

Public Document Pack

**Democratic Services Section
Legal and Civic Services Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**



**Belfast
City Council**

HYBRID MEETING OF THE CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE – REPORTS TO FOLLOW (1)

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet both online and in-person in the Lavery Room - City Hall on Wednesday, 6th December, 2023 at 5.15 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

John Walsh

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

4. **Regenerating Places & Improving Infrastructure**
 - (b) Proposed Study Visits (Pages 1 - 4)
5. **Positioning Belfast to Compete**
 - (c) Tourism Strategy Consultation Response – Appendix one (Pages 5 - 12)

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Subject:	Proposed Study Visits
Date:	6 December 2023
Reporting Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration & Development
Contact Officer:	Adrian Ferguson, Senior Development Manager

Restricted Reports									
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 									
<p>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">After Committee Decision</td> <td style="width: 30%; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
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After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>								

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

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To seek Committee approval in relation to extending the scope of previously approved study visit with a focus on regeneration projects including city centre living and public private partnership approach to delivery.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Agree to extend the scope of a previously approved study visit to Newcastle to include other cities including Greater Manchester and Leeds which will focus on regeneration projects including city centre living and public private partnership approach to delivery. Approve attendance of Party Group Leaders or their nominees, accompanied by officers.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	In December 2021 following an invitation from Newcastle City Council to facilitate shared learnings around regeneration projects and good practice in city centre living, the City Growth & Regeneration Committee agreed to a proposed study visit which was subject to restrictions at the time around travel and Covid – 19. Due to advice regarding the implementation of Covid restrictions at the time the study visit had to be postponed.
3.2	Officers have continued to engage with representatives from Newcastle and other Irish and UK cities, through existing fora such as UKReeiF / MIPIM, Urban Land Institute, and the Belfast City and Region Place Partnership. In addition to the planned visit to Newcastle, there has been ongoing contact with Greater Manchester and Leeds City Council. It is proposed to extend the scope of the previously approved study visit to include Greater Manchester and Leeds.
3.3	These visits will provide an opportunity to examine examples of housing led regeneration, institutional investor partnership approaches that these local authorities have taken to deliver regeneration as well as public private partnership approaches that support city centre living.. The proposed extended visit is considered timely given the commencement of the procurement process to seek a Private Sector Partner to deliver residential led, mixed use developments in the support of the growth ambitions as set out in the Belfast Agenda. While the core focus will be on city centre living and the institutional investor partnership / public private partnership approach to delivery of regeneration projects it will also provide an opportunity to discuss other regeneration projects including City Deal, Innovation Districts and funding mechanisms available to support regeneration.

3.4	It is proposed that this visit takes place at the end of January / early February 2024, and would take place over 2 days (one overnight). It is proposed that this would include Party Group Leaders or their nominees and accompanying officers.
4.0	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>To accommodate flights, along with hotels, transport, and subsistence for two days and one night, it is estimated that a budget of up to £600 per person will be required for the proposed extended visit which will be met from existing budget.</p>
5.0	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no Equality, Good Relations or Rural Needs implications associated with this report.</p>
6.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	None

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1. What type of organisation do you represent?

- Central Government
- Local Government
- Voluntary & Community Sector
- Tourism Industry
- Private Sector
- Individual
- Other

If you have selected 'Tourism Industry' please specify below, which area of the Industry you represent:

- Attraction/Experience Provider
- Accommodation
- Transport
- Tour Operator
- Destination Management Organisation
- Food & Drink
- Other

If you have selected 'Other' Please specify below:

2. Thinking of the Vision, Mission and Strategic Aim, to what extent do you agree or disagree that they are the right Vision, Mission and Strategic Aim for the Industry?

Our Vision: Establish Northern Ireland as a year-round world class destination which is renowned for its authentic experiences, landscape, heritage and culture and which benefits communities, the economy and the environment, with sustainability at its core.

Our Mission: To support the tourism sector in building an innovative, sustainable and inclusive tourism industry for all people and places in Northern Ireland which enriches its people, its economy and its guests.

Our Strategic Aim: To increase the value of tourism to the Northern Ireland economy by 50-75% compared to 2019.

NB: Please note the 50-75% increase in the value of tourism expressed in the Strategic Aim is based on a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 4-6%. We are particularly keen to hear views on the quantitative aspect of this aim that balances ambition, realism and sustainability.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

If 'Disagree or Strongly Disagree' Please Expand Below.

We welcome the recognition of a need for a 10 year Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland, and whilst agree that the vision and mission statements effectively consider driving tourism forward, the strategic aim appears overly focused on a single statistic. To ensure sustainable growth it should make recognition of alignment with market needs and demands, encompassing a broader perspective for long term success.

We consider that underpinning this approach presents a significant opportunity for better data sharing between and across government departments and local authorities. However clarity is sought on the measurement and value placed on metrics beyond traditional measures of economic impact such as visitor numbers, bed nights and day spend.

We understand that targets are set at topline level but would seek clarity on the role at local levels and ability to deliver aligned to tourism product, infrastructure and capacity. Alongside this greater depth of modeling against the targets wo

3. Thinking about the Themes and associated Indicators outlined in the Strategy, to what extent do you agree or disagree that they are the right ones to target future growth of the industry?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Inclusive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Innovative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sustainable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collaborative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attractive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If 'Disagree or Strongly Disagree' Please Expand Below.

We are broadly in agreement that the themes are aligned with delivering the objectives of the strategy. Consideration could be given to the role of attractiveness as an underlying principle opposed driving all themes to position Northern Ireland as an attractive place to visit.

Accessibility is an important theme to consider taking into account air access, ETA and enabling infrastructure. Strengthening the need for cross cutting collaboration with departments that have ownership of levers that will drive forward and enable change and growth.

We also recognise the need to consider definitions of the terminology associated with innovation and sustainability giving clarity to industry on how they can work to deliver against these objectives. It is important to note that in order to deliver on innovation in particular having the processes and partnerships in place that can deliver timely action and decision making will enable the sector to take advantage of market trends.

4. What would you view as the five most important actions which could contribute to achieving the indicators outlined within the Strategy? Please note a number of these actions would be dependent on the Public Expenditure available and the wider political and financial climate.

-
- Develop and deliver a bespoke Skills Action Plan
-
- Develop a Quality Employer Charter
-
- Develop a Tourism Employer Excellence Programme
-
- Build awareness in businesses of sustainability (green) practices
-
- Encourage and develop NI cross government collaboration
-
- Build awareness of, and support for, accessing sources of alternative funding
-
- Build awareness in businesses of innovation within the tourism sector
-
- Formally recognize/accredit businesses for demonstrating innovation
-
- Additional Data Collection and Robust Benchmarking
-
- Marketing Campaigns – Regional messaging across international campaigns
-
- Develop a NI Events Framework
-
- Support local events and festivals
-
- Support larger events that attract people from outside of NI
-
- Promote importance of Business Tourism and deliver on Business Tourism Strategy
-
- Deliver an annual tourism awards programme to recognise best practice in the industry
-
- Develop an air route development programme to improve connectivity with France and Germany
-
- Increased delivery of Travel & Tourism programmes in schools leading to increased qualifications
-
- Stronger connection between employers/delivery partners/programmes to support businesses to participate in opportunities
-
- Develop a bespoke Sustainability Accreditation Scheme and/or promote a framework to promote and recognize other quality assured sustainability accreditation schemes
-
- A Regenerative/Sustainable Tourism Development Programme similar to the EDP to support the development of new and enhanced sustainable tourism experiences;
-
- Promote the role tourism plays in sustaining other sectors, eg culture, arts & heritage and food
-
- Encourage and facilitate collaboration within the sector to share best practice/knowledge/networks
-
- More collaboration between councils to produce integrated tourism/destination plans at local level

5. What do you think your organisation, business or those you represent, could deliver to contribute towards the Tourism Strategy? This could be in general, or in terms of the specific Themes and Indicators set out in the Strategy.

We consider that local authorities can provide a range of support roles in the department's proposal. We are committed to Belfasts role in delivering against the Tourism strategy by fostering inclusivity, embracing innovation, promoting sustainability and nurturing collaboration.

We aim to enhance visitor experiences through diverse offerings, implement innovative solutions for tourism development that prioritise sustainable practices and collaborate with stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach to city tourism.

In addition to our delivery responsibility as outlined in the 10 year Make Yourself at Home Tourism Strategy published by Belfast City Council. We are strongly positioned to deliver a people centred approach that delivers for visitors and citizens alike , we can play an important convening role and are well placed to advice on relationships, networks, key contacts and local infrastructure.

6. Based on your responses to the above questions, do you have any further comment on the Strategy as a whole? i.e. Is there anything missing? Is it taking the industry on the right path for current and future challenges/opportunities?

We consider that councils are well-placed to work with DfE and to advise on appropriate approaches – based on their local knowledge, networks, insights and contacts.

We welcome the opportunity to consult and look forward to the associated action and delivery plans that will identify timelines, associated resources, collaborative opportunities and ownership to deliver.

We welcome the importance placed on a data driven approach but would urge clarity on consistency across reporting, access to real time data and usable dashboards that can facilitate both regional and local level insights.

Greater inclusion on the value of tourism segments and the opportunity that business tourism presents to drive seasonal and mid week high value spend against the outlined targets could be considered.

The opportunity presented is exciting particularly as alignment with city and growth deals will welcome new product that drives demand and strengthens broader industry opportunity.

7. In the event that we need to better understand some of the responses collected, would you be willing to be contacted by the Department for the Economy to discuss your responses in further detail? Please note that your responses are otherwise confidential.

Yes

No

If Yes, please provide:

Name: Lesley-Ann O'Donnell

Job Title: Senior Manager Culture, Tourism and Events

Name of Organisation (if appropriate): Belfast City Council

Email: odonnelll@belfastcity.gov.uk

If you have any concerns or questions at all about the Tourism Strategy, please do not hesitate to contact 02890529930 or tourismstrategy@economy-ni.gov.uk

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