workshop to which all members of Council will be invited, to discuss the emerging priorities of the International Relations Framework. This will allow the draft final report to be presented to the November meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee for consideration.

3.0	Main report
3.1	Members will be aware that in 2012, the Development Committee approved the development of a new three year International Relations Framework 2012-2015. The aim of the Framework was to promote Belfast on the international stage as a place to visit, study, invest and do business.
3.2	Since 2012, the Council has engaged in a number of strategic international partnerships, namely with Boston, Nashville and Shenyang, along with increasing collaboration with Dublin and London. These engagements have involved not only the Council but also its partner organisations, thereby ensuring that the relationships are multi-dimensional.
3.3	With new Planning powers already in place and Regeneration powers expected to transfer to Councils in the coming years, and with a significant endorsement of the commitment to “Growing the Belfast Economy” as articulated in the Belfast Agenda, the Council is increasing its ambition around positioning the city to attract international investment from developers, FDI and institutional investment. It is also supportive of work being undertaken by partner organisations to increase the number of international students in the city, grow tourism investment and support more Foreign Direct Investment as well as helping local businesses to become more active in international export markets.
3.4	In recognition of the need to create more focus and ensure added value of the Council investment in this area, a new International Relations Framework 2016-2020 has been under development since August 2016. As part of the commission, the consultancy team has engaged with a range of key internal and external partners to identify the appropriate focus, structure and priorities in moving forward.
3.5	Some of the emerging principles and areas of focus identified to date include:
3.6	<p><u>Clarifying the Role of the Council</u></p> <p>The role of cities in driving economic performance is proven. However, it does not follow that the local authority must be involved in all aspects of economic policy and delivery. The value that Belfast City Council can play in international relations has been consistently articulated by our city partners: it amplifies the work of others and plays a critical leadership role that opens up opportunities and access to influence on a scale that is beyond what our city partners would be able to achieve working unilaterally.</p>

3.7	<p><u>Positioning the City – importance of the collective message</u></p> <p>Belfast has a range of audiences to speak to in international markets, from potential investors to students and tourists. The international market is a competitive environment and we are only one of many cities and locations trying to achieve a similar ambition. Over time, the city has developed a suite of marketing materials and ‘place positioning’ brochures. While the message needs to be targeted to the respective audiences, it is critical that this is underpinned by a shared, compelling narrative that can be carried across social media and other web-based channels as well as traditional media and through events and promotional activities.</p>
3.8	<p><u>Strengthening our relationships with key partners and locations</u></p> <p>Building successful international relations takes time and effort. However we are not starting from a low base: we already have significant partnerships and relationships in place. The challenge is to prioritise those that can potentially provide the most significant return or add most value. These may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – International partnerships: Belfast’s international focus aligns well with the Northern Ireland Executive and other key city partners. Belfast should be open to new opportunities from wherever they emerge and should assess each opportunity on its merits but maximising our current relationships should take priority – City Partnerships: Our city partners all play a valuable role in Belfast’s growth and development. Complementing that activity and amplifying its impact should be a core principle of this framework – Civic Leadership: Belfast City Council has an important role to play in international relations, enabling and facilitating access to key influencers and networks. The role of the Lord Mayor in outward visits and in hosting delegations that visit the city has been recognised by our city partners as a vitally important contribution that Belfast City Council can make. Our international relations efforts should ensure our elected members play a key civic leadership role – Diaspora: There are tens of thousands of people and friends of Belfast living around the globe. It is important for Belfast to engage this diaspora and identify business and cultural opportunities – Best Practice and Influence: Belfast City Council is a member of a number of international networks such as Eurocities, NI Connections, Friends of NI in China and Belfast/London Forum. Belfast has recently been chosen as one of 100 Rockefeller Resilient Cities. Ensuring value and effectiveness from our membership of these global networks can guide our international relations work.

3.9	<p><u>Objectively assessing new opportunities</u></p> <p>While it is proposed that the focus should be retained on maximising the existing relationships with Nashville, Boston and Shenyang, new opportunities for city partnership working will undoubtedly arise. These opportunities will require measured assessment to determine value to the Council and our stakeholders. Belfast City Council is in the process of establishing an Economic Forum for the City to support the Growing the Economy objective within the Belfast Agenda. This Forum will look at sectoral growth priorities for the City in conjunction with City partners. Using an objective assessment tool, the Council should evaluate each new opportunity against a range of factors before providing recommendations on the new opportunity. Criteria may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Export potential – Investment potential – Inward Investment potential – Student/Education links potential – Tourism potential – Cultural links – Ease of doing business – Partner Priorities – Costs or engagement (financial, staff resources)
3.10	<p><u>Promoting trade and investment opportunities as a key area of focus</u></p> <p>Belfast has achieved great success in attracting inward investment jobs in recent years. Our recent attendance at MIPIM is an example of where the Council can work with partners to promote Belfast’s investment opportunities to a global audience. Maximising future opportunities to attract investors is paramount to growing our city and this will require a planned, targeted, concerted and collaborative effort alongside a number of our partners. Likewise, we need to consider how we can encourage re-investment after the initial investment decision.</p>
3.11	<p>Competitive cities should have a diverse economic base, comprising both FDI companies and indigenous businesses. Belfast is home to many dynamic, ambitious, small companies. Building the confidence and capabilities of these companies and helping them find international trade links will help our economy thrive. We should support these companies into international markets, and support the international trade efforts that our partners already undertake, focusing on our key partner links and locations.</p>

3.12	<p><u>Attracting Visitors and creating positive perceptions of the city</u></p> <p>Attracting people to our city for study, leisure or business involves several related strands. The first strand requires a marketing strategy that sells the city to students, conference operators and leisure visitors. Access to the city is a crucial strand and we should work with our airports and seaports to support their route development efforts where possible and target marketing efforts in destination markets. Once visitors come to the city, we must ensure that Belfast provides a rich, positive experience through our culture, arts, leisure and events provision so that visitors leave with a positive experience and a desire to return.</p>
3.13	<p><u>Ensuring Transparency and Communicating Success</u></p> <p>We need to be clear about the objectives of both inward and outward visits involving Councillors and Officers and the level of investment needs to be commensurate with the potential return to the city and its partners.</p>
3.14	<p>The need for multi-annual planning for the city-to-city links as well as our wider international promotion activity is clear: there should be proactive work planning along the key themes to identify priority actions, in line with available budgets. These multi-annual plans should form the focus of the future work programme, and they should have clear targets attached. At the end of each year, successes should be communicated.</p>
3.15	<p>Elected Members have been central to the consultation and engagement process to date. The consultancy team has spoken directly with the Chair and Deputy Chair of Committee, and they also presented some of the emerging findings from their work to the September meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee.</p>
3.16	<p>In order to share more detail on these principles and potential areas of focus, as well as the overview of the draft framework and the potential resource implications, it is proposed that a workshop is held with Members in October 2016. All members of Council should be invited.</p>
3.17	<p><u>Finance and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>Committee approval is already in place for the development of a new International Relations Framework, within the existing unit budget. Any new activities identified as part of the framework review will be taken account of in the new financial estimates and brought</p>

3.18	<p>to Committee for approval.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>The new International Relations Framework will be equality screened.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	None



Subject:	NI Science Festival
Date:	12 October 2016
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development
Contact Officer:	Lisa Toland, Head of Economic Initiatives and International Development

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issue
1.1	The purpose of the report is to update Members on a request for sponsorship for the 2017 Northern Ireland Science Festival based on the success of the 2016 event.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the contents of this report and Agree to sponsorship of £35,000 from existing budgets for the Northern Ireland Science Festival 2017.
3.0	Main report
3.1	The Northern Ireland Science Festival has been taking place annually since 2015. The 2016 event took place over 11 days in February and March 2016. It offered 134 events across a wide range of venues, presenting local and international work that focused on a wide range of themes including science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The daytime programme targeted children and young people with workshops, talks and interactive activities while in the evening the Festival presented an eclectic mix of science debates,

talks, theatre, comedy and music.

3.2

The event was organised by Science Festivals NI, a unique collaboration of major STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) outreach organisations in Northern Ireland. Belfast's exceptional higher level skills talent pool is the primary reason why investors choose the city. Events such as the NI Science Festival help grow collaborations between such organisations and individuals, showcasing Belfast in a positive light. Funding for the event was provided by a number of organisations including the then Department for Employment and Learning, the British Council, Queen's University and the Ulster University and Belfast City Council.

3.3

Science Festivals are a relatively new type of event that are growing in popularity worldwide, with cities such as New York, Edinburgh, San Francisco and Dubai hosting large scale events as part of their wider cultural frameworks. In 2015, the inaugural NI Science Festival joined this international group by becoming the largest festival of its kind on the island of Ireland and one of the largest in Europe. Since the first Festival in 2015, the event has continued to go from strength to strength.

3.4

Both the 2015 and 2016 Festivals were considered to be major successes, exceeding agreed targets and competing with other established science festivals. This included:

- Audience numbers of 60,000 significantly exceeded the 2016 target of 50,000 set out in the funding agreement
- Young people formed the majority of the audience (57%). The increased number of evening events for adults, teachers and parents resulted in a total audience share of 43%, up from 34% in 2015
- 132 events took place across a range of venues, with approximately 90% of activities taking place in Belfast
- 92% of attendees indicated that they would visit the Festival again, with 68% of survey respondents indicating that they were more likely to pursue or encourage others to pursue an career in STEM following the Festival
- The Festival acted as a catalyst for two significant conferences to come to Belfast. The Institute for Physics hosted their Spring Conference in the Hilton Hotel, whilst the British Council brought an international delegation from the Philippines, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Yemen, Jordan, Colombia, United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia, South Africa and India to discuss the future for STEM. Conference organisers chose to hold their events in Belfast to coincide with the Festival.

Proposed 2017 Programme

3.5

The 2017 Festival will take place from 16 - 26 February 2017. The core objective of the Festival continues to be a commitment to reaching a broad and diverse audience to increase the accessibility of science and to promote learning. This is in line with the ambitions set out within the Belfast Agenda to improve skills and employability, make the city an attractive location for investors and improve vibrancy and city animation. This will once again be achieved through a series of events and partnerships that link science into different areas of interest. The Programme themes include:

- Tech and Digital – linking with local companies and international experts, this theme consists of talks, debates and workshops on areas such as coding
- Engineering and robotics – highlighting the advances in engineering and robotics across Belfast, including some of the unique strengths of Belfast businesses in this field
- Food Science – attracting a new audience through events linking with local restaurants, cafes and venues such as St George’s Market
- Art and Science - a number of events will focus on the crossover between art and science. This theme is centred around an exhibition and workshops by the festival’s “artist in residence” as well as a celebration of Lillian Bland by the Ulster Orchestra
- The Festival will also host events on photography, invention, history and wildlife in addition to the core themes such as mathematics, physics and space

3.6

There are opportunities for a number of the Council’s services to engage with the Science Festival to promote their work in innovative ways, particularly to young audiences, and to engage more residents around key issues for the city. These may include the support programmes on education and skills, profiling Council’s business start-up and business growth programmes and profiling ‘investing in Belfast’. There may also be opportunities for community engagement activity, managing waste and food waste in particular, supporting active communities and promoting mobility and encouraging access to arts and culture for all residents. In addition, the innovative nature of many of the events – alongside the flagship events already lined up – will act as an attraction for people coming from outside of the city into Belfast, for the purpose of attending some of these specific events or associated activities. A postcode analysis for the Festival indicates that a large proportion of the previous Festivals’ audiences come from outside Belfast.

The success of the 2016 event has helped to secure international events with a high

3.7	<p>calibre of speakers for the 2017 programme. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Talks by international experts including Professor Alice Roberts, Jim Al-Khalili and Dame Jocelyn Bell Burnell – One of Europe’s largest tech conferences aimed at teenagers to be held in Titanic Belfast – A partnership with the BBC around employability and skills, with opportunities to link to the Council work in this area – The annual Turing Lecture hosted in Belfast City Hall which will be delivered by Dr Guruduth Banavar, IBM Vice-President of Cognitive Computing and leader of the worldwide team creating Watson – A “artist in residence” programme in partnership with the British Council – An event focused on sustainable development with Catalyst Inc and the British Council featuring experts from 14 different countries – An opening night performance by the Ulster Orchestra and Dumbworld celebrating the life of Lillian Bland, the first woman to build and fly her own aircraft over Carnmoney Hill.
3.8	<p>The Festival has strong alignment with the city’s investment, education, skills and tourism priorities as outlined in the Belfast Agenda, the Integrated Tourism Strategy 2015-2020 and the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy. In particular, this is achieved through an emphasis on skills and educational attainment, international profiling, city events and programming. The message is consistent with the emerging city positioning work which is attempting to create a new narrative for Belfast that is based on the quality of its talent, reflecting its rich industrial heritage and its emerging specialisms in new technologies.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The total budget for the Festival is estimated at £221,500. Funding of £83,000 has been secured from the Department for the Economy (this includes £50,000 of core funding), £5,000 from the British Council, £20,000 respectively from Queen’s University and Ulster University. A further £26,000 has been secured from Tourism NI alongside £7,500 from the Department of Communities. The Festival anticipates ticket sales to generate around £25,000. The amount of sponsorship requested from Belfast City Council is £35,000, in line with the awards made in 2015 and 2016. This funding is available within existing Departmental budget estimates.</p>

3.10	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> There are no specific equality or good relations considerations attached to this report
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	None

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Subject:	Employability and Skills Framework – Update
Date:	12 October 2016
Reporting Officer:	Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Lisa Toland, Head of Economic Initiatives & International Development

Is this report restricted?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>The purpose of the report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Update members on the Employability & Skills Framework and progress to date on the implementation on the associated year one Action Plan.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Note the final version of the Employability and Skills Framework and progress to date. – Approve the proposed approach of engaging through Party Group Leaders to agree the pilot areas for Employability Outreach Pilots.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>At the 24 June meeting of Strategic Policy & Resources Committee Members approved the final version of the Employability & Skills Framework and associated year one Action Plan. This Framework underpins all of the priorities identified under the Belfast Agenda. These are <i>Business and the Economy, Living Here, Working and Learning and City Development</i>. Achievement of the Employability and Skills Framework objectives will have a positive correlation on growing the city economy by influencing our ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attract more investment into Belfast;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foster more business growth in Belfast; - Strengthen business relationships; - Make Belfast easy to do business with; - Maximise impact of city region; and - Reduce poverty and economic inequality.
3.2	<p>The Framework was developed to understand the specifics of the employability and skills challenges in Belfast and to identify how a collaborative, outcomes-based, long-term approach could bring about a step change in employment rates and skills levels. It identified four key aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aim 1: To increase access to employment by supporting the development of lower and entry level skills and by addressing barriers preventing access to jobs; - Aim 2: To generate higher level skills which meet the demands of employers and investors; - Aim 3: To facilitate career progression routes across all skill levels; and - Aim 4: To develop a culture of entrepreneurship at all levels. <p>The employability and skills issues facing the city are multi-faceted and complex. Economic inactivity is one of the most significant impediments to the city. Despite significant investments to tackle this issue, evidence would suggest the scale of challenge has not been effectively addressed. This highlights the need to do things differently through a long term strategic and collaborative approach tackling issues such as skills gaps, family cultures, health problems, mobility, access to childcare and changes to welfare benefits etc.</p>
3.3	<p>Aligned to the principles of the Belfast Agenda, the Employability and Skills Framework contains the following overarching principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Citywide approach; - Long-term approach; - Outcome and needs-based; - Aspirational and Ambitious; and - Inclusive Growth.
3.4	<p>At the 24 June meeting of SP&R members approved the Framework's year 1 Action Plan. Whilst delivery of this plan is ongoing key areas of progress are outlined below.</p> <p>1. Hospitality Pilot Project (Addressing Aim 1) - the hospitality sector has been</p>

recognised as one of the growing sectors within the city, attributed in part to key investments such as the Belfast Waterfront, new hotel developments etc. In response to expected employment growth, Council's Officers have been working with key partners to develop a Hospitality Employment Academy to provide a bespoke skills programme for the unemployed to equip them with the industry-specific skills for working in this sector. The project involves intensive work with existing and future employers, early intervention programmes with key target groups and development of specific skills programmes. To prevent duplication and achieve cost efficiencies, programme delivery has been designed to utilise existing resources already part-funded through ESF (European Social Fund) with Council funding used to provide 'top up' training required to tailor the programme to employer needs, working alongside Belfast Met. The pilot aims to support 70 people into employment with the first cohort of training expected to commence in late October 2016.

2. Belfast Employability Programme (Addressing Aim 1) – As members will be aware, SP&R committee of 20 May 2016 approved the development of a Council-led employability model for the city, specifically aimed at getting those furthest from the labour market into real jobs. The 'Belfast Works' project seeks to move individuals currently furthest removed from the labour market through stages of training and development to a point where they are 'job ready' and able to compete for a job that would be ring fenced to them once they have completed the full training - i.e. a pathway of support for individuals to move from unemployment into employment, offering access to real jobs available from Council, stakeholders and those arising from new investments.

This is a different model to what often happens at present, which in many cases results in 'churn', whereby individuals may undertake employability training to a certain point but they do not necessarily progress through a joined-up pipeline to a second or third stage that gets them to a point where they are job ready. Further, jobs may exist or be in the pipeline in the city but they are not ring fenced. Belfast City Council however, as a large employer has, through the OD Department, designed and delivered an employability training programme and ring fenced our jobs to individuals who have completed the employability training and development programme. This project will build on that work by partnering with other large employers (for example, Belfast Trust and the hotel and hospitality sector) to identify jobs that could be made available for ring-fencing to individuals who are currently far from the labour market (for example, 16-24 not in employment, education or training) once they have completed a training and development programme that gets them 'job ready'.

The model is relatively simple as a concept but in reality will be extremely complex to put

into operation. The most significant issue is resources and this is currently being examined as part of the estimating process.

This project will of course also require effective partnership and co-design and delivery with key stakeholders and to this end the Chief Executive has had positive initial discussions with senior officials in the Department for Communities; the Director of Organisational Development has met with her counterpart in Belfast Trust and secured commitment from them for involvement in this project; and staff from OD/ HR and the Development Department have started initial work with Belfast Metropolitan College but there will be a number of potential providers required to co-design and deliver the training and development element and stages of the 'pipeline'. A further report on this model and the resourcing requirements will be brought through SP&R Committee.

3. Employability Outreach Pilots (Addressing Aim 1) - At the August meeting of SP&R committee approval was given to undertake two pilot projects (Sport Changes Life and Active Communities Network), subject to pilot areas being identified. These projects are aimed at engaging young people, mainly aged 16-24 year olds who are or at risk of becoming NEET's. The aim of these projects is to use sport as a means of positively engaging with young people, to address their personal challenges and support them towards an ultimate goal of progressing into employment or further training. Council Officers are identifying the potential pilot areas for these projects, based upon an analysis of deprivation and NEETs data. It is proposed that engagement will take place through Party Group Leaders to agree the pilot areas for these projects with the intention of commencing pilot delivery in the forthcoming weeks.

4. Access to Employment Opportunities (Addressing all aims) - As members will be aware a complexity of training support is available across the city, however a key challenge exists in linking training provision to employer needs and 'real' job opportunities. Awareness of and access to employment opportunities available can be difficult to determine due to the variety of recruitment mediums utilised by employers. To address this, the Council has been supporting a number of job fairs and careers events including:

- LEMIS+ Job Fair which recently took place in City Hall with over 50 local employers participating;
- Skills NI event taking place on the 8-9 November 2016 in Titanic Exhibition Centre. This careers event aims to involve up to 80 exhibitors and targeting 5,000 young people and their families;
- Digital Futures Programme delivered by Digital DNA, will engage with 4,000 13-17

years olds across Belfast to develop new skills in computer programming and to promote career opportunities within the creative sector.

In addition discussions are also taking place with Department for Communities to host a joint large scale job fair in February/March 2017.

5. Entrepreneurship (Addressing Aim 4) is one the available routes into employment. In addition to mainstream provision through the Go For It programme, the Council has also recently launched new initiatives including Go Social to assist new social entrepreneurs and a new wave of the Belfast Enterprise Academy targeting student entrepreneurs. A range of enterprise awareness activities are also scheduled for Global Entrepreneurship Week taking place from the 14th -18th November to promote enterprise awareness, youth entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship.

6. Maximising investments – to maximise the employment opportunities arising from Council and other investments work is underway in the following areas:

- Delivery of the **Innovation Factory’s** social regeneration activities to encourage the creation of new businesses, by working with local schools, provision of work placements and outreach activities with local communities. Through the operation of the facility 6 new jobs have been created alone, in addition 6 new businesses have been secured as tenants of the facility, this is expected to increase in the forthcoming weeks with a further 25 warm leads currently in progress;
- **In partnership** with the City Centre team, engagement is taking place with key development projects to maximise the impact of employment opportunities created through their investment. This includes working with major retailers, who are planning expansion, or considering new investment to look at opportunities such as pre-employment programmes.
- Working with Corporate Procurement Services (CPS) to identify the potential for inclusion of social clauses in upcoming tenders. In order to ensure that these clauses can have a positive impact in local areas, we are making linkages between contractors and relevant local training providers. The next major opportunity is the Leisure Transformation Programme and work is currently under way to define the relevant social clause requirements.

4.0	Financial & Resource Implications
	The Hospitality Pilot Project, the Belfast Employability Programme, the Employability Outreach Pilots and the Entrepreneurship Support programmes, as well as the work to maximise the employability impact of wider Council investment, are being supported by

	<p>existing budgets which have already been approved by the Council.</p> <p>Work is currently under way to consider the financial implications of delivering the year 2 work programme, as part of the estimates process. This will include an assessment of the staff resource required to ensure effective project development, management, delivery and oversight.</p>
5.0	Equality & Good Relations Implications
	<p>An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out on the draft Employability and Skills Framework. As a result, extra engagement activity took place with organisations working with ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and young people. On an ongoing basis the outreach and engagement activity will ensure that all under-represented groups are able to participate.</p>
6.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
6.1	Appendix 1 – Draft employability and skills framework –June 2016



Belfast Employability & Skills Framework 2015-2025



June 2016
(DOCS: 238006)



Belfast
City Council

1 Introduction

The Belfast Employability and Skills Framework for the period 2015 to 2025 sets a vision of “Realising the potential of Belfast’s people and its economy by transforming skills, employability and aspiration, resulting in higher levels of business growth, employment and income”.

As a Council, we are committed to making a change for our residents and developing Belfast as a vibrant city in which people love to live, invest, work and visit. This Framework is a starting point for achieving that ambition. However the Council cannot achieve this by working alone and we are committed to work with the key public, private and community partners in the context of a city agenda to tackle the challenges.

2 The Belfast Position

Belfast is a growing international business centre and, up to the economic downturn in 2008, was one of fastest growing regional economies in the UK. It is a location of choice for many leading international companies and is second only to London in attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Productivity has been reasonable across the city (at £41,535 of GVA per employee in 2013 which is 113% of the Northern Ireland average). However there are a number of key employability issues which must be addressed if the city is to achieve its growth potential. These include:

Unemployment and Economic Inactivity

Nearly 65,000 people were classed as economically inactive in January 2016, with 155,000 economically active. High economic inactivity rates have significant consequences for a growing economy; reducing the available workforce, constraining output levels and reinforcing concentrations of deprivation. Many of those identified as being economically inactive are lower skilled and therefore less likely to be employed – or at least will find it more difficult to get a job. Despite a wealth of employability and other support programmes, the economic inactivity rate has not decreased to any significant degree over the last thirty years.

Inequality

There is still a very marked polarisation of society: between those who are well qualified and those who have no qualifications or who are low skilled. This is an ongoing challenge for Belfast, to ensure that whole neighbourhoods are not left behind and are therefore economically and socially excluded. There are a multitude of interconnected issues that contribute to inequality and deprivation within the city, such as:

- Poor health and wellbeing;
- Lack of skills and poor educational outcomes;
- Long term economic inactivity;
- Low paid jobs.

Based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2010, Belfast has 8 of the ten most deprived wards in Northern Ireland on the income domain, 9 of the lowest performing on skills, and 7 for employment.

Persistent inequality and deprivation go hand in hand in these wards in Belfast, despite the considerable sums invested in interventions in these areas over decades. Existing initiatives have only had limited impact, and new place-based solutions based on coordinated working and a long term vision are needed to embed change.

Skills Levels

Skill levels have a significant impact upon employment prospects: people with no qualifications are five times more likely to be unemployed than those who have higher levels of formal education. According to the 2011 Census, almost a third of the adult population in Belfast has no qualifications, (30.4% compared to 23.2% in the UK).

While there needs to be a strong focus on building essential and lower level skills, there are also employment challenges for those with higher level skills. The percentage of graduates working in non-graduate jobs has increased over the last decade, from 37% in 2001 to 47% in 2013 for recent graduates, and from 29% in 2001 to 34% in 2013 for graduates out of full time education for more than five years. This effectively prevents unemployed or lower paid/skilled people from taking up those jobs and the progression opportunities that follow.

Better employment of those with higher level skills could help to create opportunities elsewhere in the labour market.

Economic Changes

Belfast's economy has changed with a move from manufacturing towards business and financial services. This change within the local economy has seen the contraction of traditional sectors towards new sectors of growth such as ICT, Professional, Scientific and Technical activities, Administration and Support Services and Human Health and Social Work activities, which collectively are expected to account of 76% of employment growth within the city by 2025. The impact of this will result in higher levels of demand for intermediate and higher level skills.

Entrepreneurship

A healthy business start-up rate is widely regarded as a good barometer of economic health in a city. Entrepreneurship levels in Belfast are lower than the NI average at 14.7% compared with 9.3% for Belfast. This is also lower than in other UK cities such as Liverpool (10.8%), Manchester (14.4%), Newcastle (11.7%), Leeds (12.1%), and Sheffield (10.7%). The higher figure for the whole of Northern Ireland may in part be due to its rural nature (as rural areas are likely to have high self-employment) and also the reliance in Belfast on both public sector employment (representing two fifths of employment) and on other large employers, partly due to the high levels of investment through FDI streams in recent years.

Increasing the residential employment rate

Belfast's resident employment rate is 65.6%¹ which equates to approximately 144,000 people in employment. Historically the city has struggled, even during periods of economic prosperity, to achieve an employment rate of 70%. Contributory factors to this position include high levels of economic inactivity with 29.6% (65,000 individuals) of the working age population classified accordingly and skills mismatch which make it difficult for some to gain employment. To increase the residential employment rate the city must address the high levels of economic inactivity by supporting those who are able back into employment, as well as ensuring local residents are equipped with the right mix of skills aligned to industry demands.

¹ Labour Force Survey December 2015

Impact of Welfare Reform

Northern Ireland is set to be hit harder by welfare reform than any other part of the UK with estimates that, when the reforms have come into full effect, they will take £750m a year out of the Northern Ireland economy. This is equivalent to a Northern Ireland average of £650² a year for every adult of working age (compared to an average of £470 a year across Great Britain). Belfast, with an expected loss of £840 per adult of working age, is hit harder than any major city in the UK – and significantly harder than other parts of Northern Ireland.

3 Future Employment Outlook

New employment growth to 2025 is forecast at around 4%, according to forecasts produced for the framework by Oxford Economics.³ This is a more restrained picture than during previous periods of high growth. Added to this, there are likely to be significant reductions in employment within the public sector.

In addition to the new jobs created, it is important to note that there will still be demand across all sectors to replace those who have left their jobs, meaning significant vacancy levels even in those sectors which may be in decline (“replacement demand”). Therefore, there are a number of large sectors such as hospitality and retail which, while they may not necessarily be creating large volumes of *new* jobs, will still create significant demand for replacement of labour.

Although the labour supply of skilled residents is set to improve in Belfast, there is still forecast to be a considerable oversupply of lower skilled labour in the short to medium term. This paints a relatively bleak picture for those at the lower end of the skills spectrum. Added to this, the impact of Welfare Reform has not been factored into these figures. Given that many of those who may be forced back into the labour market after long periods of absence are likely to have limited formal skills levels – in addition to the other challenges that they may face in entering the labour market – it is likely that there will be a significant surge in the claimant count in the short term at least (following the introduction of Welfare Reform in 2020). Cumulatively these trends, if they continue, could lead to an increasingly polarised labour market in Belfast.

² http://www.nicva.org/sites/default/files/d7content/attachments-resources/the_impact_of_welfare_reform_in_ni_2013.pdf

³ The forecasts provide employment projection figures based on ‘people’ based employment, as opposed to ‘jobs’ based employment. People based employment is the forecast number of people expected to be in employment. Jobs based employment (the number of total jobs) would be higher because many people have more than one job.

It is forecast that the key growth sectors continue to be those which have experienced the most investment and illustrate the structural shift to service sector growth within the city economy and have the largest share of employment. **Table 1** shows projected employment growth rates across all sectors in the period to 2025. The key growth sectors are forecast to be ICT, Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities, Administrative and Support Services, and Human Health and Social Work Activities. Between them these sectors account for three quarters (76%) of forecasted total employment growth. Conversely the forecasted impact of further austerity measures is highlighted through the expected loss of thousands of public sector jobs. It has been anecdotally reported that this cut may be as much as 10% of employment in the sector in the next four years. It illustrates a fundamental shift, with the ability of the public sector to create jobs in the future and directly influence the labour market more constrained.

Table 1: Forecast employment growth in Belfast, by sector, 2012-2025 (000's)⁴

	2012	2025	Change	% change
A Agriculture, forestry and fishing	0.15	0.18	0.0	20.3
B Mining and quarrying	0.12	0.09	0.0	-24.8
C Manufacturing	9.38	8.26	-1.1	-12.0
D Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	1.03	1.19	0.2	14.8
E Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	0.87	1.04	0.2	19.8
F Construction	6.50	6.80	0.3	4.7
G Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles	25.84	25.50	-0.3	-1.3
H Transport and storage	6.17	6.65	0.5	7.8
I Accommodation and food service activities	11.58	12.39	0.8	7.0
J Information and communication	9.94	11.97	2.0	20.4
K Financial and insurance activities	10.47	9.63	-0.8	-8.0
L Real estate activities	3.20	3.76	0.6	17.4
M Professional, scientific and technical activities	11.75	15.04	3.3	28.0
N Administrative and support service activities	18.46	22.63	4.2	22.6
O Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	24.82	20.73	-4.1	-16.5
P Education	17.01	17.23	0.2	1.3
Q Human health and social work activities	31.35	32.72	1.4	4.4
R, S, T, U Other	9.88	10.67	0.8	8.0

Table 2 shows what the above means for the employment rate in Belfast across different skills cohorts. It shows that structural imbalances within the labour market are forecast to remain in 2025, with the greatest gains in employment in higher to intermediate qualifications. In 2025 the employment rate for individuals with Level 4 qualifications and

⁴ Source: Oxford Economics Forecasts, 2014

above (85%) is forecast to still be more than double of those with no qualifications (39%), as is the case now.⁵

Table 2: Forecast changing employment rate by skills level, 2012 to 2025 (000's)⁶

Qualification level	GCSE/A Level Equivalent	2012	2025	% change: 2012 to 2025
No qualifications		38%	39%	1%
Level 1 qualifications	Equivalent of 1-4 GCSEs of any grade or entry level foundation diploma	61%	62%	1%
Level 2 qualifications	Equivalent of 5 GCSE A*-C grades	64%	67%	3%
Apprenticeship		74%	76%	2%
Level 3 qualifications	Equivalent of 2 A-Levels, 4 AS Levels, Advanced GNVQ, Advanced Diploma	70%	73%	3%
Level 4 qualifications and above	Equivalent of degree level qualification or above, foundation degree in Northern Ireland	85%	85%	0%
Other qualifications		72%	74%	2%

Supply and demand imbalance

As highlighted in table 2 there is a significant oversupply of lower skilled residents within Belfast, and this trend is forecast to continue. However there will be an improvement in the reduction in people with no qualifications (a continuation of the improvement over the last decade), and the supply of working age residents qualified to Level 4 and above will also increase, forecast at 34% compared to 28% in 2012. This will result in higher earnings, which have already improved across the city by 7.5% between 2010 and 2013.

Table 3 shows the expected position between the supply of resident skills and the demand for skill levels up to 2025. As shown in the table below, in the future, greater demand is

⁵ Some of the data in this section and the appendix refers to the base year as 2012. Oxford Economics use 2012 as that is the base year that the current forecasting model starts from (based on when population data starts from). There are changes in the population over time and assumptions made up to 2025 that are linked back to the base year of 2012. This is also consistent with the data for the Integrated Economic Framework where the base year is 2012.

⁶ Source: Oxford Economics forecasts, 2014

expected for higher skilled workers with Level 4 qualifications and above. However the supply of resident skills at this qualification level is not expected to match demand. This is not just a question of quantity (as many graduates are currently in low skilled jobs). It is also about the extent to which graduates have the specific technical skills and employability skills that employers require. Additionally a significant oversupply of residents with no or level 1 qualifications is expected to result in an oversupply in the market, making it increasingly difficult for individuals with these skill levels to find employment.

Table 3: Forecast supply of Belfast’s resident skills and demand for skills by qualification level, 2012 and 2025⁷

	2012	2025	2012	2025	2012	2025
Qualification level	% of total supply	% of total supply	% of total demand	% of total demand	Supply Minus Demand 000's	Supply Minus Demand 000's
No qualifications	23%	16%	12%	6%	28.6	22.2
Level 1 qualifications	12%	12%	12%	7%	4.2	12.6
Level 2 qualifications	14%	15%	17%	15%	-1.8	3.1
Apprenticeship	3%	2%	3%	3%	-0.4	-2.1
Level 3 qualifications	15%	16%	16%	20%	2.4	-4.6
Level 4 qualifications and above	28%	34%	37%	45%	-11.4	-17.6
Other qualifications	4%	4%	4%	4%	0.0	0.4
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%		

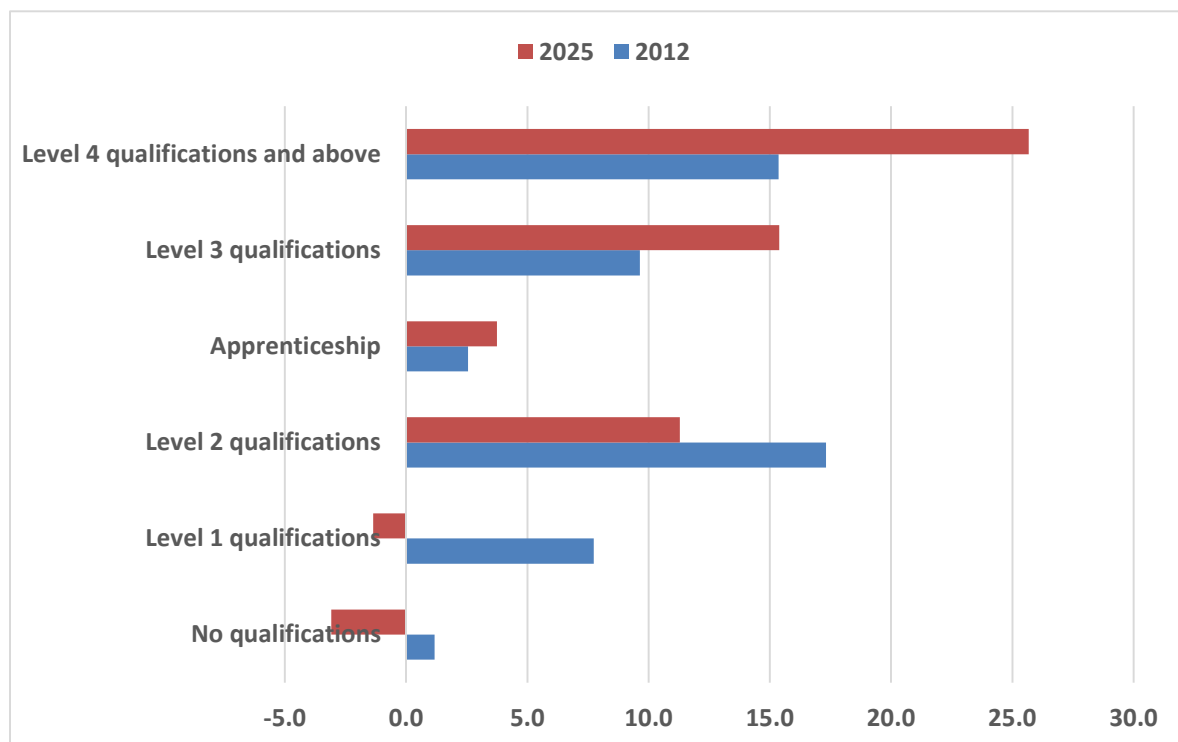
Reliance on skilled commuters

Because the increase in supply of higher skilled residents will not match demand, this will inevitably lead to an increase in net commuters with level 4 qualifications or above over the forecast period. Belfast is not producing enough of its own graduates with required skills sets to reduce commuting, and without action, it is difficult to perceive this trend changing in either the medium or long term. It is forecasted that commuting for those who possess level 3 and 4 qualifications will increase by 38% and 43% respectively by 2025.

⁷ Source: Oxford Economics Forecasts, 2014

Figure 1 illustrates the forecasted shift in numbers of higher skilled commuters over this timeframe, with net commuting for low level qualifications a negative, meaning more local residents are accessing lower level employment than those commuting in. However, as previously noted, there will be a much lower volume of these lower-skilled roles in the future.

Figure 1: Levels of net commuting by skill level, 2012 and 2025⁸



Skills demand across key sectors

Changes in skills demand are driven by changes in overall employment, sectoral employment and the share of skills within sectors. As highlighted previously in the future, jobs in Belfast will require more intermediate and higher level qualifications. Tables 4 to 7 illustrate the trends amongst the key growth sectors in the city. They suggest, that, with the exception of Administration and Support (which is forecast to experience particularly strong growth in jobs with intermediate occupations and a spread also amongst lower level qualifications), the focus is very much upon demand for Level 4, and to a lesser extent, Level 3 qualifications across these growth sectors. Particularly notable is the growth of nearly 6,000 jobs at Level 4 within Human Health and Social Work between 2012 and 2025.

⁸ Source: Oxford Economics forecasts

Beyond these key growth sectors however, there is also forecast for significant demand of higher level skills across other sectors, where the large forecast fall in lower skilled employment somewhat masks the demand for higher level skills. For instance, there is forecast employment for 1,700 jobs at Level 4 within Financial and Professional Services over this period; 1,600 within Wholesale and Retail; nearly 1,000 within Accommodation and Food; and 900 in Education.

This highlights the widespread trend for higher level skills extends not just within what would be deemed 'higher value' sectors, but is cross-cutting across the whole economy.

Table 4: Employment demand change in ICT by qualification level, 2012 to 2025 (000's)⁹

	Volume change	% change
No qualifications	-0.3	-68.7
Level 1 qualifications	-0.5	-69.7
Level 2 qualifications	0.2	14.5
Apprenticeship	0.1	20.4
Level 3 qualifications	0.9	60.5
Level 4 and above	1.6	28.2
Other qualifications	0.1	20.4

Table 5: Employment demand change in Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities, by qualification level, 2012 to 2025 (000's)¹⁰

	Volume change	% change
No qualifications	-0.3	-75.4
Level 1 qualifications	0.0	-0.8
Level 2 qualifications	0.5	33.7
Apprenticeship	0.0	28.0
Level 3 qualifications	1.0	77.4
Level 4 and above	2.1	28.2
Other qualifications	0.1	28.0

⁹ Source: Oxford Economics Forecasts, 2014

¹⁰ Source: Oxford Economics Forecasts, 2014

Table 6: Employment demand change in Administrative and Support Services, by qualification level, 2012 to 2025 (000's)¹¹

	Volume change	% change
No qualifications	0.1	3.4
Level 1 qualifications	0.3	8.9
Level 2 qualifications	0.9	25.5
Apprenticeship	0.2	22.6
Level 3 qualifications	1.5	57.0
Level 4 and above	0.9	25.8
Other qualifications	0.3	22.6

Table 7: Employment demand change in Human Health and Social Work, by qualification level, 2012 to 2025 (000's)¹²

	Volume change	% change
No qualifications	-1.7	-62.1
Level 1 qualifications	-1.6	-58.6
Level 2 qualifications	-1.8	-37.5
Apprenticeship	0.0	4.4
Level 3 qualifications	0.7	15.2
Level 4 and above	5.8	38.0
Other qualifications	0.0	4.4

¹¹ Source: Oxford Economics Forecasts, 2014

¹² Source: Oxford Economics Forecasts, 2014

4 The Belfast Policy Context

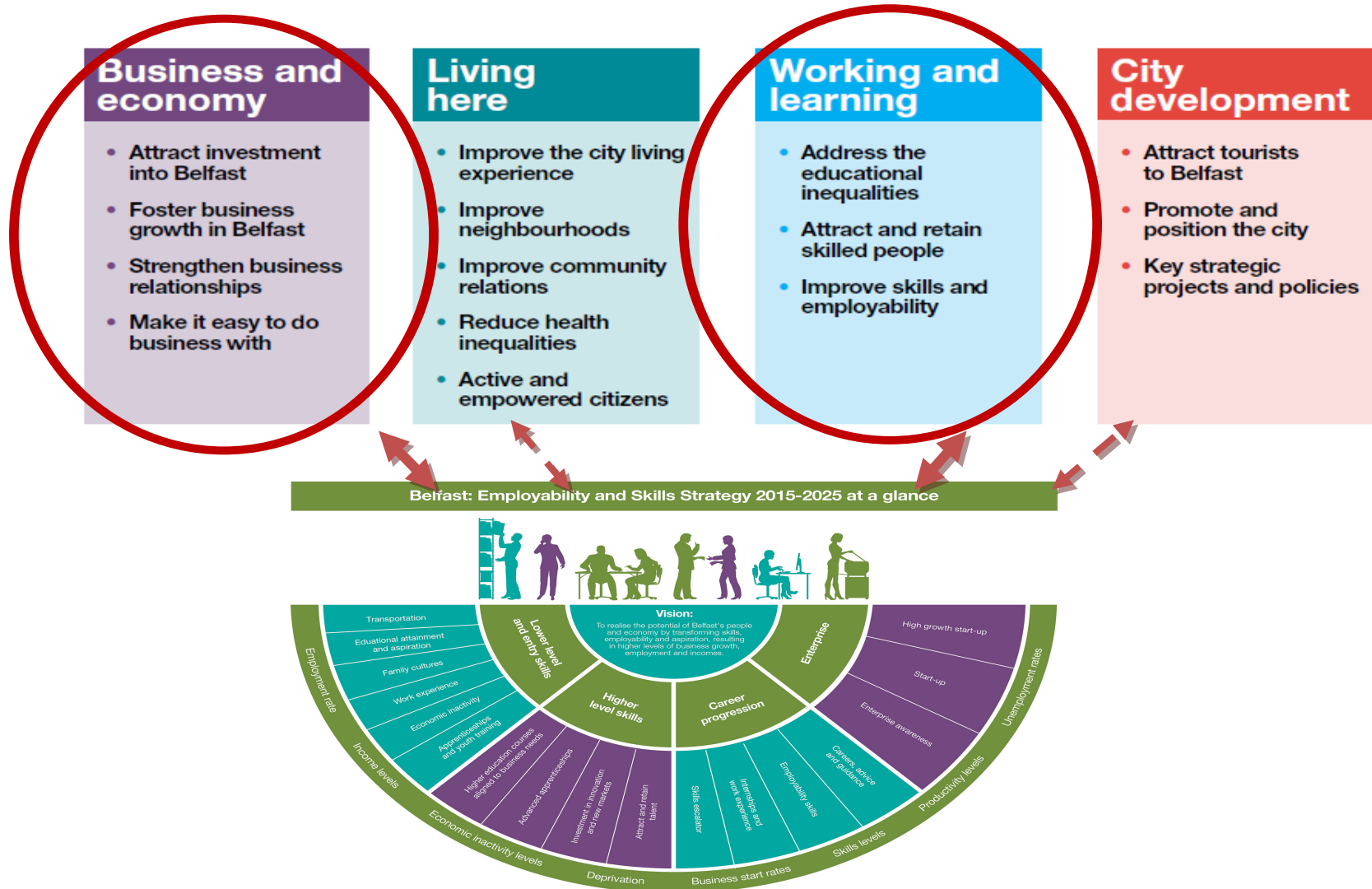
The Employability and Skills Framework is set in the context of Northern Ireland and Belfast level policy and strategy. Within Belfast itself, there are a number of strategies, policies and changes in the local government environment that are central to the employability and skills framework and action plan.

The most important change is Local Government Reform (LGR), under which Belfast City Council acquired enhanced planning, regeneration and economic development functions in April 2015. Community Planning is an important element of LGR, a process which will lead to the creation of an overarching plan (Belfast Agenda) to improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the city.

The 'Belfast Agenda' is the city's strategic plan for the future, up to 2030. As a sub-set of the Belfast Agenda, the Employability and Skills Framework will contribute towards the achievement of the priorities set out in the agenda. As outlined in **figure 2**, the framework will specifically align to the 'Business and Economy' and 'Working and Learning' themes of the Belfast Agenda. It will also support the delivery of the other two pillars, namely 'Living Here' and 'City Development'.

Research indicates that Belfast is a significant source of employment for residents from all across Northern Ireland. 58% of those who work in the city travel in from adjacent areas. The work that is currently under way to look at the role of Belfast in the regional economy has identified that addressing the employability and skills challenge will be critical to the future success of the city – and of the wider region. This work also identifies the potential for city-level activity to address the associated challenge and to start to make an impact in terms of improvements in the employment rate and in skills levels across the board.

Figure 2 – the Belfast Agenda and the Employability and Skills Framework



5 The Challenges Associated with Employability and Skills

Belfast faces a number of employability and skills challenges which were highlighted in the development of this Framework. These relate to both strategy and delivery and are contributing to the overarching problem of the Belfast economy not achieving its potential in terms of growth, productivity and employment. The key challenges include:

Challenge	Associated issues
Employability Skills	The lack of employability skills across all sections of the working age population. These combine basic attitudes and abilities that are essential to work, as well as crucial generic skills that contribute to productivity and success from basic to high level roles. This is affecting not only those who are most marginalised from the labour market but also those leaving college and notably university. This is having knock-on effects for access to lower level jobs.
Culture	Family cultures around schooling, education and the world of work are also affecting employability. In particular this has knock on effects for the ability to tackle the cycle of decline in some neighbourhoods, and for people to move into even the lowest levels of employment opportunity.
Basic and essential skills	The demographic aged over 25 lack general technical skills. A significant proportion of the working age population (aged over 25) have left school with no formal qualifications and have subsequently found it very difficult to move into employment. Similarly, there is a large number of over 40 year olds who have been affected by the decline of heavy primary industry and manufacturing, and have been unable to move back into employment with limited skill sets.
Enterprise	The low levels of entrepreneurship in Belfast mean that people are reliant on employment as a route into work. There is a need to link entrepreneurship in education and careers advice offers, and to build a stronger local support package for start-ups
Careers Advice	Careers advice and access to work experience opportunities is patchy. There is too little quality provision which enables young people to get informed advice about their future and there are gaps in the levels of awareness among teachers about future growth areas and the skills and pathways required to access these.
Governance	There is a significant amount of complexity and duplication in relation to provision around employability and skills. Interventions are being delivered by a wide range of stakeholders, with no real sense of joining up or measurement of impact

6 Overview of draft Framework

Overarching principles

Consultation on this framework revealed that the way in which action on employability and skills is designed and delivered is as important as the actions themselves. There is acknowledgement that in the past there has been insufficient connection between organisations and projects, and too little emphasis on a long term and strategic approach. The following principles therefore guide the Belfast Employability and Skills Framework.

Joined up and holistic Whilst there is a myriad of activity going on around employability and skills in Belfast, there is little coordination, too much fragmentation and complexity. The Framework provides a mechanism to join up disparate activity, providing a strategic, coherent and city wide approach to employability and skills.

Citywide approach	A strategic and joined up approach must also be a city-wide one. Delivering overall programmes for Belfast will be more efficient and effective than a myriad of smaller ones which risk duplicating activity. Whilst the overall vision and programmes will be city-wide it will important to deliver through a model that is sensitive to local challenges and opportunities, and can work with local organisations and communities to meet specific needs.
Long-term approach	An ambitious and transformative approach will require time, so Belfast must look ahead at future trends, issues and opportunities and plan for the long term. It recognises that addressing employability and skills challenges is a significant and long term job and there are not necessarily any quick fixes.
Outcome-based	The Framework will focus on delivering tangible outcomes that contribute to wider goals and vision and which visibly benefit the people of Belfast. This framework is therefore driven by the outcomes of the Belfast Agenda.
Needs-based approach	The Framework is needs based recognising that demand and supply needs to be aligned to ensure labour market skills match employer demands and reflecting changes in market conditions in both a local and global market context.
Aspirational and ambitious	Belfast's long term goal is to maintain and improve its position as the economic driver for Northern Ireland. This is as challenging as it is important, and it will only be achieved if it is ambitious and seeks radical change for the good of the whole city
Inclusive growth	Employment is the main mechanism through which individuals can lift themselves out of the poverty trap. A core principle of this framework will be to support inclusive growth by facilitating access to employment opportunities, arising from economic growth, in all parts of the city

Vision and targets

The vision for the Belfast Employability and Skills Framework is:

To realise the potential of Belfast's people and its economy by transforming skills, employability and aspiration, resulting in higher levels of business growth, employment and income.

Backing up this vision, a headline target has been established, based on the employment rate in the city. Therefore the headline indicator is:

To achieve an employment rate of at least 70% by 2025.

By way of context, the baseline position is around 65.6% (Labour Force Survey December 2015). The draft Northern Ireland Economic Inactivity Strategy (2014) suggested a regional employment target of 70%.

This increase would mean moving an estimated 17,300 **additional** Belfast residents into work up to the period 2025, and would require an increase in the employment rate of 0.36 percentage points per year (year on year).

The overarching vision and target is supported by three supplementary stretching sub-targets that relate to skills levels. This reflects the view that the two issues are inextricably linked: improvements in skills levels both enhance the potential to find work and can generate better financial returns in terms of increased earnings.

- **Sub target 1:** To reduce the proportion of the working age population with no qualifications from 2012 baseline of 23% to between 9% and 12% by 2025
- **Sub-target 2:** To increase the proportion of the working age population with level 2 qualifications and above from 2012 baseline of 64% to between 76% and 79% by 2025.
- **Sub-target 3:** To increase the proportion of the working age population with level 4 qualifications and above from 2012 baseline of 28% to between 37% and 39% by 2025.

These targets should not be viewed as static and fixed, rather there needs to be the flexibility to amend targets based upon wider external factors such as economic conditions and changes in the policy environment. As the wider framework needs to be a live and fluid document, so do the targets. This is particularly important in a constantly changing economy and where external policy changes will have a significant impact on the city's economy.

Achievement of the targets will be dependent on agreement to the need to focus on these, as well as a commitment to measure progress consistently across a range of interventions. While it will take some time to agree the full range of actions, it is considered that it is critical to retain these targets – albeit that they can be open to review – as a means of focusing attention across a range of agencies and delivery partners.

Overarching aims and objectives

The framework has four key aims. These are:

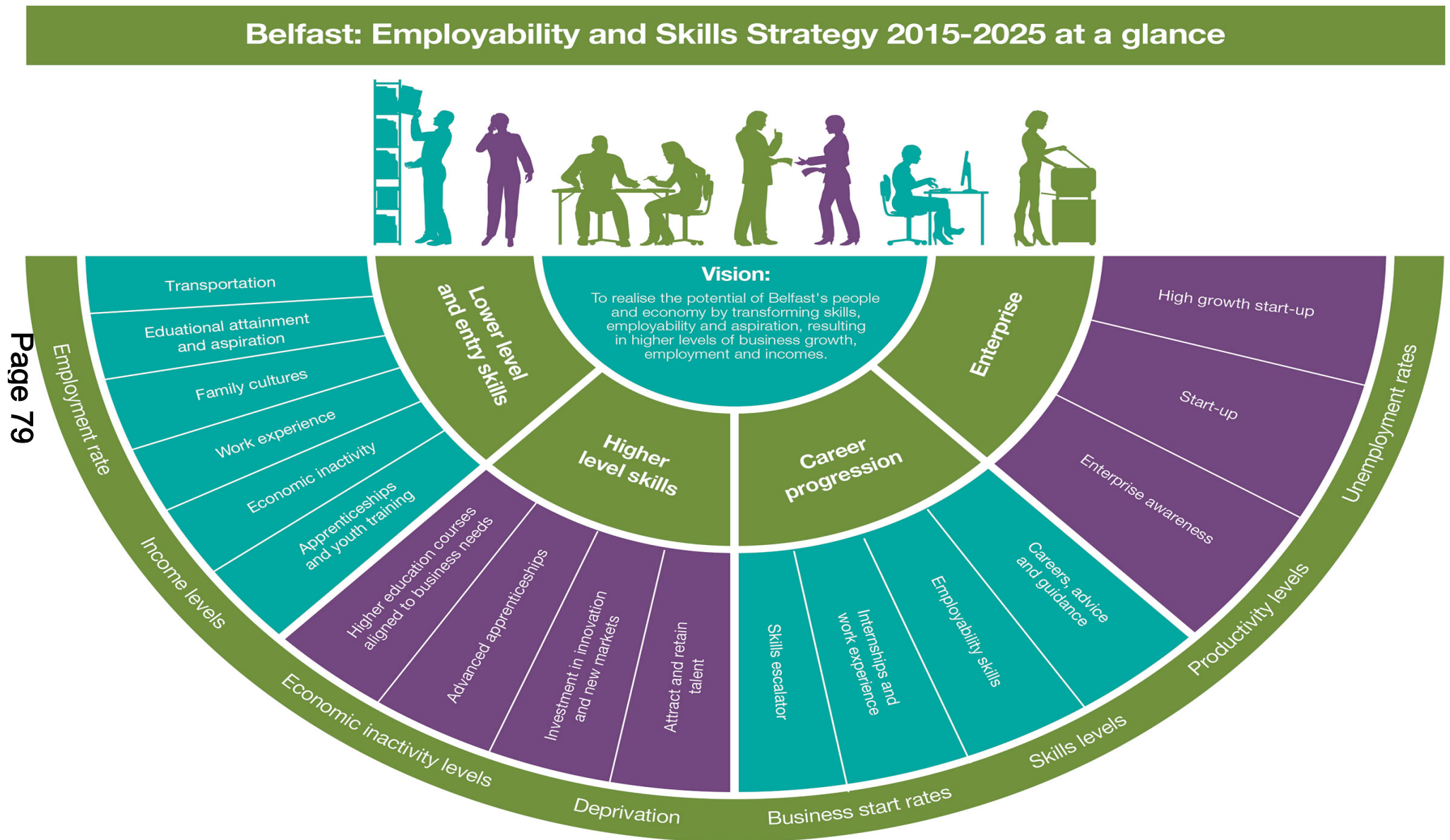
1. To increase access to employment by supporting the development of lower and entry level skills and by addressing barriers preventing access to jobs
2. To generate higher level skills which meet the demands of employers and investors
3. To facilitate career progression routes across all skill levels
4. To develop a culture of entrepreneurship at all levels

Each aim is supported by a suite of objectives (see overleaf). The draft framework identified a number of priority actions. These will be further developed by those parties involved in the working groups established to bring forward key projects in each area. Year 1 priority actions are set out in Appendix 2.

Table 8: Belfast Employability and Skills Framework: Aims and Objectives

Aim	Objectives
<p>Aim 1: To increase access to employment by supporting the development of lower and entry level skills and by addressing barriers preventing access to jobs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To work collaboratively with government partners to establish more coherence around the support provision to help economically inactive individuals back into work (employability and support services) b) To work collaboratively with relevant government departments to influence the attainment and attitudes of schools and further education providers in key areas i.e. encouraging vocational skills in growth areas c) To create a cultural shift in aspirations through engaging families with complex needs d) To provide work experience and up skilling opportunities for those furthest from the labour market, including those aged 24+ e) To work with transport providers to look at how improvements in mobility can support access to employment f) To work with government partners and key partners to create more opportunities for apprenticeships and youth training, through investment projects.
<p>Aim 2: To generate higher level skills which meet the demands of employers and investors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To work with Invest NI, employers and higher education providers to ensure that course provision meets business needs b) To encourage more higher and advanced level apprenticeships c) To work directly with small growth-focused businesses and encourage all city employers to invest in innovation and new markets to close the productivity gap d) Attracting and retaining talent.
<p>Aim 3: To facilitate career progression routes across all skill levels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To work with government departments in the roll-out of the new careers advice and guidance strategy, better connecting education and employers b) To work with the education sector, training providers and employers to develop and encourage delivery of standardised employability skills (pre and post employment) c) To work with government departments and employers to provide opportunities for career progression along the ‘skills escalator’ at all levels d) Coordinate and extend internships and placements with employers across the city.
<p>Aim 4: To develop a culture of entrepreneurship at all levels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Build enterprise, entrepreneurship and self-employment skills through targeted programmes b) Work with schools and colleges to increase enterprise awareness through the use of positive role models and encouraging a culture of entrepreneurship c) Work directly with universities and colleges to encourage more high growth potential business starts.

Figure 3: Belfast Employability and Skills Framework: Summary of vision, overarching aims and activity themes



7 Implementation

Governance and management

The consultation and other desk based activities undertaken as part of this work has identified that whilst there is a myriad of activity going on around employability and skills in Belfast, there is little coordination, too much fragmentation and complexity. What is required is a means of joining together this disparate activity and providing a strategic, coherent and city wide approach to employability and skills.

Additionally it is important that strategic and operational activity around employability and skills links into wider strategy being undertaken at Belfast City and Northern Ireland levels. As the Community Plan for the city, the Belfast Agenda will provide overall strategic context for the Employability and Skills Framework. Therefore, it is proposed that the overall governance of the Framework will be through the Belfast Community Planning Board who will agree key priorities and provide strategic oversight of the Framework's implementation.

It is intended that delivery structures will be created around the four key aims of the framework. These will involve representatives from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors based on the areas of priority, as set by the Belfast Community Planning Board. Given that this is not yet operational, it is proposed that a number of Task and Finish groups start to take forward individual elements of activity, in the context of the Belfast Agenda.

A draft action plan for year one activity (2016/17) has been developed. Given the long-term focus of much of this activity, it is likely that there will also be a significant degree of preliminary work to look at longer-term collaborative approaches. The Programme for Government commitments on employability, skills and inclusive growth as well as the Belfast Agenda framework are critical vehicles in helping focus activity and in securing buy-in from all partners around an agreed programme of work, and leveraging the relevant resources to make this happen.

Figure 4: Belfast Employability and Skills Framework: overview of aims, targets and outcome measurements

BELFAST AGENDA - OVERARCHING FRAMEWORK

Vision: Employability and Skills Framework

To realise the potential of Belfast's people and its economy by transforming skills, employability and aspiration, resulting in higher levels of business growth, employment and income

Aims

- To provide a rounded and whole-life package of entry and lower level skills development and provision
- To generate higher level skills which meet the demands of employers and investors
- To enable progression routes and employability skills for all
- To develop a culture of entrepreneurship at all levels

Targets

- To achieve an employment rate of at least 70% by 2025
- To reduce the proportion of the working age population with no qualifications from 23% to between 9% and 12% by 2025
- To increase the proportion of the working age population with level two qualifications and above from 64% to between 76% and 79% by 2025
- To increase the proportion of the working age population with level 4 qualifications and above from 28% to between 37% and 39% by 2025

Indicative outcome measurements

- Employment rate for key groups e.g. LT sick, disabled
- Median income levels
- Youth unemployment levels
- No/% of residents who are workless
- Productivity improvements (GVA per worker)
- Economic inactivity rates (incl. by area)
- % population earning < median income level
- No/% of NEETs
- % of Belfast wards in to 10%/20% most deprived
- Business birth rates

Governance and Management

Governance and oversight: skills group of Belfast Agenda Board. Coordination and delivery of Council-led activities: dedicated resources within Council

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Subject:	Proposed ERDF- funded business start and business growth activity
Date:	12 October 2016
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development
Contact Officer:	Colin McCabrey, Economic Development Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update concerning advancement of three projects. They are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Regional Business Start Initiative, named locally as the Go for It Programme; • A Belfast-specific programme for higher growth potential start-up businesses; • A Belfast-specific business growth programme for established businesses to increase their competitiveness and growth.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Note progress in advancing a Regional Business Start Programme (Go for It), a Belfast specific programme for higher-growth potential start-up businesses and a Belfast specific business growth programme for established businesses; – Note the funding status of each of the above programmes under European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Investment for Growth and Jobs Programme 2014 – 2023 and Invest NI; and – Note the proposals for business start provision from the end of the existing contract (22

	October 2016) until the start of the new regional programme, expected to be 1 April 2017.
3.0	Main report
3.1	The purpose of the Programme for Government Outcomes Framework is to improve wellbeing for all by tackling disadvantage and driving economic growth. It contains outcomes which are reflective of the Council's ambition for Growing the Economy, set out in the Belfast Agenda. Such outcomes include our ambition to be an innovative, creative society where people can fulfil their potential and that we have more people working in better jobs.
3.2	In April 2015, Councils assumed statutory responsibility for a range of business start and entrepreneurship support activities.
3.3	<p>Since the transfer of functions, officers have been exploring opportunities for securing external resources to support the ambitions set out in the Belfast Agenda for 'Growing the Economy' and re-focusing our own resources in order to meet the needs of our local businesses. This has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplifying our messaging about the type of support that is available at each stage of the business lifecycle (Starting your Business; Growing your Business and Investing in Belfast) • Working with partners to ensure that there are no major gaps in provision of support to our target businesses • Improving signposting for businesses to ensure that they get the help they need when they need it • Looking at how we can better package the support that we provide to businesses across the wide range of Council services (including Building Control, Waste Management, Street Cleansing, City Centre Development etc) • Exploring potential incentives to encourage additional business start (including financial incentives and packaging business accommodation and business support services) • Exploring opportunities for greater alignment between the Council's investment in business growth initiatives and its support for employability and skills issues – ensuring that local companies have access to the skills and talent that they need to grow their business and improve their competitiveness.

3.4	<p>Work is currently underway to agree with partners the priority actions to move forward on the Belfast Agenda's 'Growing the Economy' theme. Given that the Council has statutory responsibility in this field, it is likely that this will form a significant part of the actions on which the Council will lead, bringing in other partners as appropriate.</p>
3.5	<p>In recognition of the pressures on Council resources, Officers have identified the opportunity to secure up to 80% match funding for eligible activities under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through the Investment for Growth and Jobs (IGJ) Programme 2014-2023.</p>
3.6	<p><u>Advancing a Regional Business Start Programme (Go for It) to support Growing the Economy</u></p> <p>Members will recall that, as a result of Local Government Reform (LGR), a number of economic development functions transferred from the former DETI/Invest NI to local authorities. These functions included support for business start-up as well as targeted support for under-represented groups (youth, females) and social enterprise support.</p>
3.7	<p>Given that this is now a statutory function of local authorities, the associated job targets have been set out in the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 and local authorities are accountable for the delivery of these targets. This Order contains an indicator regarding "the number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity". The annual Belfast target for this is 325 jobs defined as completion of 325 business plans.</p>
3.8	<p>Councils have a collective "in principle" agreement to move forward with a regional Business Start programme in order to ensure consistency of provision in all areas. A business case for the new programme was developed and this has been submitted to Invest NI on behalf of the 11 local authorities. Invest NI is in the process of undertaking an economic appraisal in order to determine the viability of providing ERDF and Invest NI financial support to deliver the new programme. The only outcome measured in the ERDF programme is "jobs created" at a cost of £1,000 per job. Up to 80% match funding is available for eligible activity via ERDF (60%) and Invest NI (20%) with Councils required to provide the remaining 20% match funding.</p>
3.9	<p>Pending an Invest NI decision on the new programme, councils agreed to extend the contract on the existing programme to support business start (which is delivered by a range</p>

	<p>of Enterprise Agencies across Northern Ireland). This contract cannot be extended beyond 22 October 2016.</p>
3.10	<p>The business case presented to Invest NI on behalf of all of the councils will deliver 1,330 business plans and 819 jobs over 3.5 years in Belfast. Officers are continuing to work with Invest NI on a number of key points within the economic appraisal in order to ensure that the business support offer is attractive to interested individuals and meets their specific development needs. Members will be aware that the business start-up rate in Belfast is significantly below regional and national averages: Belfast is currently the lowest ranked city for business start-up in the annual Centre for Cities index.</p>
3.11	<p>In order to ensure that the EU match-funding element is available for the programme Councils met Invest NI's timescale of collectively agreeing the programme by 29th September 2016. The timeframe stipulated by Invest NI is to ensure that councils receive a Letter of Offer prior to the Autumn statement, scheduled for 23 November 2016. Current advice from Invest NI is that funding committed by this stage will be supported post-Brexit. Council Chief Executives – at their meeting on 23 September – endorsed the collaborative approach.</p>
3.12	<p>Upon receipt of the Letter of Offer, the procurement of the regional programme will be advanced by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council. The indicative date for having a regional delivery partner in place is the start of the new financial year (1 April 2017).</p>
3.13	<p>For the interim period (22 October 2016 to 31 March 2017), councils are developing their own approaches to business start-up support. In Belfast, it is proposed that the interim solution will be to utilise the service contract for Innovation Factory. The contract allows for the establishment of “additional” or “optional” services in line with the main contract. This proposal is dependent on commercial negotiation with the operator, but early indications are that it may present opportunities for engagement of the local supply chain in the delivery activity. The need to ensure that there is service provision in place all across the City will be one of the key considerations in agreeing the interim solution, as well as a focus on quality and the need to ensure that we meet the business start targets agreed set out in the Local Government 2015 Order. This activity will be funded under the Transfer of Functions budget for promoting entrepreneurship.</p>
3.14	<p><u>A Belfast-specific programme for high growth potential start-up businesses</u> Additionally but complementary to the Regional Business Start Programme (Go for It)</p>

<p>3.15</p> <p>3.16</p> <p>3.17</p> <p>3.18</p> <p>3.19</p>	<p>Officers are advancing a higher growth potential business start programme / tier 2 programme which will be specific to Belfast. This project, which is still being articulated and appraised by Invest NI is designed to encourage the development of higher growth businesses (employment and export) with a particular focus on Belfast City Council's key sectors, including creative and digital industries, Green/Clean technology sector, technology/ ICT and tourism.</p> <p>The programme fits within Council's pipeline of support from pre-enterprise support through to post start business growth support. The programme is designed to provide a greater level of specialist assistance to companies compared to the generic regional start initiative / Go for It replacement programme.</p> <p>The output for this project is still under review and targets are dependent on the final agreed appraisal relating to the Regional Business Start Programme (Go for It). At a minimum it will create 630 jobs over 5 years in businesses at the start up stage (less than 2 years) where the business can demonstrate higher-growth potential. Once accepted onto the programme, participants will be able to access support up to two years post-start. This support will be aligned with the Council's other support and programmes.</p> <p>An economic appraisal for this project is being completed by Invest NI. There is currently no guarantee of funding for this project.</p> <p><u>A Belfast specific business growth programme for established businesses to increase their competitiveness and growth</u></p> <p>Belfast City Council is the first Council to be awarded a Letter of Offer for a project of this type. The Letter of Offer is subject to revision to provide a further 2 year period for delivery (currently 3 years). This programme will deliver support to existing businesses. The programme will deliver 336 jobs over 5 years.</p> <p>Belfast City Council has a positive track record of delivering projects like this. Our previous ERDF funded programme, <i>Go for Growth</i> has been successful and this project will adopt the same process. This programme offers support to businesses irrespective of sector or scale of economic opportunity. Procurement for the advancement of this programme will be commencing soon upon acceptance of the Letter of Offer.</p> <p><u>Financial Implications</u></p> <p>The cost for business start-up activity will continue to be delivered from within existing</p>
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3.20	<p>Economic Development budgets, inclusive of the budget associated with transferring functions. If successfully awarded Letters of Offer from Invest NI these projects could collectively benefit from approximately £1.2m.</p> <p><u>Equality and good relations implications</u></p> <p>Current and future business start-up programmes have been designed to help remove barriers to participation. Officers are currently assessing options to enhance the provision to be provided through the regional programme with the aim of adding further value and promoting equality of opportunity.</p>
3.21	
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	None



Subject:	Innovation Factory update
Date:	12 October 2016
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development
Contact Officer:	Colin McCabrey, Economic Development Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update Members on progress on the Innovation Factory (IF) Project which plays a key role in growing the city economy – the Council’s flagship new development to support new business starts and to encourage existing companies to grow and become more productive.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to note: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – how this project encompasses the Council’s aspiration for Growing the Economy under the Belfast Agenda; – the work undertaken to mobilise the centre towards opening to the public on 29 September; and – how community benefit and good relations has been incorporated into the operation of the centre as a model of best practice.

3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>The Innovation Factory is located at Forthriver Business Park and offers ‘Grade A’ standard business accommodation in the form of a 55,000 sq. ft. building comprising 32,240 sq. ft. lettable space and 5,133 sq. ft. innovation space. It is the first development on the wider 14 acre business park which was previously the site of James Mackie and Sons Engineering Works.</p>
3.2	<p>The Innovation Factory project characterises a local economy, community, place and situation which the Council hopes can be achieved on a city-wide scale. By this we mean:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A socially responsible centre where contract and management arrangements act as a catalyst for the local economy in terms of wealth generation, jobs, skills and employability, contributing to inclusive economic growth and the Council’s anti-poverty agenda; - A mix of ingredients for businesses to start, grow and innovate: infrastructure (telecoms and data storage), support, quality design of accommodation, access to other markets; - Capital investment leads to increased civic pride, shared space & good relations, enhanced public realm, access to quality services and improved living environments; - Access to finance; and - Collaboration and innovation leading to a longer-term sustainable economy.
3.3	<p>The centre will be a significant contributor to the Council’s job creation target of 50,000 jobs and 5,000 new businesses supported. The current draft of the Belfast Agenda sets out these targets for the next 20 years. These targets are still work in progress but the Innovation Factory will accommodate 382 workstations across 111 business units. It will support at least 145 jobs in the operation of the centre by December 2018 and 187 by December 2020. It will provide support annually to over 100 businesses and create 5 collaborative networks. It will promote and encourage social and economic regeneration, encourage local and foreign direct investment and act as a catalyst for further development of Forthriver Business Park.</p>
3.4	<p>Belfast City Council accepted hand over of the centre from the contractor Heron Bros Ltd on 18th April 2016 ahead of the scheduled capital completion date of 6th May 2016. The project was also completed in budget.</p>

3.5	<p>In parallel with the construction contract, the centre operators – Oxford Innovation Limited – were appointed via a competitive dialogue procurement process. The Service Contract with Oxford Innovation came into effect on 1st June 2016 and since that point they have been mobilising to get the centre open for business at the end of September.</p>
3.6	<p>Oxford Innovation Ltd is responsible for overall centre management. A range of operational services will be sub-contracted locally and/or delivered via existing or newly created social enterprises where opportunity exists. To support local supply chains, Oxford Innovation have held ‘Meet The Buyer’ sessions, with over 30 local businesses engaged to date. These have provided an opportunity to meet with potential suppliers of some of these sub-contracted services and a number of these contracts are now in place.</p>
3.7	<p>The Innovation Factory will not only provide business space. The centre will also offer business programmes and mentoring support to centre tenants (and non-tenants) to be provided by Full Circle Management Consultants (Belfast-based company).</p>
3.8	<p>Social regeneration impacts (including social enterprise development) will be delivered by Time Associates and GEMS NI. GEMS NI has a clear focus and track record in moving people from long-term unemployment, economic inactivity and worklessness to work and has been a partner of the Council on a range of initiatives since its establishment during the development of the Gasworks.</p>
3.9	<p>Since June 2016 Oxford Innovation and the Council have been working in partnership to get the centre ready for opening. This work has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Recruitment: local recruitment of an Innovation Director, Centre Manager, Assistant Centre Manager, Community Engagement Officer and two Centre Support Assistants; – Installation of telecoms infrastructure; – Development of brand guidelines for the centre and website; – Agreeing policies for the operation of the centre (e.g. finance manual, staff, procurement and lettings policies); – Agreeing the capital expenditure plan for the fit-out of the centre; – Agreeing the business growth and business innovation services delivered at the centre; and

<p>3.10</p>	<p>– Agreeing the Good Relations and Shared Space Policy and Social Integration and Community Engagement Plan for the Centre.</p>
<p>3.11</p>	<p>The Innovation Factory’s Good Relations and Shared Space Policy and Social Integration and Community Engagement Plan demonstrate a commitment to ensuring that the centre will have a positive impact on local communities. These plans set out the Innovation Factory’s vision, namely:</p> <p><i>“The promotion of the social and economic regeneration of the Springfield Road and Shankill Road areas and surrounding locality, providing employment opportunities and acting as a catalyst for further development in the area.”</i></p> <p>There are seven key priorities, each of which contain timed actions for delivery. The priorities are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To devise a clear and explicit policy based on the principles of Good Relations and Shared Space that ensures the IF remains a safe and welcoming environment where all members of the community, tenants, users, visitors feel comfortable and safe; 2. To assist and support local businesses to tap into supply-chain ‘spin-off’ opportunities arising from the operation of the Innovation Factory; 3. To facilitate skills development work placements and permanent employment opportunities for long term unemployed / economically inactive people living within the local community; 4. To provide school children from the Springfield Road, Shankill area and surrounding locality with first hand exposure to Innovation and Entrepreneurship with the aim of inspiring the next generation; 5. To engage actively with the local community to show-case operations including promotion of social enterprise activity and corporate social responsibility; 6. To encourage positive local engagement aligned to the ethos of the Innovation Factory that can extend its core services to include under-represented groups; and
<p>3.12</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Actively target, exploit and monitor potential sources of external support funding / other opportunities related to social regeneration. <p>Progress on each of these areas will be reported at quarterly management meetings between the operator and Council officers. The payment mechanism for the operator contract has been set up in such a way that the operator must demonstrate progress not only on the commercial elements of the centre (% occupancy, agreed rental) but must also show that they are meeting their social regeneration obligations.</p>

4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	None

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Subject:	Belfast City Council Entrepreneurship Provision - Enterprising Britain Award
Date:	12 October 2016
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development
Contact Officer:	Colin McCabrey, Economic Development Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>The purpose of the report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Update Members on the announcement of an Enterprising Britain Award for the Council’s Belfast Enterprise Academy which is a student entrepreneurship programme; and – Inform Members of current and planned initiatives aimed at supporting enterprise and entrepreneurship across the city, as part of the wider Belfast Agenda which sets an ambition to grow the number and quality of new business starts.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Note the various strands of work being delivered to support enterprise and entrepreneurship across the city; – Note that the Belfast Enterprise Academy has been highly commended in the Building Enterprise category of the Enterprising Britain Awards 2016; – Agree attendance by the Chair of City Growth and Regeneration Committee (or nominee) and one officer at the awards ceremony which takes place in London in late October (date to be confirmed).
3.0	Main report

3.1	<p>Officers have been planning future programmes so to ensure a continuum of support to contribute to the Council’s goals under the <i>Growing the Economy</i> strand of the Belfast Agenda. Although still in formation, the draft targets within the Belfast Agenda set an aspiration to create 50,000 jobs and to support 5,000 new businesses over 15 years. Further definition of the targets is being undertaken regarding the type and quality of jobs to contribute to a longer-term sustainable local economy. Naturally, there will be a proportion of the target met by Foreign Direct Investment and key investment developments across the city. However, to ensure that we meet the Council’s objectives of a socially inclusive city, working to the anti-poverty agenda, it is important that equal priority is given to growing indigenous talent and new businesses. These ‘home-grown’ businesses will act as a catalyst for jobs within local communities and will contribute to the inclusive growth agenda.</p>
3.2	<p>In addition, the Council’s Employability and Skills Framework highlights key issues that enterprise and entrepreneurship activity can help address such as a generational culture of worklessness, poor career planning and low levels of confidence and innovation.</p>
3.3	<p>Currently, start-up rates in Belfast are significantly below regional and UK average. Council activity in this field has increased over the last two years, in line with the transfer of economic development functions from DETI/Invest NI to Councils through Local Government Reform in April 2015.</p>
3.4	<p>The Council delivers support to businesses across a range of stages of development.</p> <p>These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting Your Business • Growing Your Business • Investing in Belfast
3.5	<p>Under the “Starting a Business” strand of work, the Council delivers a range of programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pre-enterprise support initiatives to encourage persons to consider self-employment;
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schools initiatives aimed at promoting entrepreneurship as a career choice;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activity to target under-represented groups (e.g. through partnership with Women in Business); - Graduate Entrepreneurship Programmes such as Belfast Enterprise Academy (referred to below); - Enterprise networking events via the very successful Belfast Entrepreneurs' Network; - Support to entrepreneurs starting their own business via the Council's Regional Start Initiative Programme (Go for It) and Go Social Programme (for social and co-operative enterprises); - Council Economic Development staff volunteer for Young Enterprise, attending schools and careers events to promote careers advice along with profiling the services of the Council.
3.6	<p>As we advance these programmes under the Belfast Agenda we are looking to further incentivise start up businesses and create more pop-up opportunities for entrepreneurs to test trade in vacant space or St George's Market.</p>
3.7	<p>One of the priority areas of work in recent years has been a focus on student enterprise. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) report – widely acknowledged as the key benchmark for entrepreneurial activity – highlighted the potential of working with universities and colleges to encourage more high-level business starts to address the challenges with the City's productivity levels and low business birth rates.</p>
3.8	<p>The Belfast Enterprise Academy (BEA) is the primary support intervention in place to stimulate student entrepreneurship levels. The Academy has been successfully delivered over the last 7 years, working in partnership with Queen's University, Ulster University and Belfast Metropolitan College. The programme is open to any student living in the city, who is working towards a 3rd level qualification, with a viable business idea and a commitment to starting a business.</p>
3.9	<p>Through BEA, participants have access to pre-enterprise and start-up support to help them explore their business idea in more detail or generate new business ideas; gain best practice from existing innovative businesses and develop business skills by engaging with existing entrepreneurs and business networks.</p>

3.10	The programme is made up of a series of enterprise workshops, tailored one to one
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	<p>support and best practice visits. To add value to the programme, each of the educational institutions provides complementary support for students to help fast-track their business ideas. This might include access to workspace or additional mentor support.</p>
3.11	<p>To date the key achievements of BEA include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 165 students have been engaged through the programme - 60 new businesses have been created - 54 students have completed an optional accreditation resulting in an Open College Network Level 3 award in Business Development (a recent innovation to the programme) - 80 jobs are expected to be created.
3.12	<p>Given the success of the previous programmes, the Belfast Enterprise Academy is to be expanded this year, working with 50 would-be student businesses to help them bring forward their ideas into viable business concepts or indeed functioning businesses. This year's programme will get under way in the coming weeks.</p>
3.13	<p>The success of BEA has already been externally recognised through a number of awards and accolades. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A European Training Foundation (ETF) 3 star rating (the highest possible score) for International Best Practice - High Commendation in the Innovation in Education, Employment and Training for young people category at the MJ Local Government Awards earlier this year.
3.14	<p>Most recently, the BEA was entered under the "Building Enterprise" category of the Enterprising Britain Awards 2016. These are one of the prestigious awards schemes operating across the UK to honour and celebrate the best public or public/private sector partnership work to support business start and business growth. The awards are part of the UK Government's drive to increase entrepreneurial activity and they are managed by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) in conjunction with a range of public sector partners.</p>

3.15	The "Building Enterprise" award is one of only five award categories. It recognises the
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	<p>positive impact on a target audience of activities to support and promote entrepreneurship. Following submission of the entry in recent months, officers have recently been advised that the application for the BEA project has been awarded a high commendation. Each category identifies one overall winner and one highly commended. Therefore this achievement effectively places BEA as second in the UK for building enterprise.</p>
3.16	<p>Enterprising Britain is currently finalising arrangements for an awards ceremony to be held in late October in central London. It is proposed that the Council would be represented at the awards ceremony by the Chair of Committee or their nominee and one officer.</p>
3.17	<p><u>Finance & Implications</u></p> <p>Travel and accommodation costs associated with member and officer attendance at the Enterprise Britain Awards Ceremony will be met from existing Economic Development Unit budgets.</p>
3.18	<p><u>Equality & good relations implications</u></p> <p>Programmes have been designed to help remove barriers to participation and promote equality of opportunity.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	None

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Subject:	Public Transport Arrangements for Christmas 2016
Date:	12 October 2016
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Director City & Neighbourhood Services Department
Contact Officer:	Siobhan Toland, Assistant Director, City & Neighbourhood Services Department

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To brief members on the offer to work in collaboration with Translink and the Department for Infrastructures on their proposed public transport arrangements for Christmas 2016 offered as an alternative to Belfast City Council free off street parking.
1.2	Members to consider the recommendation to agree proposals to incentivise public transport, as an alternative to free Council car parking, which will reduce congestion and make it easier for everyone, including those that wish to use their car, to visit the City over the Christmas shopping period. It is anticipated the proposals provide a better way to encourage shoppers and to boost local trade and subsequently increase footfall in the city.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to agree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Council works in collaboration with Translink and DfI to support the attractive Christmas transport proposals which will support greater choice for shoppers and tourists and have a positive impact in increasing footfall into the city as an alternative to Council offering free car parking and; • That the opening hours for Smithfield car park be extended this year and in future years, to cover the Christmas late night shopping period with the set tariff applying.

	All other car parks, including Bankmore Street to be available for use at all times.
3.0	Main report
	Background
3.1	Members will recall in the run up to Christmas 2015 the Council, in an effort to encourage visitors, suspended charging in its off street car parks all day Saturday and after 6.00 pm on week days from 27th November until 2nd January inclusive.
3.2	Over the same period the Council also made the Ormeau Avenue staff car park available for public parking, free of charge and extended the opening hours in Bankmore Street and Smithfield car parks on Sundays from 1.00 pm until 6.00 pm.
3.3	Translink recently wrote to the Council raising concerns that offering free parking pre Christmas in 2015 had a significantly detrimental impact on the reliability and punctuality of their service and a knock on effect on traffic flow and therefore congestion in the city.
3.4	Translink and officials from the Department of Infrastructure consider that incentivising public transport as an alternative to free car parking will reduce congestion and make it easier for everyone, including those that wish to use their car, to visit the City over the Christmas shopping period.
3.5	Furthermore Translink believe the offer of free parking in Council car parks resulted in cars queuing for the limited spaces or driving around looking for free spaces all of which increased congestion and may have deterred people from coming into the City to shop.
3.6	Translink reported that pre Christmas 2015: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 2000 journeys did not operate due to disruptions, • Only 84% of services were on time, significantly lower than previous years and their target of 99.2% • A 28% increase in consumer complaints linked to operating conditions • 62% fewer passengers on the bespoke Saturday park and ride compared to previous year.
3.7	Translink estimate the cost of providing extra resources to compensate for the additional running time to be in the region of £250K as well as lost fare box revenue.

3.8	<p>Translink and colleagues in DfI are of the view that the level of disruption last Christmas was similar to that experienced in 2011, notably the last time DRD offered free parking and confirm the Department subsequently concluded free Christmas parking led to increased congestion and parking safety issues. Through their review of Christmas travel arrangements in recent years, Translink have concluded additional measures such as providing and promoting more park and ride services and discounted fares in 2013 and 2014 provided a better way to encourage shoppers and to boost local trade and subsequently increase footfall in the city.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>The evidence presented by Translink and endorsed by officials from the Department of Infrastructure indicates that any offer of free car parking by the Council is likely to be counterproductive. It is likely to increase congestion and journey times deterring car users and bus users from visiting the City.</p>
3.10	<p>The Council controls less than 7 percent of public parking in the City Centre and due to their location and cheap tariffs many of its city centre parks are usually fully occupied and with high numbers of commuters. It is likely that removing charges will encourage more commuters to bring their car to work and park all day. Therefore it is likely offering free car parking will reduce further the actual number of spaces available to shoppers.</p>
3.11	<p>It is anticipated that the majority of Christmas shoppers attracted by an offer of free Council parking will not be able to locate a free car parking space. Subsequently they will be disappointed and encouraged to queue for free spaces or move between car parks looking for non charged spaces and this will increase congestion. Ultimately the vast majority of visitors, irrespective of any offer of free Council parking, will have to pay for parking on street or in commercially operated sites at rates that are higher than those charged in Council car parks.</p>
3.12	<p>Translink and officials from the Department of Infrastructure consider that incentivising public transport as an alternative to free car parking will reduce congestion and make it easier for everyone, including those that wish to use their car, to visit the City over the Christmas shopping period. Council officers have met with officials from Translink and the Department for Infrastructure to develop seasonal public transport proposals for Belfast in 2016, to be offered as an alternative to free parking which will encourage more people visit the City over the Christmas period.</p>

3.13	<p>Subsequently Translink and Dfl have proposed a range of attractive and additional measures for Councils consideration as alternatives to offering fee car parking as detailed in Appendix 2.</p>
3.14	<p>These include Translink offering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced metro fare of £2.50 return after 9:30 am representing a saving of up to £2 on single cash fares; • 1/3 off all NI Rail and Ulsterbus routes after 9:30 am; • Extended Park and Ride opening hours to cover late night opening plus 30mins; • Park and Ride services every 30 mins;
3.15	<p>Dfl propose over the period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To cease all non emergency road works over period on key routes into Belfast; • To extend traffic control centre hours of operation; • To extend the opening hours of park and rides to facilitate extended bus services.
3.16	<p>Currently all BCC car parks with the exception of Bankmore Street and Smithfield are open and available for use at all times. Bankmore Street and Smithfield are closed and secured after 6pm with the exception of Smithfield operating late on a Thursday night to accommodate late night shopping. These arrangements were inherited from transport NI and officers cannot see any reason why Bankmore Street should not be left open at night. Members are asked to agree to the opening of Bankmore Street car park at night.</p>
3.17	<p>Smithfield car park is an integral part of the market building and for security reasons is locked at night. Members are asked to agree that the opening hours for Smithfield car park be extended during the Christmas late night shopping period with the set tariff applying.</p>
3.18	<p>Belfast City Council and the Belfast One Business Improvement District are providing financial support to Visit Belfast to carry out a promotional campaign to encourage visitors to come to Belfast at Christmas.</p>
3.19	<p>If these proposals are agreed Dfl and Translink will collaborate with Council on communication plans, messaging and press releases and to link into the Visit Belfast</p>

	<p>promotional campaign.</p> <p><u>Finance and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>3.20 It is estimated that extending the opening hours of Smithfield Market car park this Christmas could generate an additional income of up to £5k.</p> <p>3.21 <u>Equality and Good Relations Issues</u></p> <p>There are no foreseeable equality or good relations issues.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	<p>Appendix 1 - Letter from Translink (9th August 2016) regarding Christmas 2016 Transport Management Arrangements.</p> <p>Appendix 2 - Christmas transport proposals.</p>

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9 August 2016

Mrs Suzanne Wylie
Chief Executive
Belfast City Council
City Hall
BELFAST
BT1 5GS

Telephone: 028 9025 8109

Dear *Suzanne***Re: Christmas 2016 – Transport Management Arrangements**

Translink is starting to plan public transport services for Belfast during the busy pre-Christmas 2016 period. Given the economic importance of this festive period for local businesses we would welcome the opportunity to work in partnership with the Council to reduce congestion and keep the city moving, encouraging more people to shop and socialise in the city.

The pre-Christmas period last year was a particularly challenging one for bus and car users in and around the city centre. This was primarily as a direct consequence of queuing on entry to off-street car parks and / or circulating for available parking spaces, recurring hotspots were on Chichester Street and Victoria Street. It is generally accepted that the adverse effects of this seasonal congestion impacts on all road users in terms of journey time and ultimately reduces the attractiveness of Belfast as a shopping destination. However, it would be Translink's view that in comparison with out-of-town retail centres, Belfast City Centre has a unique asset, as it can offer additional travel options over the private car with its current bus and rail networks. Translink would therefore wish to collaborate with Belfast City Council to consider how best to encourage greater uptake of these sustainable transport modes.

As such, we have undertaken a review of the Christmas travel arrangements for the past years to get a better understanding of what works best. During 2013 and 2014 additional weekend park and ride services and discounted fares were offered and we heavily promoted these and public transport as a better way to access the city – this approach worked well and was endorsed by the then DRD Minister in the statement shown below:

"I am aware that there have been calls for free on-street parking in the lead up to Christmas but in previous years we have seen that this led to an increase in congestion and created parking safety issues. The measure developed by my Department, in conjunction with Translink, provide better choice and value for all road users which will lead to more people using our city centres for Christmas shopping, providing a vital boost for our traders".

However, last year 1500 free city council car parking spaces were promoted and the additional traffic had a significant impact on the performance of our bus services with a level of disruption similar to difficulties we experienced in 2011, notably the last time free parking was offered. This manifested itself in the following ways:

Reliability of Service: Passenger's Charter reliability commitments are to operate 99.2% of our planned services. This fell to 97.4% in December 2015, significantly below previous years. To put this into context there were over 2,000 journeys recorded as not operating in December 2015 due to service disruption.

Punctuality of Service: Passenger's Charter punctuality commitments are to operate 95% of our planned services on time. This fell to 84% in December 2015, significantly below previous years. To put this into context, customer complaints, linked to operating conditions, grew by 28% in the pre-Christmas period due to service disruption.

The impact on bus users was significant as were the knock on costs to our business in terms of the extra resources needed to try and compensate for the additional running time incurred pre-Christmas 2015 (estimated to be of the order of £250k) as well as lost fare box revenue e.g. there were 62% fewer passengers on the bespoke Saturday Park & Ride services in 2015 compared to 2014.

Our assessment is that, if Translink experienced these problems then undoubtedly car users did too. Free parking spaces, available after 6.00 pm and all day Saturday and Sunday seemed to be taken up fairly quickly. As a result car users had to regularly wait in long queues or instead, circulate looking for spaces at alternative commercial car parks, further impacting on traffic progression around the city. Furthermore, many shoppers were unaware that the free parking was evenings only during the week which also caused traffic congestion even before the normal rush hour periods and may have deterred people from coming into the city to shop later in the evening.

We want to continue to help make Belfast an attractive, vibrant city for shopping and socialising, not only all year round, but particularly this Christmas. Independent research shows that Metro bus passengers (accounting for more than half a million passenger journeys per week) help to maintain retail sales. Quite apart from this economic reality, greater use of sustainable modes has environmental benefits that will resonate with the Council in respect of air quality. Finally, there are issues of equity as 36% of households in Belfast have no access to a car, so our local bus and rail networks are a key mode of access.

Christmas is such an important financial catalyst for the heart of the city and we know that congestion not only impacts on our services but can also affect local businesses and retailers as people can be put off by delays and disruption and find alternative locations to visit. I would urge the council to take on board lessons learned from last year when reflecting on this year's decision on car parking.

There are many options which we could discuss together, for example:

Instead of offering free car parking - we could agree a set of offers for people using park & ride facilities around the city, and on Metro, to encourage these as a more efficient way to travel into the City for shopping and socialising. We could promote this together and have discounts in store for people showing their travel ticket.

Improve communications - work with public and commercial car parks to display the number of spaces left in the city at park & ride facilities so that people are given the P&R option before driving in to contribute to congestion.

Selective car parking incentives - work together to selectively offer car parking incentives and Park & Ride, for example evenings versus week-ends.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet in the near future to discuss these options, and others, to put in place a transport plan for the City that will ensure a successful festive season and will see more people take that all important trip to Belfast to shop, socialise and soak up the Christmas spirit!

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Conway', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chris Conway
Group Chief Executive

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Appendix 2 Christmas public transport proposals

Translink Proposed Christmas Service enhancement & Promotional Offers

Metro - Network Wide Promotional Fare

£2.50 Day Return Fare (All Metro Services) after 9.30am

A new £2.50 Day Return Ticket will be available after 9.30am every day from 1st – 31st December 2016. The paper ticket is only available from the driver and represents a saving of up to £2 on single cash fares.

The new £2.50 ticket is also available for Park & Ride passengers using the Black's Road, Cairnshill, Dundonald and Ballymartin services. Late night shoppers can enjoy the convenience of Park & Ride as well as not worrying about traffic and parking. The new £2.50 fare promotion is the perfect way to travel and save more money on the run up to the busy Christmas shopping period. The table below outlines savings against the standard single and cash return fares.

Additional late night shopper services will also be operating across the Metro network to cater for the increased demand as late night shopping commences on the run to Christmas.

Ulsterbus & NIR

For those travelling from further afield, 1/3 of offer on NIR and selected Ulsterbus routes after 0930 will be available.

Additional late night services will also operate on Selected Ulsterbus routes to cater for the increased demand.

Park & Ride

On commencement of late night shopping in the City (28th November) the following park and ride sites opening hours will be extended beyond 1830 and operate a service every 30 minutes, up to approximately 30 minutes after shops close.

Park & Ride service	single / return cash fare	Savings made with £2.50 fare	Discount
Black's Road	£2.00 / £3.80	£1.30	34%
Cairnshill	£2.00 / £3.80	£1.50	34%
Dundonald	£2.00 / £3.80	£1.60	34%
Ballymartin	£3.50 / £6.30	£3.80	60%

Department for Infrastructure Christmas transport arrangements:

- For those travelling by roads, planned road works on key arterial routes into Belfast, Londonderry, other cities and major towns across the north, will cease in the run up to Christmas. This will apply from Monday 28 November 2016 to Tuesday 3 January 2017 and will include works by utility companies, as well as Transport NI. Only emergency works will be permitted on these routes during the embargo.
- Belfast's Traffic Control Centre will stay open for longer periods as necessary during the evenings, to assist with the monitoring and control of traffic across the city in the run up to Christmas.
- Cairnshill, Dundonald, Black's Road Northside and Eastside Park and Ride sites in Belfast will be open for longer hours to facilitate additional bus services being provided by Translink.



Subject:	Routes Europe Conference 2017
Date:	12 October 2016
Reporting Officer:	Donal Durkan, Director of Development
Contact Officer:	Lynda Bailie, Improvement Consultant

Is this report restricted?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of the report is to advise Members of an upcoming business tourism event taking place in Belfast in April 2017, the annual Routes Europe conference and to secure Committee agreement for Council funding towards the costs associated with hosting this very significant event in the City.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the upcoming Routes Europe conference which will take place in Belfast for the first time in April 2017 Agree that the £100,000 planned subvention to support the event in the city is now confirmed. This amount was planned for given the importance of this particular conference to the Belfast economy and is in the Department's budget.
3.0	Main report
3.1	The newly extended Belfast Waterfront has been attracting conference and exhibitions since its opening in April 2016 which have had a significant impact on the local economy. In its first quarter it has hosted 9 major conferences, including the Association of Surgeons of the UK & Ireland and The World Council of Credit Unions, which generated

	<p>almost 10k out of state delegate days and had an estimated economic impact of £4.68million. This year the Belfast Waterfront is forecasting it will host 23 national and international conferences anticipated to generate in the region of 44,000 delegate days, with an economic return to the city of £19m.</p>
3.2	<p>The target by 2020 is for the Belfast Waterfront to be attracting 50,000 delegate days, with an economic return to the city of £35m a year. The future programme of conferences is very strong, with 16 National/International conferences confirmed for 2017/18 already. The Routes Europe conference, another major conferencing event, is due to take place in the newly extended Belfast Waterfront in April 2017. Hosting the conference in the Belfast Waterfront provides the venue with an opportunity to showcase the newly extended conference centre to a wide range of European Corporations, many of which host conferences in their own right. It also provides an opportunity to showcase the new Belfast Waterfront on a global stage, firmly positioning the venue as a world class conference centre.</p>
3.3	<p>Routes Europe is a particularly attractive conference due to the economic impact that it will have, particularly on potential new air routes. It is the largest regional gathering for all aviation-based companies operating in Europe. This major international event brings together decision makers from airlines, airports and tourism authorities to negotiate and build relationships that will shape the world's future air route networks. Routes events occupy a unique position, both in the field of aviation and as an economic development catalyst. Air transport is one of the means of regional economic development and Routes delivers to the event – and the host city – the very people who decide where, when and why the world's airlines fly.</p>
3.4	<p>Routes Europe is an annual event which takes place in major European cities over a three day period. Following a successful bid by the city of Belfast – comprising a partnership of Visit Belfast, Invest NI, Belfast City Council, Tourism NI, Tourism Ireland and the airports – the Routes Europe 2017 event will take place in Belfast on 23-25 April 2017. The delegates are considered to be 'guests' of Routes and therefore of the host city which will provide Belfast with a rare opportunity to bring influential decision makers into the city, make them welcome, build a relationship with them and seek future partnerships.</p>
3.5	<p>It is estimated that the event will attract around 1,000 delegates representing more than 100 global airlines, airports and tourism promotion agencies. In addition to the significant</p>

	<p>financial impact of the delegate spend – estimated at around £1.3million – the event presents an excellent opportunity to provide the economic and tourism potential of the city of Belfast to a range of decision-makers, focusing on the key messaging identified within the emerging city narrative whilst showcasing all that is on offer for airlines, tourists, businesses and inward investors. It also provides the City with an opportunity to positively change perceptions about our airport(s) and Belfast as a destination.</p>
3.6	<p>The main conference and showcase will take place in the Belfast Waterfront while a welcome dinner is planned for Belfast City Hall and a gala networking event is to take place in Titanic Belfast. Organisers and the local team are also currently working on a programme of supporting events across the city. Research shows that the host city has a significant impact on delegates' overall satisfaction and the Belfast Waterfront will be able to showcase that it can deliver well-organised meetings and a high standard of events in a luxurious, state of the art, riverside location presenting a positive impression of the city.</p>
3.7	<p>The Routes Europe conference has the potential to accelerate air route development. Previous host cities report that they have secured agreement on up to six new routes after holding the event as well as increases in airline operations over subsequent years. Members will be aware that air route connectivity has been identified as one of the most critical elements required to support future tourism and business growth. The Integrated Tourism Strategy noted that limitations in air route connections to key business destinations was one of the most significant challenges to the ambition of doubling the value of tourism. Routes Europe helps support a fundamental part of the business tourism strategy – business and leisure tourism is of key importance in growing the tourism industry and doubling tourism spend by 2020.</p>
3.8	<p>The Northern Ireland Executive has invested in a range of incentives to secure key routes from the region's airports. Despite this, there are opportunities for further development – particularly to a number of key European business hubs – and it is considered that this event will be a critical part of work to secure these new routes. Longer term benefits will also come from the extensive international PR coverage for Belfast that the conference will generate and this can be used to profile the city as an attractive leisure and business tourism destination and to carry some of the key messages around the business and investment opportunities in the city.</p> <p>Routes Europe have indicated the benefits to a city hosting the event, which includes PR</p>

3.9	<p>coverage, potential new airline routes and additional leisure/business tourism visitors, is in the region of £50m+.</p> <p>In order to support the bid, a funding package is required from the various partners</p> <p>3.10 involved. In principle Invest NI has agreed approximately £300k with TIL agreeing £20k, TNI £165k, Visit Belfast £20k, BUWH Ltd £10k and the Airports approximately £100k each. Final details of the event are still being discussed but Belfast City Council has been requested to provide financial support of £100k towards the costs of hosting the event at the Belfast Waterfront.</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>3.11 The Council contribution towards the hosting of the event is £100,000. These costs have been set aside within existing budgets as this event has been in the planning process for some time. The difference in this conference from others is that it was allocated to Belfast as an economic initiative as part of a joint city bid. The baton was passed over from Krakow to Belfast last April. However to attract such an event all cities have to provide significant subvention which is to be shared among the partners.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>3.12 No specific equality or good relations implications.</p> <p><i>Abbreviations</i></p> <p>BWUH Ltd – Belfast Waterfront Ulster Hall Limited</p> <p>TIL – Tourism Ireland</p> <p>TNI – Tourism Northern Ireland</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	None